

Editorial

“Therefore we have been buried with [Christ] by baptism into death so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4).

This Easter 2015 issue of the LTS News, English edition, celebrates the “newness of life” that Paul talks about in his letter to the Romans. The issue begins on Maundy Thursday, when Jesus said goodbye to his friends before his death and burial. But it does not end there. It moves to the festival of Easter, the victory of the reign of God when Jesus was raised from the dead “so we too might walk in newness of life.” We enjoy this new life in worship and song, in eating and playing together, in connecting with new friends, and in blessing old friends as they move away.

In Romans 6:4 Paul points to baptism as our connection with Christ’s dying and rising. The LTS community got a wet reminder of our baptisms when we celebrated the New Year Mekong-style. You can read about it in the first article, by BTh student Chinda Soukpaseth.

The next two articles are sermons, one preached on Maundy Thursday by Rev. Dr. Jan Martin Depner, and one preached at the Annual Sacred Music Festival on 17 April 2015 by Rev. Dr. Peter Li Kwong-Sang. The Sacred Music Festival fell during the season of Easter and the program moved us beautifully from Jesus’ death to his risen life under the theme “Our God Reigns.” The Sacred Music Festival also sparked the next article, a reflection from Rev. Øystein Bjørdal on the significance of liturgical worship, especially in the Lutheran tradition.

The last two articles are about some of the ways that we share our Christian life together. On 24 January 2015 a group of faculty members was privileged to go to Shenzhen, China, to meet Christian brothers and sisters and to learn about their ministries, especially their work of preparing lay leaders to serve in congregations. Mr. Jonathan Lee Tak-Yu takes you along on the trip in the fifth article.

The sixth and final article says goodbye to four faculty members who are leaving or retiring after this spring semester 2015, Øystein Bjørdal, Patrick Chan Kwok-Kuen, Gabriele Hoerschmann, and Abraham Peterson. These four recall with gratitude the growth that they have experienced at LTS and the growth that they look forward to in the next years of their lives.

That final article was written by me, Rev. Dr. Carolyn Schneider, Associate Professor of Church History at LTS. I am the new editor of the LTS News, English edition. For the upcoming issues I invite all of you readers to send me ideas, photos, stories, or articles. Is there something you would really like to see in the LTS News? Tell me about it at cmschneider@lts.edu. I close with gratitude to the previous editor, Rev. Dr. Jan Martin Depner, for his help in making this editorial transition and for all his fine work for this magazine over the years.

Carolyn Schneider



The faculty prepares to get wet!



By Chinda Soukpaseuth, BTh Student at LTS

Sabaidee beemai, or Happy New Year! – from the Mekong Region to LTS

Sabaidee beemai is the saying to greet and say good-bye to others during Lao New Year. It occurs during the Buddhist New Year which is in the middle of the month of April, usually between the dates of April 14th to 16th. It is not just a Laotian holiday but it is a regional holiday for most parts of the Mekong Region, with celebrations in Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar and the very southern part of China (close to Myanmar and Laos). Lao New Year is also known as the water festival, as it greatly involves lots of water to be thrown at each other.

There are many myths of why this festival is celebrated and how it started; they vary from country to country and even within parts of one country. The Buddhist explanation is that water is used to cleanse oneself from the bad karma or spirits that one may have gained from the past year to have a new clean start for the new year. In Laos, Buddhists will go to

the temple during one of the three days of celebration and will offer alms to the deities and monks and will take some water that was blessed at the temple to their home. Once they arrive home they will clean the spirit-house in their home and take some water and pour it on the deity that is hosted in their spirit-house. Some families will even clean the house with the water to try to remove any bad spirits from the house.

The water is also used during celebrations in which family and friends pour some water on the back of the neck to offer a blessing to their family and friends for the Lao New Year. This custom is still practiced today but with some added fun. The festival has turned into a three-day event of throwing water at everyone, which is quite nice, since it is usually the hottest part of the year for us and this cools down everyone.

Christians will also celebrate Lao New Year, but we will usually have a special afternoon event of bible teaching, worship, prayer and then will sit the pastors and their spouses down and the congregation will offer a blessing of water down the back of the neck and then afterwards everyone at the church will very nicely throw water on everyone else. The common element between the Buddhist and Christian practices is the understanding that water clears our sins and brings us a blessing, as in baptism. But what is different is that, for Christians, baptism depends on the greatness of God. Next year if you have time, try to come to visit Laos during the New Year. It is truly a Laotian experience that everyone must enjoy. Happy Lao new year!

Ingrid Meyrick gets ready to "bless" someone back.



Bounthavy Souliyavong

I Have Called You Friends

The following is an abbreviated sermon from this year's Maundy Thursday worship. We at LTS celebrated together with Hong Kong's Anglican Ming Hua seminary. The Anglican liturgy and Mabel Wu's wonderfully composed service was a spiritual highlight. The topic of the sermon found its follow-up by a visiting professor from Tel Aviv. Rabbi Josh Berman of Bar-Ilan University spoke to us a few weeks later about political equality in the Pentateuch. Please bear in mind that the following is a spiritual talk. The preacher is well aware that the antithesis between friendship and power is not an absolute one. But for the sake of highlighting the difference of a theological view ... here it goes:

I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. John 15:15

Good News on this evening of banquet: Jesus calls us friends. Distinctly: not servants! In word and in particular in deed Jesus makes known to us - his friends - how God's kingdom differs from the kingdoms of this world.

All biblical principles of a good life have to do with love and friendship. What every human soul yearns for has been offered to us! This Thursday night is a wonderful, a festive evening: white and bright and joyful indeed.

Yet we know about the end of this worship. We know the dynamic of this week. Why does this festive night end in darkness?

It is because of me of course, because of us!

A few days ago I saw a T-shirt in the MTR

saying: Power corrupts our soul.

Dear friends from Ming Hua and LTS, dear fellow-searchers: this T-shirt is telling a deep truth about Holy Week and about the world at all times and ages: Power easily corrupts. Here we have an answer: the destructive principle of power is the opposite to God's plan of friendship. This is what Jesus was radically opposing that evening, when he was folding back his sleeves and getting down on his knees to wash his friends' feet. He turned our ideas of leadership upside down and said "no" to our destructive ways of power and domination. The reason for tonight's bright banquet is that God's idea of leadership, God's principle of life is indeed radically different from our power games.

Of course we all think: "No, not me!" I can resist the temptation of power. "I am only serving!"

And many of us think: "In real life we need power!"

Do we?

Do we need titles and hierarchies? Do we need a line of command? What if we don't? I know this power thinking started in biblical times. I know the Bible allows for shepherds and fathers to lead. But what if Jesus, "telling



Olivia Cheung

Dr. Jan Depner assists at communion, presided over by Rev. Dr. Lam Chun Wai of HKSKH Ming Hua Theological College



Olivia Cheung

us what he learned from his father”, was seriously suggesting that we replace our human power games with holy friendship? Couldn’t we have known, because he made this known to us?

We may need some power and obedience. And we know that Christianity can thrive in all sorts of government. But when it comes to us, to the church, the friends of God – then Jesus calls for radical friendship among us and sets the example. There is no alternative! We may structure our congregation with presbyters, elders or bishops, we could go for a radical model of equal brethren... but the principle is the same for all: No space for power – all space for friendship!

- For friendship with God: that’s why we need solitude!
- For friendship with each other: that’s why we need community!
- For friendship with the other ones, even enemies: that’s why we need ministry!

Solitude, community, ministry: they are the heart of a spiritual life. Power can destroy that easily. Probably we don’t like that very much. Friendship takes up so much more time than clearly defined power-lines. That’s why there was a cross waiting for the servant-king...

I am all for contextualizing our faith ... But we must not go too far. We left Jesus’ footsteps when Christianity included the western principles of military hierarchies. And equally: Confucian principles of handling power have nothing to do with the radicalism of Jesus, who laid down his life for everyone and became a servant to the least.

The world of friendship is a different world! Friends do not obey each other! Friends serve each other only out of free choice. Friends tell

each other painful truths without ceasing to love each other. Friends never do what the other one wants unless their heart presses them that way; and if the other one demands this, friendship dies.

Friends long to be near each other; the more time they can spend together, the better. Friends long to hear the other one’s opinion and treasure it, but have the courage and the freedom to disagree! The beauty of friendship lies in the healing and uplifting power God has built into it. Good friends will stand as one – but they will fiercely refuse any harmony that is demanded of them. In true friendship there is room for leadership and authority, but only that which is given to the other one voluntarily out of respect and love.

What Jesus has made known to us from his Father in many of his words and deeds and especially in this dramatic week is a different way of life for the church and a radical plea: Never submit to power! Submit to love. Do not obey a brother: love a brother, forgive a sister, become a friend. Wash her feet, serve him, uplift her. Renounce the power games. They will most likely corrupt your soul! ... Let us learn from Jesus. Amen

Our God Reigns



Tse Tak Kwong

Greetings, both apostolic and on behalf of the president, Dr. Simon Chow.

Our God reigns! In Matthew 28:16-20 Christ Jesus, the resurrected Lord, proclaims that he is now given all authority in heaven and on earth. God the Son, Jesus Christ, had all authority with the Father and the Holy Spirit before he became incarnate. But because of his mission to save this world of sinners, he gave it up and emptied himself, taking the form of a servant. Willingly the infinite became finite, living in the midst of human beings, unrighteous, lawless, helpless, and hopeless. Through his words and deeds he proclaimed and witnessed to them that God

is love, and he called sinners to leave evil for righteousness, darkness for light, death for life.

A former president of the People's Republic of China, Mr. J.T. Wu, once said that as a public servant, one should have one's heart tied closely with the people, endeavoring for the people's well-being and making use of power only for the people's sake. But this is more easily said than done except by Jesus Christ, who laid down his life for the world, all because he is in concord with his Father in heaven and the Holy Spirit. He should be respected not only by the communists and all civil servants, but by every person and all people on earth.

We recall when Jesus was born: There were wise men coming from the east looking for him – he who was born as King of the Jews. They came to Jerusalem and this threatened King Herod, the one who reigned over Palestine. How could he, like all rulers on earth, bear with another king who might come to take over his reign?! So, we are told that he ordered all infants below two years old to be killed. “No two tigers should be ruling in one mountain,” as the Chinese saying goes. This is exactly what we see and experience in human history until today. Anyone who has power and authority wants to have the sole say. This is true not only in the political arena but also in each and all human institutions, including religious ones. May God forgive and have mercy!

When Jesus was put to death on the cross his crime was described as claiming to be “King of the Jews.” Although Jesus clearly told the Roman governor Pontius Pilate that his kingdom does not belong to this world, he just as clearly told him that he was born to be the King. In other words, his authority is



Tse Tak Kwong

different from that of those worldly rulers. Cruel reality as well as our experience tells us that no matter which political systems or institutions they belong to, worldly rulers always claim that they rule only for the service of their subjects, but most of them in fact serve only themselves and their interests so that they usually abuse their power by oppressing and exploiting their subjects.

But Jesus Christ is a totally different kind of King. He came not only to be King of the Jews but also to become King of all sinners in the world. He did not establish his kingdom through weapons or violence or votes, but through the sacrifice of his life. Through his words and deeds he witnessed to the world that God is love and he established the Kingdom of love. Although, through his obedience to the will of God the Father, he died on the cross, he was raised from the dead and granted all authority on earth and in heaven. However, he does not force anyone to accept his reign now any more than he did while he was on earth. He has power and authority, but he never used it for himself. He used power and authority only for the needy, the sick, and the marginalized. For God the Son came not to be served, but to serve. This is his mission, and his way is the way of the cross.

Now Jesus has accomplished his mission and the redemption of the world. He was raised from the dead and was granted authority both on earth and in heaven. Our God Jesus Christ reigns! Yet still he refuses to abuse his power or authority. He only calls his disciples to baptize and teach so that more

may become his disciples. Following Jesus Christ their Lord, they will witness to the world through their words and deeds that God is love. Our God Jesus Christ reigns in order to establish his Kingdom of love. Have you heard his call? Will you respond to his call? Do you welcome his reign in your life and daily living? Would you like to see more people welcoming his reign in their lives? Dear friends, sisters and brothers in Christ, our God reigns. Hallelujah!



Tse Tak Kwong



Tse Tak Kwong

Is there a Lutheran liturgy?

By Rev. Øystein Bjørdal



Tse Tak Kwong

There are many answers to the question raised in the headline of this article. Certainly there is not one official Lutheran liturgy. We have many Lutheran churches with different liturgical traditions. So the question remains - is there a specifically Lutheran order of worship? My answer is no. There is both a continuity and a reorientation of the worship-life as it was known at the time of the reformation, and there is a significant Lutheran contribution to the liturgical tradition of the Christian church. Luther was concerned about bringing the church back to apostolic origins and classic traditions. He challenged much of the liturgical development of the Middle Ages. But there is no such thing as a specific Lutheran liturgy.

Luther's two liturgies

When it came to the actual making of new liturgies, among the reformers Luther was very conservative and hesitant. His first mass was published more than six years after he posted the Ninety-Five Theses on the church door in Wittenberg (1517). Luther's Formula of Mass and Communion (December 1523) was in Latin (Formula Missae et Communionis), "to teach the youth in the classic disciplines", as Luther himself explained. It followed the basic structure of the Roman Mass with strong reservations, theologically and liturgically, against the sacrifice of the Mass. In 1526 Luther published a mass in the German language (Deutsche Messe). This came after strong pressure from the reformers, and Luther is evidently very uncertain about this

liturgy. He even says that Christians don't need it. This is for the education of non-Christians, he maintains. So this seems to be more pedagogical thinking than liturgical.

Sacred Music

One of the most obvious Lutheran contributions to Christian worship is within the realm of "sacred music". In general, music had a very high standing in Martin Luther's mind. He was convinced of its deep relevance in the education and discipline of young people. In importance Luther ranked music next to theology, and he connects music both to the angelic and the prophetic world: "Music is the art of the prophets, the only art that can calm the agitations of the soul". Thus we can see a direct connection from Martin Luther to the Lutheran church musician that sometimes has been named "the fifth apostle", Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750).

A radical new involvement of the congregation

The Lutheran reformation brought a new dimension to the liturgical tradition of the church – the singing of hymns in the native language of the people. Singing hymns was not actually a new tradition. It belonged to the early church and some of the church fathers were remarkable hymn writers. But pope Gregorius the Great (6th century AD) introduced a thousand-year-long period of so-called Gregorian chanting, until the times of the renaissance and reformation. Luther himself wrote both hymns and music and liturgically involved people in the worship in a radical new way. The priesthood of all believers were not just to say "Amen" here and there. The liturgy belongs to the congregation, to the BIG choir, as Luther sometimes called the congregation.

There is a fundamental dialectic between revelation and response in this Lutheran understanding of worship. On the one hand are God's holy acts in the history of salvation and in the Word and sacraments of the Church. On the other hand are the people of God, the congregation's involvement in receiving and responding. In this perspective

the preaching of the Word of God also plays a central role. The theological expressions of "faith alone" and "grace alone" became cornerstones for an evangelical liberation and education of common people.

Giovanni Pergolesi Palestrina (1525 – 1594) At the same time in the Roman church Palestrina was a very influential musician. He composed a new mass that was not in the Gregorian tradition but in the newer polyphonic style. Palestrina dedicated this mass to Pope Marcellus II (Missa Papae Marcelli, 1562). Since that time the popes also have been open to a more diverse form of music in the Roman church. The influence of so-called "sacred music" spread in the following centuries, not only in the Lutheran and Roman Catholic traditions, but very much also in the Anglican tradition. Widespread hymn-singing has in later years also become very important in many Roman Catholic churches.

Continuity and reorientation

The Lutheran tradition from the Reformation to Johann Sebastian Bach still stands in a long, classic liturgical continuity. But there is a remarkable reorientation. The preaching of the Word of God became a much more influential part of the worship service. And the role of the people of God, the congregation, was renewed in both the principal and the practical understandings of the worship service. Through Bach's passions, cantatas for all the Sundays and festive days, motets and hymns, and from all the following sacred music-tradition, Christian worship and Lutheran music have been brought to more people in this world than we are able to understand. The involvement and participation of the congregations in the preparations and celebrations of our liturgies seems to be a continuous challenge for many of our churches and congregations even today, both east and west.

Mr. Jonathan LEE Tak-Yu
Executive Assistant to the President

Faculty's One Day Visit to Shenzhen Churches



Rev. Jie Qiu Fu of the Langkou Church shows the faculty around the historic Qianzhen Girls' College.

It was an exciting moment when 15 members of the Faculty, led by Dr. TAI, walked across the Lo Ma Chau Bridge from Hong Kong to Shenzhen. We experienced the hospitality of the Mainland pastors when we arrived at Futien Port. After about an hour's traffic venture, the delegation visited the Bible Training Centre, which is run to help train members of the congregations to serve as assistants to the pastoral ministry in Shenzhen. According to Rev. CAI Bosng, senior pastor of the Meilin Church, the number of Christians is slightly more than 300,000, i.e. around 1% of the total population in Shenzhen, while the pastors and ministers, approximately 70 in number, have been facing an overwhelmingly heavy workload. The rising trends in the size of the total congregations can be attributed to a new government policy on religions and the enthusiastic pursuit by believers of their spiritual life. Members of the congregations are therefore invited to share part of the pastoral workload. At the time of the visit, there were around 60 trainees in the classroom. They responded with full heart attention to the teachings delivered by Dr. TAI and joined in active discussions with the faculty members. The Meilin congregation used to be the largest one in the whole of China, but now it can only claim to

be the largest in Guangdong Province. The delegation proceeded to visit the Langkou Church which is adjacent to the relics of the Qianzhen Girls' College, a former ministerial base of the Tsung Tsin Mission. At the climax of the TTM ministry, all villagers of the Langkou were believers, with the exception of three families. While the Hakka tradition is still being kept at this church, the ministry of the church now extends to workers and each Sunday all seats are occupied during service. They run bible classes during summer vacation for the children of the workers, with assistance of mission teams from Hong Kong churches, demonstrating the love of Jesus in transforming life. While it was late, some members of the delegation also went to the Guanlan Church, which was rebuilt a few years ago, with the sole financial support of a member of the church. With a history of eighty years, the new building is of modern design but the most attractive feature is the red wood seating inside the church. The seats are elegant and display solemnity. Even though the Shenzhen pastors are shouldering a heavy workload, they were keen in their reception of the delegation, as Paul says, "Love one another with mutual affection; ... Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers" (Romans 12:10-13).



The faculty was warmly welcome at the Bible Training Centre



Students from the Bible Training Centre talk with Rev. Dr. Peter Li Kwong-Sang

By Rev. Dr. Carolyn Schneider

We wave goodbye as they walk away in newness of life

Four members of the faculty as LTS are leaving after the spring semester, 2015: Øystein Bjørdal, Patrick Chan Kwok-Kuen, Gabriele Hoerschelmann, and Abraham Peterson. It is not easy to say goodbye, neither for those leaving nor for those staying. Perhaps we may borrow beautiful words shared by Henri Nouwen: "From now on, wherever you go and wherever you are, all of the ground between us will be holy."¹ Below, our four faculty members reflect on the newness of life that they experienced here at LTS and give us a glimpse of the new life to which they are going next.

Rev. Øystein Bjørdal has been a visiting professor at LTS in the 2014-2015 academic year, teaching church music and liturgy and sharing responsibility for the international choir with Ms. Michelle Chiu Wai Tak. For Rev. Øystein, living in Asia was a new experience and an opportunity to learn about church and society in this part of the world. He found it inspiring to meet people from Hong Kong and from many other Asian countries at LTS. Rev. Øystein's delight in the variety of cultures on campus was matched by his delight in the variety of churches off campus. His engagements leading workshops and preaching off campus enabled him to worship with communities of a number of different traditions. Through these ecumenical experiences, he found his spiritual life expanded with a sense of freshness and openness. Recalling a Protestant principle of ecclesiology, "The Church is always reforming," Rev. Øystein adds, "As a liturgist, I believe in our traditions, but traditions have to be renewed to be alive."

¹ Henri J.M. Nouwen, *Reaching Out: The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life* (New York: Doubleday, 1975), 45. These words were spoken to Nouwen by a former student of his.

One element expresses for him such newness of life: water. As the blessed element in the sacrament of baptism, water has had powerful meaning to Rev. Øystein for years. While in Hong Kong, Rev. Øystein felt privileged to witness the baptism by full immersion in water of a woman who had grown up in a secular family in mainland China but whose life had been transformed by the Gospel. Rev. Øystein treasured the centrality of water on the campus of LTS and describes his daily walk up the 121 steps from the dormitory as a pilgrimage, passing through the round gate to the cross and the water-well out of which flows the "little Jordan River" to "little Lake Gennesaret" (the fish pond), surrounded by the cornerstones of a theological seminary (the library, chapel, offices, and classrooms).

When Rev. Øystein returns to Oslo, Norway, his new life there will be spent

Rev. Øystein rejoicing at LTS's "little Jordan River."



Carolyn Schneider

mainly with his family: his wife Oddbjørg (who was able to join him from time to time at LTS), his children, and his four grandchildren. He will also continue to serve the Church of Norway and the Norwegian Seamen's Church. He is also active in the Norwegian Mission Society, which helps to support students at LTS. So we stay connected across the miles.

Rev. Dr. Patrick Chan Kwok-Kuen has been at LTS for twenty years. He arrived in June 1995 to serve as the chaplain. As

Dr. Patrick enjoying the fish.

chaplain, he focused on caring for the students and the spiritual dimension of their lives. Not only did this involve counseling students and serving as a spiritual director for them, but it also involved organizing all worship on campus, student and faculty retreats, and field education for students in various churches. Rev. Patrick launched the "Companionship Scheme" by which more advanced students were paired with first-year students to help them adjust to life at LTS, and he met monthly with recent graduates of the seminary in order to help them through another moment of transition, the first year of ministry in a church.

When the seminary began to see spirituality as an increasingly important aspect of theological education, Rev. Patrick was often asked to teach courses in this area. So, with the arrival of LTS's current chaplain, Rev. Angus Wu Yuk-Fan, Rev. Patrick earned his D.Th. in 2009 and became a full-time professor of spirituality and pastoral care. Even though he has retired from this position, he is not really leaving LTS. He will continue to teach one course per semester in spirituality. At the same time, he and his wife will work together in the center for spirituality that they have recently opened, doing counseling, leading retreats, and teaching.

In such work, Dr. Patrick has had many opportunities to witness new life in others and in himself. He tells of a time when he was deeply troubled by something and had no energy to deal with it. He went to his office at LTS and sat with the icon of the Holy Trinity for a long time until he suddenly felt invited into fellowship with the Holy Trinity. He knew he was completely accepted and loved by God. He was not left alone to deal with the problem but was accompanied by the Holy Trinity and filled with a sense of release and empowerment.

Dr. Patrick sees this newness of life modeled by the fish in the pond at the center of campus. They reflect the beauty of God and swim so leisurely, enjoying the water, the shadows, the reflections, and each other. He recommends taking time out to watch them, to imitate them, and to be refreshed.



Carolyn Schneider

Rev. Dr. Gabriele Hoerschelmann

arrived ten years ago as a Christmas gift to LTS in 2004. Ever since, she has been teaching courses in Christian Education and in Homiletics. After her second year at LTS she gradually took on administrative responsibilities, first leadership of an accreditation process and now service in her current position as Associate Dean of Studies. All along Dr. Gabi has served on the worship committee of LTS and loves the way worship makes a space for the creative expression of faith.

Over her decade here Dr. Gabi has had the continuing joy of seeing new life burst out of its seeds and blossom as new students come and graduating students go. She uses the image of a closed seed pod to describe incoming students. When they arrive, they are a mystery. One does not know what is inside of them or what they will become, especially if they are shy or reticent in the beginning. But while they are at LTS a huge development takes place and they open up and blossom. Graduations are a rewarding time for Dr. Gabi. They are a reminder of this flow of students coming and going, and this flow will remain a part of Dr. Gabi's life. It includes all of the students and faculty who have been here at LTS and gone over the years.

Dr. Gabi amidst the flow of life at LTS



Gabriele Hoerschelmann

In July, Dr. Gabi will move to Germany to take up her new life as director with her husband of Mission EineWelt (Mission One World), the mission organization of her church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bavaria. As one of the biggest mission organizations in Germany, Mission One World is active all over the world, including here at LTS, where many students have been supported in their studies by Mission One World. In her new role Dr. Gabi looks forward to expanding what she has learned at LTS and in Asia to include other regions, too, like Africa and Latin America. She is confident that she will see many more pods open and bloom.

Mr. Abraham Peterson has been teaching English at LTS for two years, which has involved many things beyond the four core English classes. In addition, he has served as the faculty secretary as well as assisted the editor of this very LTS News magazine (English edition).

Abraham found LTS a place of continuous new life on many levels. On a personal level, Abraham's work at LTS brought him to a new country with a new language in a new role surrounded by constantly new students and colleagues. "Newness of a way of life" at LTS, he says, and adds that even on an environmental level, the greenery of To Fung Shan Road is always green. "There is no 'season of death' here, as there is in my home State of Minnesota in the

winter." He liked his office because from that location he could look down into the green valley at Shatin below and up on the other side to Ma On Shan.

Abraham with his view



Carolyn Schneider

Abraham's time at LTS has given him a better view of himself, too, and a clarity about the direction in which he would like to go in the future. He speaks about it in terms of swadharma, a word used in Hindu circles that means something like "vocation" or calling, a response to the question, "What were you created for?" Abraham thinks that part of the answer for him is to be a teacher in a spiritual community like LTS. So, when he returns to the United States, he will be applying for a doctoral program so that he can prepare himself for the life of a professor in a long-term career. Abraham is quick to caution, however, that a direction is not a plan. Sometimes God doesn't work by our plans.



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Statement of Income and expenses for the Quarter Ending 31 March 2015

Income		Expenses	
Personal Donations	\$288,172.11	Salaries and Mandatory Provident Fund	\$3,342,182.87
Church Donations	\$371,137.10	Utilities (water, cleaning and telephone)	\$32,084.00
Designated Donations	\$20,199.40	Electricity	\$96,389.20
Tuition Fees	\$3,198,660.00	Meals	\$94,790.40
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Campus Rentals	\$172,146.10	Tuition discount	\$31,605.00
Meal Fees	\$13,932.00	TEE Courses	\$28,757.80
Bank Interest	\$40,238.09	Equipment	\$13,439.00
Copying/Printing fees	\$5,681.06	Postage	\$6,760.90
Member Church Subsidies	\$10,000.00	Rates	\$149,695.00
Overseas Partner Churches & Mission Subsidies	\$1,023,380.43	Mission Education Bursaries	\$1,023,380.43
TEE Courses	\$146,280.00	Rental	\$14,550.00
Others	\$104,169.70	Library Acquisitions	\$55,614.14
		Maintenance	\$46,875.20
		Insurance	\$1,920.00
		Exchange losses	\$137,426.56
		Others	\$70,839.54
	\$6,754,333.99		\$5,201,800.21
Surplus	\$1,552,533.78		
	\$5,201,800.21		\$5,201,800.21

Coming Up (June to August)

- 6/6 A.G.M. and Inauguration Ceremony of the Martin Luther Garden
- 7/6 Graduation Service, a total of 59 graduates
- Thanksgiving, Celebrations and Farewell Dinner Party (Rev. CHAN, Dr. Gabriele Hoerschelmann and Mr. Abraham Peterson)

Looking Back (April to June)

- 1/4 Lecturers and students of the SKH Ming Hua Theological Seminary attended the Institution of the Eucharist Service which was led by Rev. Dr. LAM Chun Wai, Vice Principal of the SKH Ming Hua Theological Seminary
- 17/4 Annual Sacred Music Worship
- Commissioning Service for Graduates
- 15/5 Prof. Dr. Eve-Marie Becker (Aarhus University, Denmark) delivered the Friday Lecture, titled "What is (Christian) humility? Paul's concept in Phil 2"
- 16-24/5 Dr. Peter K.S. LI was invited by the ELCA Chinese Lutheran Church of Honolulu, Hawaii to hold an intensive course on Essence of Lutheran Dogmatics.
- 28/5-2/6 Faculty Retreat in Harbin, China.

President's Itinerary

- 19/4 Attended the Centennial Celebrations of the Hong Kong Chinese Christian Churches Union
- 21/4 Greeting Elder FU Xianwei and Director GU Mengfei
- 22/4 Greeting Rev. Ole Jacob Groevold of the Norwegian Mission and discussed on matters of co-operation.



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Economy

Lutheran Theological Seminary

- 2/5 Teaching in Shenzhen
- 3/5 To preach in the Volunteers Gathering Day of the Amazing Grace Worship Music Ministry held at LTS
- 19/5 Meeting pastors in Tuen Mun and Yuen Long areas, and shared on the ministry of LTS
- 20/5 Greeting Prof. Nehring, Chairman of the MEW, Germany
- 20/5 Greeting church leaders of the Anhwei Province
- 25/5 Greeting Miss Maaikie Wigboldus, Director of Asian Ministry, Kerk in Actie, Holland and discussed on co-operation matters
- 3/6 Attend the Dedication Service of the new building of the Fujian Theological Seminary
- 18-19/6 Visit churches in Guangzhou and the Concordia Theological Seminary with the Berlin Mission, Germany
- 20-24/6 Teaching at the Fujian Theological Seminary
- 1-2/7 Visit the churches in Beijing and the Yenjing Theological Seminary
- 4/7-11/8 Annual Leave and to attend the inauguration ceremony of Drs. Hans and Gabriele Hoerschelmann as the General Secretary of Mission One World on 17-19/7 in Germany

Faculty and Students

- 24/3 Alumnus Mr. CHAN Sau Wah (32th BTH) and his wife gave birth to a baby girl CHAN Mei Kei. Congratulations.
- 25/3 Alumnus WU Hao (36th MA(Diakonia)) and his wife gave birth to a baby girl WU Youyang. Congratulations.
- 4/4 Mr. NG Shek Fong, father of alumnus Rev. NG Kim Hung (9th MDIV) passed away in the arms of the Lord. May God console Rev. NG and his family.
- 11/4 Mr. Marco PANG (3rd yr student MDIV) married Ms. WONG Shing Yan at the ELCHK Life Lutheran Church Yuen Long. May God bless the new couple.
- 10/5 Alumnus Mr. FONG Tai Wai (32nd BTH) was ordained by the Evangelical Free Church of China as pastor. Congratulations.
- 24/5 Alumna Ms. SHEK Sau Wan (28th MDIV) was ordained by the Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong as pastor. Congratulations.
- 26/5 Alumnus Mr. CHAN Lap Yan (20th BTH) was ordained by the Daybreak Church as pastor. Congratulations.

TEE News

- 25/4 The TEE Alumni Association held a retreat day camp with 11 alumni attended. All enjoyed the sharing and devotion while Dr. Nicholas TAI led a tour around the campus to bring further insights into the spiritual connotations of the campus design.
- 8/5 A seminar on "When is the time of sorrow and despair? Ways to show concern upon suicidal subjects and their families." together with the briefing session on the Diploma Course on Help Oneself and Help Others - Companion Counselling" was held with Elder Dr. MAK Ki Yan shared his experience. There were about 100 attendants.
- 27/6 One day trip to Lamma Island. Details to be announced in due course. All TEE students, alumni and families are welcome to join.

Staff News

- 11/5 Ms. Olivia CHEUNG, Deputy Director of the Development Department left the post. Thanks to her past service with the Seminary.

