

LTS

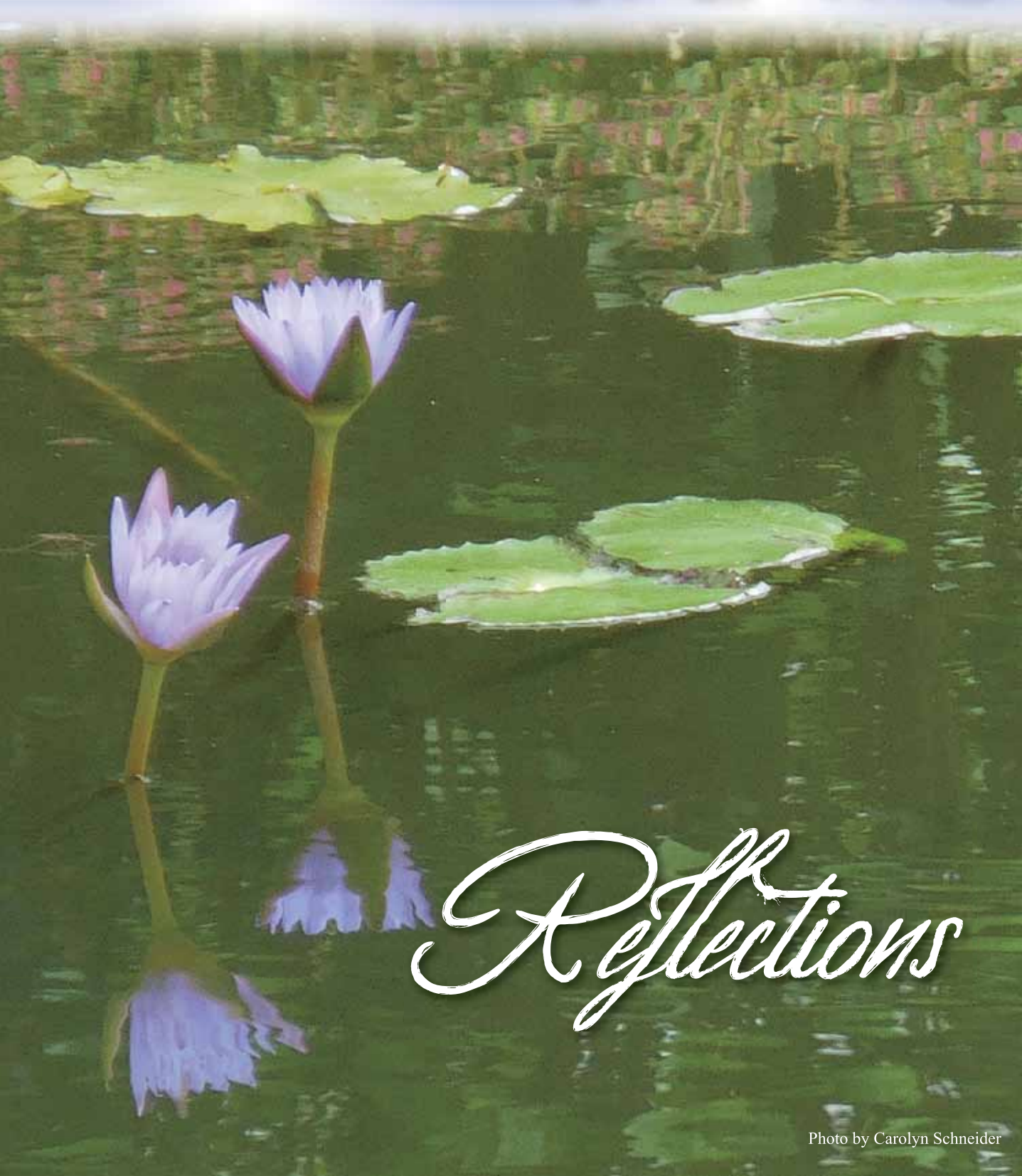
Hong Kong, Easter 2017, No. 95

信義宗神學院

LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



NEWS



Reflections

Photo by Carolyn Schneider

Editorial

The photo on the cover of this Easter issue is of the lotuses growing in the fishpond at the center of LTS's lovely campus. The lotus has a long history as a religious symbol in both Hinduism and Buddhism. It was also adopted by Syriac-speaking Christians in Asia many centuries ago. The material remains of ancient Christian art in India, Central Asia, and China, among other places, often contain images of the cross emerging from a lotus flower.

The roots of the lotus are submerged under muddy water. But out of them grows a beautiful flower that rises above the water. The nature of the lotus and the way it grows seemed to our Christian ancestors to summarize from many angles the nature of Christ and his work of salvation for us. They saw God the Son taking flesh at Jesus' birth and being planted deeply into this world, enclosed in the muck of our sin on the cross and in the tomb. But then they saw him rise and bloom in glory, taking with him all those who have died with him under the water of baptism and now rise with him in glory.

The theme of this issue, "Reflections", comes from Paul's reflections on the lotus-like Christ in 2 Corinthians 3:18, "And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit."

On pages 4-5, alumna Mailin Josi-Dorothea Arlt finds reflections of Christ in those who suffer and in our responses to them. On pages 6-7 LTS Assistant Professor Ms. Po Chu Groenvold points to the work of service done for others by many of our alumni in many places. On pages 8-9 Dr. Wayne Nieminen describes opportunities for students to broaden their academic experience and exposure to the global church through partnerships that LTS has with other institutions, and Piano Chow writes about her experiences in Norway. On pages 10-11 we say goodbye to Dr. Wayne and Pastor Christa von Zychlin, two wonderful reflections of Christ. On pages 12-13 you can read about events at LTS commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, when Christian theology was re-centered on the saving work of Christ.

I thank those of you who have contributed to this issue, particularly Mailin Josi-Dorothea Arlt, Piano Chow, and Rev. James San Aung, Mission Director of the Myanmar Lutheran Church (not an alumnus of LTS but an avid reader of the "LTS News"!). As always, I invite contributions from any of you, our dear readers.

Carolyn Schneider

Editor: Carolyn Schneider
Assistant Editor & Layout: Sophie Chuek
Publisher: Simon Chow
Mailing Address: Lutheran Theological Seminary, 50 To Fung Shan Road, Shatin, Hong Kong S.A.R., China
Telephone: 852-2691-1520
Website: http://www.lts.edu/2013/e_main.php#0008A
Email: cmschneider@lts.edu

Statement of Purpose:

Published three times a year, the LTS News, English edition, is a newsletter for local and global alumni/ae and friends of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Hong Kong. Through stories about people and events at LTS, it aims to connect readers and create a sense of belonging to a broad LTS community even beyond graduation.

To make a donation toward the publication of the LTS News, there are three methods. You will receive an official receipt through any of these methods.

1. A check in HK\$, payable to The Lutheran Theological Seminary, may be sent to the mailing address above.
2. A deposit may be made to Dah Sing Bank, Account number 040-645-701-23889. Please send the deposit slip to The Lutheran Theological Seminary at the mailing address above.
3. A check in US\$, payable to Friends of LTS/USA & Canada may be sent to Mimi Borchers, 160 Third Street, Ste 102, Pittsburg, CA 94565, USA.

Reflections seen around campus:



*Left: Ms. Yang Ying-nong Cleaning the library - photo by Robby Indarjono



Right: Sunny Chan painting the cross - Photo by Robby Indarjono

Reflections from Myanmar:

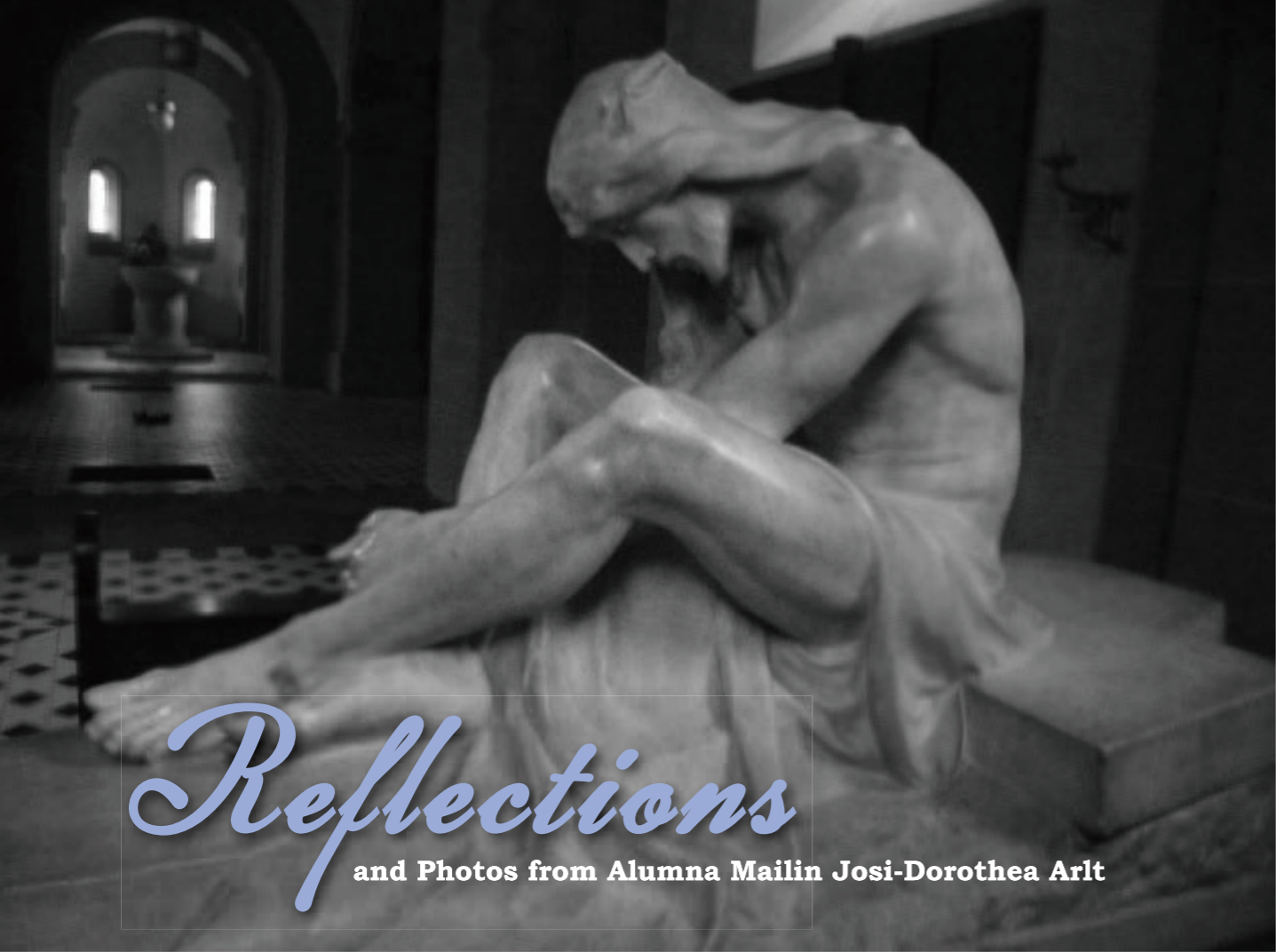


*(From top Left to Right)

1. 2016 First Christmas Celebration at Hmaw Bi Township02
2. Bible students from LBTI presented Christmas Song with all their heart on 17th December 2016
3. Rev. James shared to the Community on 16 December 2016 that Christmas is for all people
4. Fellowship meal with local authority at Christmas
5. MLC Youth Carol Singing at Buddhist's House 19th December 2016



One of our readers, Rev. James San Aung, Mission Director for the Myanmar Lutheran Church, responded to the invitation by the "LTS News" to send stories and photos. Above is the photo-story of a Christmas celebration by the Hmaw Bi Township with representatives of the Myanmar Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Bible Training Institute. "One hundred and sixty-three people came together for this wonderful celebration," writes Rev. James San Aung. "Please kindly pray for us too so that the different lives to be touched and reached by the Lord through our sharing during Christmas."

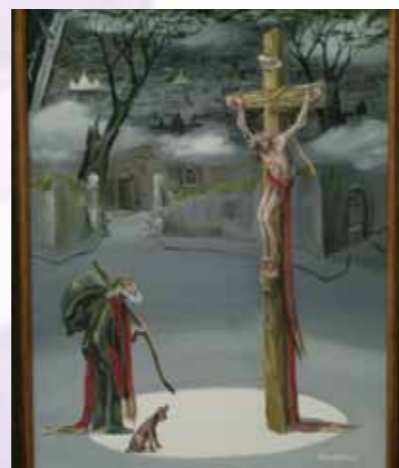


Reflections

and Photos from Alumna Mailin Josi-Dorothea Arlt

Mailin came from Germany to study at LTS in the 2014-2015 academic year. She left with many good experiences and insights, especially in the “eyes of the heart”. Mailin found that being outside of her country at LTS in Hong Kong, where she had many conversations with people about being Christian in various countries, caused her to ask what being Christian means in her own context, a question she had never asked herself before. Recently she wrote to share some photos and reflections, tying together her time of learning at LTS with her present life.

In September 2016, Mailin made a study trip to Rome for a seminar on building relations between churches. While there, she was struck by this painting made by an atheist posing a good question:



Mailin says, “On it you see the big Rome at night ... And the cross of Christ outside ... and the person who looks at him seems not

to know who he is. Maybe ... we've forgotten about the real Christ ... Love ... and serving”

At LTS, Mailin’s courses in Diakonia with Ms. Po-Chu Groenvold made a lasting impression on her, grounding her deeply in the image of Christ that emerges from Matthew 25, especially verse 40: “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.” That is what Mailin thought of when she saw this sculpture of Saint John of God at the Basilica of San Bartolomeo all-Isola.



Mailin says, “He cared for the sick ... and I liked this picture because I feel the person in his arms look like many pictures of Christ (to

think of Mt 25). The person we help may be Christ himself. And we even don't know.” She reflects further that at different times we are both the carriers and the carried. Mailin remains grateful to all the Saint Johns at LTS who talked and prayed with her, or simply shared a kind word and smile that carried her through when she was at her limits.

Back in her home town of Würzburg, Mailin took this photo of an early 20th-century sculpture called “Jesus at Rest.”



It was very important in her "faith biography". At a time when she was not a Christian, she went with her school's art class to the church where this sculpture is to paint.“ I really loved it,” she says. “Until today I go there ... just to look at him and to pray.” Now that Mailin is a Christian and carries inside memories of seminary in Hong Kong, this sculpture takes on an even fuller meaning for her. She connects two experiences of Hong Kong in particular with this piece of art. The first is worshiping at Christ Temple at Tao Fung Shan Christian Center, right next to LTS. Mailin writes about the rest and peace she felt there: “It felt so good, especially Friday morning Eucharist, just to take time to rest and meditate over scripture texts. To sit together and to be as I am. After listening to God, to listen to each other ... and to have real conversations. Always very bad things happen in the world, but there is this small little moment, this tiny spot, when we see each other, and we feel seen by Him. That means Home, probably.” A second restful moment of “home” came for her in a visit to Cheung Chau island with another LTS alumna, Denise Mountain, just at the end of her time at LTS. Surrounded by the sea, “There was a feeling of freedom, and the wide horizon.”

By Ms. Po Chu Groenvold
Assistant Professor of Diakonia at LTS

ALUMNI IN SERVICE

Kind, gentle, helpful and caring is how I would describe Chan, Chee Keong Eric, our alumnus who graduated in 2015 with an M. A. in Diakonia. After the graduation, he returned to his previous ministry, pastoring in the Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer in Singapore. He himself is a Malaysian.

November 12, 2016, while I was attending a conference in Thailand, I received a Whatsapp message from Eric, "Mrs. Po Chu, I am on my way to Myanmar to teach Diakonia." I replied to him, "I will pray for you, and I am very proud of you!" He wrote back, "Thank you...I truly want to promote the true spirit of Diakonia as inspired by you." I responded, "I am so happy because my former student has become a teacher! This is the dream of every teacher."

The rest of the correspondence helped me to understand that the invitation was initiated by Van Biak Muan, a lecturer at Tahan Theological College (TTC). He had gotten to know Eric while they were both students at LTS. TTC is located in Chin State, one of two Christian states in Myanmar. The College has 105 students and 8 lecturers. Eric was invited to teach an introduction to Diakonia. The invitation was well received by Eric's church. Bringing the church's blessing with him, Eric reached out to Myanmar to share his knowledge of and passion for Diakonia with the future leaders of this church.

How did it go? This is how Eric described it: "Although the teaching was 8 hours in total only, I spent lots of time outside the

classroom answering students' questions. It was also my first time to teach outside Singapore and so a very good experience and exposure for me. I witnessed their hunger for knowing more about Diakonia, and the whole faculty looks forward to engage in Diakonia too."

During the whole time, Eric stayed in a hotel, as foreigners are not allowed to stay privately. Yet, he was warmly received by the seminary and especially by Muan. It is probably not going to be his last trip teaching outside Singapore. TTC has asked him to return next year to teach a more in-depth course on Diakonia.

How do I feel? I am thrilled and grateful to the Lord for what is happening between LTS's alumni. How beautiful it is to see that they are networking with each other and empowering each other!



*Tahan Theological College - photo by Muan



*Eric and the first year students at TTC - photo by Muan



*Eric and the final year students at TTC - photo by Muan

LTS

Cooperation and Exchange

By Dr. Wayne Nieminen, Associate Dean

For many years LTS has been engaged in partnerships and exchanges with theological institutions, ecclesiastical bodies, and universities in various parts of the world. International partnership and cooperation agreements make it possible for our school to be involved with the global church and to host visiting scholars who provide both faculty and students with a wide range of cultural and theological perspectives.

Since 1995, through cooperation with the China Christian Council, select students from Chinese seminaries and universities have come to study at LTS. Through the development of various masters degree programs (for example, the Diakonia program), the number of Mainland Chinese students has gradually increased. In the same year, an agreement was formed with the Association of Theological Schools in Myanmar (ATEM) and since then a large number of Myanmar students have studied in our masters and doctor of theology degree programs with the goal of helping to strengthen the faculties of the many seminaries in Myanmar.

LTS has also been training students from the Mekong river basin, including Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Thailand, as well as other Southeast Asian countries, such as Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia. The presence of these students immensely enriches the academic and community life of LTS! Such international students return to their home countries with huge insights from their time in Hong Kong and help to build bridges across the globe.

At the present, official agreements of cooperation exist with MF – the Norwegian School of Theology; Friedrich-Alexander University, Erlangen; China Lutheran Seminary; Protestant Theological University, Netherlands; Westfälische Wilhelms University, Munster; and Georg August University, Göttingen. Other expanding

relationships include: Vitenskapelig Internasjonal Diakonal (VID) – Specialized University, Norway; Sabah Theological Seminary, Malaysia; HKBP Theological Institute, Indonesia; and two Lutheran Seminaries in the USA (Luther Seminary, St. Paul, and the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago).

Here is a story from Piano Chow Yue Kam, a current LTS student who has taken the opportunity to participate in the cooperative program with VID – the Specialized University, in Norway.

Hello, everyone! I am now in Norway!

Thank God for giving me this chance to study here in VID Specialized University, Oslo. It is a joy to understand the country through the lessons and also the real experience of living here! For example, in a course on the Norwegian welfare state, we learnt that Norway is a social democratic regime. Social rights are emphasized and social policies have a higher priority than other policies. “What is a good life?” is a basic way of thinking of the government and policy planners. Statistic results show a relatively low unemployment rate, high satisfaction of life, and a low rate of inequality. Living here, I can feel there is trust between people, government and the system.

Somehow I think of Hong Kong when I was young; there was trust between Hong Kong people and the government, and it was a core value of Hong Kong people. Prosperity may not necessarily give rise to trust, but love and caring do. How would our society be if everyone believed that they would not be forsaken even if they got into trouble or a bad situation? I think of Ms. Elsie Hume Elliot Tu, who kept on fighting for justice and against corruption for the sake of Hong Kong people, and contributed to the establishment of ICAC (the Independent Commission against Corruption). Diaconal work should not be limited to serving vulnerable groups, it can also appear at the structural level of the

society. Diakonia means “Go-between”, go between different communities in our role as servants of God and our neighbors.

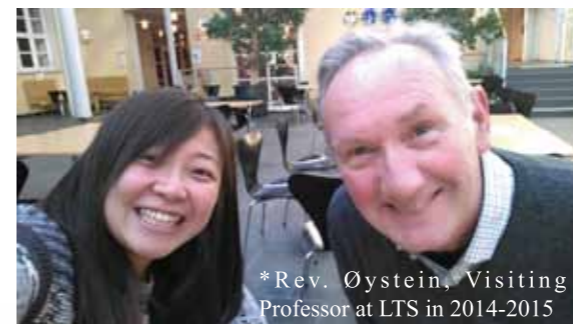
It is wonderful to have classmates from different countries, especially those from Africa. In a lesson called “Use your talents” I was impressed by the creative development projects that my classmates had done for their community. One student did a project about bees, since people in his community are poor, not many children like to go to school, and their parents also want them to stay at home and do farm work or housework. So the church members sat together and discussed this situation. Someone suggested that they could try to attract bees to live in the forest nearby, and then get the honey and sell it, so it could help to develop the micro economy. And because the honey is tasty, more children are willing to go to school in order to have a spoon of honey.

When I look at those brothers and sisters of Africa, I am grateful that God has given them and every one of us different talents, so that we can be a blessing to others. I think that if we, students and professors in LTS, take time to sit

together and discuss what we can do to serve the community, we will discover that God has already given us a lot of resources to serve.

I have also been so happy to see Johan and Arnstein, two Norwegian exchange students at LTS two years ago. They brought me to have a BBQ in the forest! It was fantastic!!! Sitting in a white and cold world, around the fire and hot dogs, talking and laughing, so grateful that I could experience such a Norwegian culture!

This country sent out numerous missionaries to China and the missionaries offered their whole life in China and shared the gospel and love with Chinese. Even our seminary was greatly supported by the mission organization of Norway. That made me long to see this country and people (and also I want to catch a salmon, haha!). Finally, I am here! Give thanks with a grateful heart! I also want to say thank you to Dr. Wayne, Rev. Wu, Rev. Øystein and two little flowers, for they encouraged me and helped me all along the way of application. It would be super nice if more and more students from LTS can have chances for exchange, since the world of God is so big, colorful and amazing!



*Rev. Øystein, Visiting Professor at LTS in 2014-2015



*Johan and Arnstein



BBQ in the Forest

Farewell to Wayne Nieminen and Christa von Zychlin

Pastor Christa and Dr. Wayne love the beauty of Mrs. Cheung's garden at LTS. (See the article about Mrs. Cheung in LTS News, No. 90, Pentecost 2015.) - Photo by Carolyn Schneider

Wayne Nieminen and Christa von Zychlin arrived in Hong Kong on New Year's Eve, December 31, 2008, with their youngest son, Eric, who was in secondary school at that time. They still remember their amazement at seeing the city lights soaring skyward on their way from the airport to To Fung Shan Road. This summer, they will be flying in the other direction as they leave LTS to head back to the United States.

They graciously gave the "LTS News" a farewell interview responding to three questions.

1. What were your responsibilities at LTS over the years? 2. What were some of the highlights

of your experience here? 3. Where are you going now and what will you be doing?

Pastor Christa

For the first 2 ½ years in Hong Kong, I taught English to children and adults using the theory that language is elicited from people, not taught to them. I have appreciated that idea and learned from it. I found that it applied well to the two courses I taught after I began working at LTS: Introduction to Pastoral Formation, and Stewardship.

Six months after arriving in Hong Kong, I began to serve as a sacramental minister at

Truth Lutheran Church in Ma On Shan, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong (ELCHK).

In 2011, I started my work at LTS as the Coordinator of International Student Affairs and Assistant Coordinator of the Mekong Mission Forum Network Implementation Committee. It has been a privilege to work with international students at LTS and to help develop short-term continuing education events in the Mekong region.

In 2013 I became a student at LTS, too, working toward a DMin in the area of Diakonia. The title of my dissertation is "This Is My Beloved Daughter - Listen to Her": Diaconal Empowerment through Contextual Bible Study among Marginalized Women of the Mekong." One of the highlights of my time here has been participating in the first women's conferences in the Mekong region, in partnership with others from the Mekong Mission Forum. It is so beautiful, worth all the effort, to see the biblical texts become part of a living conversation pertinent to the lives of people today.

Another highlight has been the intercultural atmosphere of LTS. I love the intercultural make-up of the classes and the times when international students lead worship and share their faith.

When we return to the U.S. we will be engaged in parish ministry because we are neither old enough nor rich enough to retire yet! I am looking forward to experiencing the work of God in a local congregation through the rhythms of parish life.

Dr. Wayne

At LTS I have been teaching Pastoral Care and Counseling, with a focus on marriage and family counseling, although I have grown in experience by stretching into other areas, too, such as crisis counseling and dealing with issues of domestic violence. It was new for me to be able to work on specifically Christian counseling and discernment. In all, I taught thirteen different courses,

seven tutorials, and guided several MTh, DTh, and DMin students through their theses. Teaching classes with such a great mix of students from Hong Kong, mainland China, and Southeast Asia has been a highlight for me. The discussion was thrilling, and I loved introducing the students to some of the well-organized social service institutions in Hong Kong.

It has also been a pleasure for me to see our alums at their best and leading well. For instance, last month I visited Myanmar for a Minister's Institute on Marriage Counseling. There were forty people there, half of them men and half of them women. There was great conversation between them, especially when one of our alumni, Rev. Muan, after traveling a long distance, introduced the participants to his marriage enrichment program, the theme of his thesis at LTS. He taught in Burmese and got people excited about implementing his program. I was also able to watch Dr. Saw Christopher, now the Vice-President of Karen Baptist Theological Seminary in Yangon, introduce his model of care for internally displaced Karen people.

Back in Hong Kong, I have enjoyed hiking! In *The Idiot*, Fyodor Dostoevsky wrote, "Beauty shall save the world." Going up into the hills, I believe it. There is beauty also in the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, the Arts Festival, and the variety of cuisines in Hong Kong.

During these eight years in Hong Kong, I have been serving as the sacramental pastor at Tin Yiu Life Church of the ELCHK. I look forward to serving full-time in a parish, being involved in people's lives at a deep level and earning their trust. I am excited about having regular Bible studies, doing pre-marital and marital counseling, and visiting people in their homes and work places.

We do not know exactly where we are going, but, as someone once said, "Abraham and Sarah left not knowing where they were going - a sure sign that they were going the right way."

By Dr. Carolyn Schneider

LTS Marks the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

In 2017 churches and seminaries around the world are commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. In those five hundred years the Reformation has spread globally beyond Germany and ecumenically beyond Lutheran circles. A number of events that explore various facets of the Reformation will be happening on the campus of LTS, with partnership in planning and participation not limited to Lutherans or to Hong Kong. You are certainly invited to come and experience any of the following activities, which will be in English or in Chinese with an English translation.

Fall semester, 2017

Stroll around the campus at any time to see the words of the various Reformers posted everywhere for you to read and ponder. Then, step into the library to follow-up with further research and to see the exhibition described above.

Spring and Fall semesters 2017

In 2017 churches and seminaries around the world are commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. In those five hundred years the Reformation has spread globally beyond Germany and ecumenically beyond Lutheran circles. A number of events that explore various facets of the Reformation will be happening on the campus of LTS, with partnership in planning and participation not limited to Lutherans or to Hong Kong. You are certainly invited to come and experience any of the following activities, which will be in English or in Chinese with an English translation.

15 September, 2017

Come to the LTS chapel at 11:00 to learn about the music of the Reformation and to sing the hymns that came out of it, composed by Lutheran as well as Catholic, Reformed, and Anglican composers

22 September 2017

At LTS's Ming Chieh chapel, from 10:30-12:30, Dr. Jeff Shu will lecture on "Rethinking Sola scriptura from the Perspectives of Psychoanalysis and Spirituality." This lecture is in cooperation with Tao Fung Shan Christian Center.

20-21 October 2017

The Annual Theological Lecture will be given in Ming Chieh chapel on Friday morning, 10:30-12:30, by Luther scholar, Dr. Timothy Wengert, on "Investigating the 95 Theses after Five Hundred Years". Wengert will also lecture on Saturday; the time is still to be decided. Please check <http://www.lts.edu> for details about this and about the related lecture by Dr. Peter Li Kwong-Sang on Friday evening.

23-24 October 2017

In cooperation with Ming Hua College (Anglican), LTS hosts a conference on the topic of "Justification by Faith in the Context of Asia". A range of speakers will address the question of how the doctrine of justification by grace through faith alone can be relevant for people in East Asia today. The conference begins at 9 am on Monday, 23 October, and ends at 15:30 on Tuesday, 24 October. All sessions are held in Ming Chieh chapel. A detailed schedule will be available on the LTS website when the fall semester begins. Registration is free. To arrange for meals or for further details, contact Mr. Paul Lau (officeadmin@lts.edu). Lodging must be arranged independently.

10 November 2017

At LTS's Ming Chieh chapel, from 10:30-12:30, Dr. Chan Kam-Kuen will lecture on "A Psychological Perspective on Freedom of a Christian". This lecture is in cooperation with Tao Fung Shan Christian Center.

1 December 2017

At LTS's Ming Chieh chapel, from 10:30-12:30, Dr. Carolyn Schneider will lecture on "Lutheran Spirituality." This lecture is in cooperation with Tao Fung Shan Christian Center.



Tharo and Sui Lian Thang present the doctrine of justification in rap style during chapel this spring semester



E	POSTAGE PAID HONG KONG	PERMIT NO. 6119
---	------------------------------	-----------------------

LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Economy

Coming Up

- 4/6 The 39th Graduation Service. May God bless his servants.
- 5/6 Graduation Banquet.
- 7-11/6 Faculty Retreat. May the peace from God be with us.

Looking back

- 7/4 There was almost 1000 person join the Annual Sacred Music Worship Service" Call to sing a new song! "
- 28/4 Completing Friday Lecture" Urban Mission in Hong Kong: a Panel Discussion " speaking by Rev. Yau Tung Leung and Rev. Burny Lam smoothly.
- 13/5 2017 Bible Reading Day Camp" The World of Revelation "was completed.

Special News: Dissertation Defense

- 15/12 Jhon Pieter Simorangkir successfully defended his dissertation, "Lutheran Identity of Batak Churches: A Study of the Confession of Faith of the HKBP and the Basic Articles of Faith of the GKPI" .



*(Left to Right)Dr. Jan Depner, Dr. Andreas Nehring, Jhon Pieter Simorangkir | Photos by Robby Indarjono

President's Itinerary

- 18-22/3 Attending ATESEA meeting.

*Pres. Simon Chow with LTS alums at the ATESEA meeting in the Philippines
- photographer unknown



- 17-23/4 Invited to teaching Revelation in team retreat at Lutheran Church in Malaysia. Preaching and promoting LTS at Ipoh.
- 10-11/5 Invited to preaching at revival conference by LTS partner, Holy Light Theological Seminary in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.
- 6/6 After visiting Finland, visit difference partners in Europe and will be back to Hong Kong at the end of June.

Staff News

- 4/6 Assistant Editor Sophie Chuek left the post. Thanks to her past service and may the Lord bless her.