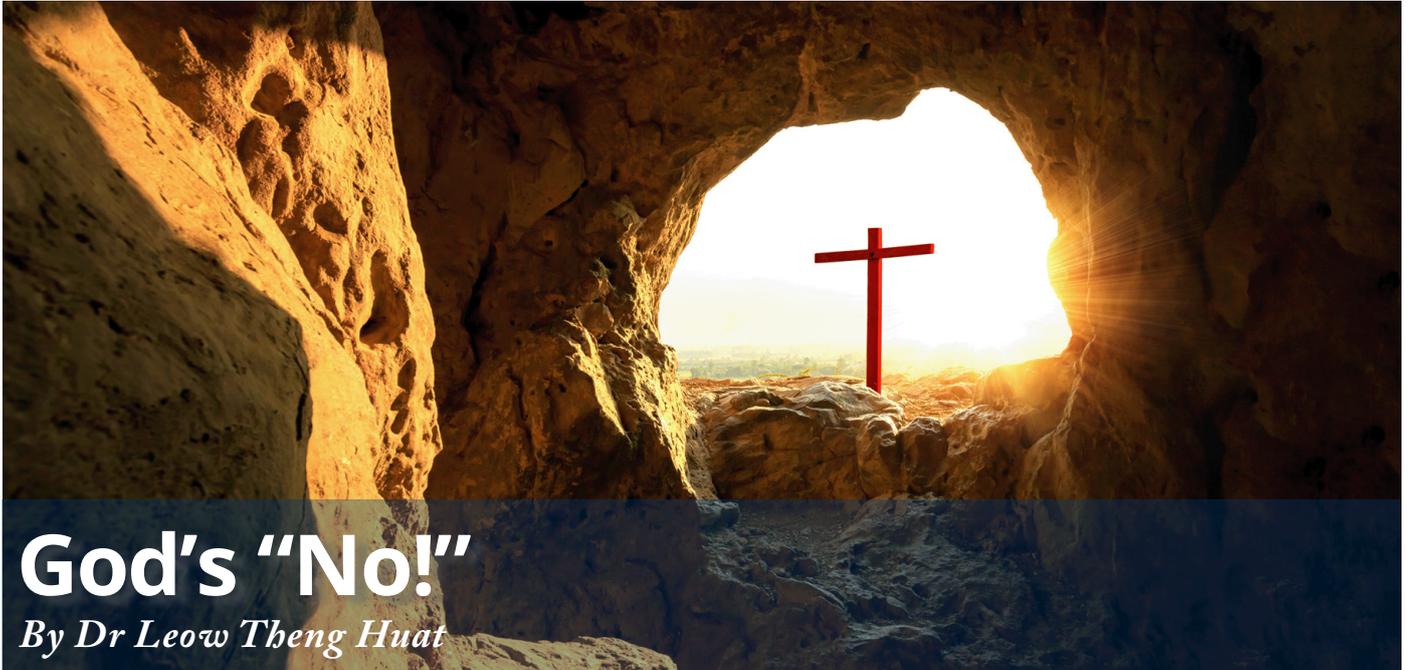


APR-JUL 2024

TRUMPET

VIEWS AND NEWS FROM TRINITY THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

MCI (P) 083/03/2024



God's "No!"

By Dr Leow Theng Huat

Injustice is a Reality

The human being can live under very severe conditions. But if there is something we find difficult to live with, it is injustice. When we look at situations where the evil prosper and the good suffer, something inside screams, "No!"

Life, however, teaches us that injustice happens. Many places in our world see those in authority abuse their power to oppress the people and enrich themselves. These evildoers have little to worry about. They are so powerful that few would dare call them to account. We are also familiar with the injustice which lurks in our workplaces, schools and homes. Those in charge might behave like a tyrant. The strong seem to enjoy bullying those who cannot fight back. We are painfully aware of blatant favouritism being practiced.

Propelled by our yearning for justice, we might have tried to put things right. At great personal risk, we attempted to speak truth to power and stand up for the weak. At the end of the day, however, nothing seems to have changed. The unscrupulous continue to be rewarded, while those who play by the rules suffer.

These experiences of injustice affect us profoundly. We might fall into despair, as we resign ourselves to a reality in which evil wins.

...continued on page 2

INSIDE

The Church and Our Faculty's Vocation

We Are Not A Company

Upholding Truth in a Post-Truth World

Equipping Christians for Discipleship and Mission

Student Council 2024

Inter-College Games 2024



Some of us might even descend into cynicism. We are tired of being that fool who suffers for doing the right thing. We decide to switch sides. We begin to welcome evil and injustice when they benefit us.

Injustice at Its Worst

This rather depressing article has recounted instances of injustice. There is one more to mention. It is an occurrence of evil worse than anything else our world has seen. It took place on that first Good Friday.

Christians proclaim Jesus of Nazareth a unique figure. He is the second member of the Holy Trinity. Jesus is the eternal and almighty God who has humbled himself and come to live amongst us as a fellow human being.

How did we respond to this momentous visit of our eternal and almighty God? We gave him a fine welcome. We put him on trial in a kangaroo court, which pronounced a guilty verdict on the most innocent of human beings. We brayed for his blood when Pontius Pilate tried to release him. We mercilessly mocked this God of ours. We whipped him. We made him carry a heavy cross. We nailed him to this cross and left him to hang there until he died. We lowly and sinful creatures welcomed our good and gracious God by humiliating him in public, torturing him with refined cruelty and finally murdering him in cold blood.

If there was ever a time for despair and cynicism, that first Good Friday was it. The greatest evil has been committed, but there seemed to be no consequences. The perpetrators of this crime celebrated their victory over the hapless Jesus. Those who cried out for Jesus' blood and those who tortured him mercilessly returned to their normal lives after the saga ended. More inexplicably, God the Father was silent as this horrendous travesty of justice unfolded. All this while, Jesus' mutilated body lay stone-cold dead. If this most horrendous of evils can go by unaccounted for, what hope do we have that things would ever change?

God Speaks

But Jesus' story did not end on Good Friday. God the Father might have been silent thus far. But he finally spoke on Easter Sunday. He spoke by raising Jesus

from the dead. In doing so, he spoke a resounding "No!" to the evils of Good Friday.

The resurrection of Jesus tells us what God truly thinks about the evil in our world. God is not okay with it or "chill" about it. God is, in fact, angry. He is determined to overcome it. By raising Jesus from the dead, God the Father says, "No! I will not allow my Son to remain dead, because this is an unacceptable outcome. I will not allow injustice to prevail and evil to have the final word. With my almighty power, I will overcome the effects of evil. Both the righteous and the evildoers will receive justice. I will put everything right!"

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If there was ever a time for despair and cynicism, that first Good Friday was it.

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In the person of the resurrected Jesus, God gives us a preview of what the end will be like. It is an end where even the most meticulously planned evil will be thwarted and its effects undone. It is an end where the celebration of the evildoers will turn to mourning.

It is an end where the righteous will be vindicated and exalted. The resurrection of Jesus tells us that this world will not forever remain as it is. In the end, there will be the new heavens and new earth, the home of righteousness.

In a world where we encounter incessant episodes of injustice, what prevents us from succumbing to despair and even becoming cynical? Where do we find the encouragement to do what is right, fight for justice and try to change things for the better? We find it ultimately in the "No!" that God spoke on that first Easter Sunday, as seen in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The resurrection assures us that those who "hunger and thirst for righteousness" will be filled. They are on the winning side, whether it seems like it or not.

Because God has said, "No!", we too can say, "No!" As Easter people, may we say it loud and clear! ❖



Dr Leow Theng Huat
Lecturer in Theology

The Church and Our Faculty's Vocation

The church as an institution is an ecology of giftings and ministries. Believers are initiated into the church through baptism by the one Spirit, worship the one God and Father of all, and follow the one Lord Jesus Christ. Sharing a common faith, the calling of Christians, as members of Christ's body, is expressed through diverse, Spirit-empowered giftings and ministries.

According to the apostle Paul, teachers, along with apostles, prophets and shepherds, are given by Christ to the church "to equip the saints for the work of ministry" and "for building up the body of Christ" (Eph 4:12). Granted, TTC is not a church in the institutional sense. Nevertheless, we are governed by our Governing Churches and thus exist as an extension of their ministries. As such, it is important to appreciate the vocation of the TTC faculty as teachers gifted by God for the nurture of the church. Several considerations follow in the light of this ecclesial context.

First, the faculty's calling. A potential faculty's vocation is to be co-discerned with the church and seminary leadership. The necessity of ecclesial discernment means that Christians who are considering a teaching position at TTC will need to be tried and tested in a church community for their character, giftings and commitment to Christ.

There is something unfitting and unsettling about a Christian scholar who trains future leaders of the church in a seminary but who is not committed and accountable to a local church. Obtaining a doctorate in a theological discipline is a significant but insufficient condition for employment at TTC. The church's confirmation of a believer's inward call and endorsement of that call are of critical importance in discerning the faculty's vocation.

Second, the faculty's competence. Seminaries are only as effective as the quality of lecturers they employ. The highest level of academic competence and integrity are to be expected of a faculty member. There is no divide or inconsistency between reason and faith, or learning and godliness.

Members of TTC's faculty are both accomplished scholars who have obtained doctorates from leading academic institutions, and servants of Christ in their churches and the wider Christian community. While each faculty member is a subject expert in their field of theological research, their scholarship is aimed at the service of God and the maturing of Christ's church.

Third, the faculty's commission. At the opening chapel service of every academic year, the TTC faculty renew their commitment to the ministry of teaching to which they were commissioned. Gathered before the presence of God and the college community, each faculty member promises to continue "in prayer and study", "teaching in accordance with Holy Scripture and the ecumenical creeds of the church", "patterning...(their) lives" after "the teachings of Christ and so provide a wholesome example to the students...." The substance of the faculty's commission makes clear the ecclesial context of their vocation at TTC.

Fourth, the faculty's continuity. Similar to discerning the faculty's calling, the raising up of new faculty is a ministry that is undertaken in partnership with the church. In the Dec 2023 edition of the Trumpet, I indicated in passing that the college is supporting five persons, faculty-in-development, who are undergoing doctoral studies across four theological disciplines. All five are endorsed and supported by their sending churches in partnership with TTC for their advanced studies and subsequent service at the college.

The strong church-TTC partnership in the ministry of teaching augurs well for the future. It evidences a healthy, symbiotic relationship between church and seminary. It also signals the seriousness with which these sending churches regard the stewardship of teachers as God's gift for the growth of the church. May God multiply the fruits of this partnership and the teaching ministry of theological educators so that the church of Jesus Christ may be built up and attain to "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph 4:13). ❖

We Are Not a Company

By Rev Dr Chiang Ming Shun

When I was serving as a pastor in a church, I was very much struck by the pastor and author John Piper's 2002 book, *Brothers, We Are Not Professionals*. John Piper dramatically argues that pastors "are being killed by the professionalizing of the pastoral ministry". He rails against "cultural expectations of professionalism", "the pride of station" and "the borrowing of paradigms from the professional world". He longs instead "for radically Bible-saturated, God-centered, Christ-exalting, self-sacrificing, mission-mobilizing, soul-saving, culture-confronting pastors". Piper quotes Methodist pastor Edward McKendree Bounds, "The preacher...is not a professional man; his ministry is not a profession; it is a divine institution, a divine devotion".

While I largely agree with the general thrust of Piper's argument, I think the problem these days is not so much the professionalisation of ministry but the corporatisation of the Church.

By this I do not mean that good management and governance are unimportant or unnecessary. John Wimberly has shown clearly in *The Business of the Church: The Uncomfortable Truth that Faithful Ministry requires Effective Management* that... well, the title says it all. Modern churches and congregations are complex and require good

management and leadership. In Singapore, the requirement for effective management is enshrined in a Code of Governance for Charities and Institutions of a Public Character which churches have to adhere to. Churches are required by the Code to submit a Governance Evaluation Checklist that the public can view. Transparent, effective management is a good thing.

I also do not mean that businesses should be neglected. I heartily affirm that we should be good stewards in business and that the Kingdom of God must be proclaimed in the marketplace. "Business" is not a dirty word. Gea Gort and Mats Tunehag have written about the Business as Mission (BAM) global movement to integrate business with mission. They give inspiring

stories about how Christians from all over the



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Many corporate-minded individuals in churches believe they can run God's house better with practices learned from business principles instead of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit.

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world have been able to use their businesses to share the gospel not just in innovative ways but in challenging situations. They show how businesses can be shaped for God and for the common good. Our God is the God of business and the marketplace.

By corporatisation I mean the adoption of a business mindset that makes only financially-based decisions in the church and not faith-based ones. What I object to is the unthinking, wholesale adoption of secular business practices in churches without considering whether these are appropriate or even Christian in nature and effect. So the human resource board of a church offered staff salaries below the market rate not because that church could not afford them but because the board wanted to see if desperate applicants would be willing to take less. This may be what companies do but is it what a church should do? How is this being generous, gracious and Christ-like?

In 2017 Edwin Alston submitted to Liberty University's School of Divinity his doctoral project entitled "*Corporatization of the Church Compromises Christian's Priorities, Purpose, and Practices*". Writing about churches in America and drawing on the work of a wide range of researchers, Alston argues that a corporate mindset focuses on the church and not on Christ. So the church is built up as a corporation or a business-making enterprise at the expense of ministry. Policy, structure, finances, branding, according to secular models, these become key, and the building up of God's Kingdom using God's methods is sidelined. As Alston put it, "Many corporate-minded individuals in churches believe they can run God's house better with practices learned from business principles instead of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit".

We do need inspiring, sacrificing and competent church workers, missionaries and pastors. We need lay people embedded in the marketplace who are able to draw out the best from secular models and practices. We need them to be skilled not just in handling the Word, in motivating and shepherding people, but also in managing churches, missions and programmes. All I am saying is that we have to be careful in using the methods of the world uncritically. The world has much to teach the Church, but the

churches should adapt business practices and not just adopt them. Can churches make these practices better for use? What should best practices in the church look like? We have to find our own Christian way.

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Yes, in Luke 16:8 we are told, "The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness" and we should be shrewd. But remember what Isa 55:8-9 says:

8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord.

9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Let's think about what God's



ways are. God's ways can include some modern management and business practices. But we have to keep asking ourselves, "How can we be counter-cultural when we uncritically accept prevailing business culture in churches? How can we hope to change the world if we blindly follow it?" Because we are a Church and a family, not a company. ❖



Rev Dr Chiang Ming Shun
Lecturer in Church History



By Dr Mark Chan

Christian discipleship does not happen in a vacuum. We follow Jesus in time and space and bear witness to him within the sociopolitical and cultural contexts of our day. And given the fact that our world is profoundly shaped by digital technology, Christians must navigate the realities of life in our hyperconnected environment. How then do we follow Jesus in our digital age?

To begin with, we should eschew two extreme views. The first is that of total disengagement from all things digital. Apart from questioning if such withdrawal is even possible, this fails to acknowledge that digital connectivity has brought great benefits. Like FaceTiming with friends and loved ones around the world around the clock; or disseminating vital information quickly in an emergency.

The second is to uncritically accept as unvarnished good everything that digital technology bequeaths to us. For all the conveniences and seemingly limitless attractions coming through our digital devices, digital life does have its deleterious effects. The internet, along with the technological ethos that it represents, does impact us negatively both physiologically, psychologically, and spiritually.

In this three-part essay, we will explore the intersection between Christian discipleship and the multifaceted phenomenon of digitality, particularly in the way digital technology is changing us as people. As Jason Thacker suggests in his book, *Following Jesus in a Digital Age*, “we are each being disciplined every day by the technologies that we use, whether we realize it or not.”

Being mindful of the formative influence of digital technology is integral to our journey to transformative discipleship. We will explore in this first instalment the challenge of upholding truth in a post-truth world.

The Post-Truth World of Fake News and Deepfakes

We are living in what is known as a “post-truth” era. The word was named by the Oxford Dictionaries as the word of the year for 2016. It describes post-truth as “relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinions than appeals to emotion and personal belief”.

The prefix “post” in post-truth refers not so much to truth in the temporal sense of being now a thing of the past. Rather, it points to truth as something that has been rendered irrelevant. The veracity of a piece of information is not important. What’s important is the way it advances one’s preferred narrative or take on reality.

It is no longer about seeking the truth but asserting one’s own truth. It’s about my truth and your truth rather than the truth. Post-truth is about massaging the truth to present an alternative reality, hence the notion of “alternative facts”. Facts become malleable, with the aim to bend reality to fit one’s opinion.

This is most evident in political contests, where feuding parties offer their own sets of facts which point to dramatically different versions of reality. Political debates become nothing more than a

contest to see who shouts the loudest. Post-truth politics is about the triumph of the visceral over the rational. Whereas Descartes would say, “I think therefore I am,” post-truthers maintain, “I believe therefore I am right”.

There was a time when photographs and video recordings are trusted as evidence for the truthfulness of an event. Seeing is believing, right? Well, not quite anymore. The rise of fabricated photos and AI-generated deepfakes or hyperrealistic videos of people saying or doing things they never did means that one is never sure what is real and what is fake.

A deepfake is a type of synthetic media, ie, images, audio, and video that are either manipulated or entirely generated by AI. While synthetic media can be used for wholesome (and even humorous) ends, its application tends in the direction of misinformation and disinformation. Voice cloning technology is used to create robocalls or fake audio messages, while face swapping technology that takes someone’s face and superimposes it on another’s body provides the tool to create celebrity pornographic videos.

What makes such digital impersonations especially dangerous is their ability to spread false information that appears to come from reliable sources. One can only imagine the devastating consequences such will have at a time of war. We are living through what has been described as a “disinfodemic”, an epidemic of disinformation. Trust is certainly being eroded in our post-truth world.

On Being People of Truth

How then shall we live in truth and bear witness to Christ the Truth in a post-truth world of multiple truths?

First, recognise that truth is not self-determined but is something that stands outside of us and confronts us. It challenges us to conform our lives to it rather than make it conform to our desires. All of us stand under the judgment of truth; and when our preconceived ideas are shown to be contrary to truth, we must have the courage and humility to change our mind to align with the truth.

Second, cultivate the discipline of pausing before forwarding any news item lest we be complicit in the spread of fake news. The effectiveness of fabricated news depends on people sharing it on social media. If we pass information on unthinkingly, we risk

contributing to the proliferation of falsehood. Part of this discipline entails learning how digital fakery works. For to be forewarned is to be forearmed.

Third, exercise discernment to tread the middle path between cynicism and naïveté. To dismiss everything in the news as nothing more than lies or propaganda is to go the way of cynicism. Just because there are liars doesn’t mean there are no decent people who speak the truth. On the other hand, one cannot be so gullible as to simply accept as true because someone or some video says so. There is room for a healthy sanctified hermeneutics of suspicion. Discernment

means engaging social media with eyes wide open, doing due diligence in fact-checking, and cross-referencing to seek the truth in the midst of lies.

Fourth, respect and embody the truth of Christ in our lives and in our engagements with people. Being truthful means maintaining congruence between who we say we are and who we really are. It also means being vigilant not to misrepresent or mischaracterise others lest we bear false witness against them.

Fifth, invest in the spiritual formation of believers as virtuous citizens. The problem with fake news and deepfakes is not technology but people. While legislative intervention to curb the spread of scams and fake news are necessary, the problem will not be eradicated so long as there are sinful people on this side of glory. Total abolition of sin and deception will come only when history ends at the feet of Jesus Christ. In the meantime, the church can exert a leavening influence in society by forming Christlike people and releasing them as virtuous citizens to serve as salt and light of the world.

Sixth, and finally, with God on his sovereign throne and his hands on the world, the truth will triumph in the end, no matter how persuasive, pervasive, and sophisticated our technological tools of deception may be. Truth always wins over lies. That’s good news for a world awash in fake news! ❖



Dr Mark Chan

Earnest Lau Professor of Systematic Theology

Equipping Christians for Discipleship and Mission

By Rev Dr Bernard Chao,
Director EQUIP, Lecturer in Practical Theology



Learning is central to the life of Christians and the ministry of churches. We see a continuity of focus in the Old and New Testaments for the people of God to keep learning and on the transmission of faith. The teaching of Moses in Deut 6 and 31 speaks of the importance of the transmission of faith across generations in the same breath as our response of obedience to God. Jesus' commission to his disciples in Matt 28 connects disciple-making intimately with the task of teaching. Christian mission involves Christian education.

The church is a learning community in which teaching and learning are a shared, ongoing task and the responsibility of every disciple. As such, both parents and children, teachers and students, pastors and laity, need to "let the message of Christ dwell among [us] richly...[and] teach and admonish one another with all wisdom" (Col 3:16). Local churches engage in Christian education in their congregations through children and youth ministries, Bible studies in small groups, various courses, and across their pulpits.

Resourcing Local Churches: EQUIP and *QiCheng*

In view of the Christian responsibility for learning and teaching, biblical studies and theological reflection are not solely the tasks of clergy and theologians. Seminaries have a role in supporting and resourcing Christians in their efforts to understand the Bible, engage in theological reflection, live faithfully as disciples, and participate in God's mission. Aside from training pastors, chaplains, church workers, and missionaries, TTC offers theological education to all Christians and churches via its lay-equipping platforms known as EQUIP and *QiCheng*.

TTC has been offering such support and resources for local churches since 1978 and these lay-training arms are now known as EQUIP and *QiCheng*, which offer courses in English and Mandarin respectively.

How EQUIP and *QiCheng* Serve the Learning Needs of Churches

Annually, EQUIP and *QiCheng* attract approximately

700 participants from across the spectrum of denominations and churches in Singapore. Participants comprise mainly laypersons and lay leaders. There is also a significant group of TTC alumni, pastors, missionaries, and church workers who are regular participants, which is a testament to the quality of our instructors and the depth of these courses. Many participants also enrol in our certificate and licentiate programmes which means a commitment to attending between eight to sixteen seven-week courses and workshops. This indicates a clear desire for serious learning among Christians in our churches.

EQUIP and *QiCheng* offer a mixture of online and in-person courses and workshops. With no prerequisite other than that participants must be Christians, these courses are open to everyone regardless of educational qualifications and age. Even after the Covid-19 pandemic, EQUIP has continued to offer its weekday evening courses online via Zoom. This has enabled many to access learning when it was either impossible or less convenient before, due to work, travel or caregiving limitations.

The courses offered by EQUIP and *QiCheng* are intentionally broad in spectrum to offer a balanced diet of biblical studies, systematic theology, historical perspectives, missiology, and practical theology for Christian living, ministry practice, and emerging issues. These courses are taught by TTC faculty members as well as invited subject-matter experts. Aside from traditional and core topics such as Bible surveys, book studies, and theological doctrines, our courses also engage a wide range of current issues and emerging challenges.

Examples of such topics include: "Video Games, Esports and Virtual Worlds as Ministry"; "100,000 Sundays: The History of Christian Worship and Its Ongoing Relevance for Today"; and "Christians on Social Media: Shining a Light in the Phygital Space". In this way, TTC serves the churches also in offering a platform for fresh conversations on emerging challenges as well as

thought leadership for current issues.

This year, EQUIP launched new in-person workshops to offer churches training in ministry practices. These workshops, which require greater interaction between participants, are held on campus over three Saturday mornings. The first four of such workshops in 2024 offer training in preaching, counselling, mission mobilisation, and youth ministry.

How Churches in Singapore and Beyond Can Employ EQUIP and *QiCheng* for Training

Although many EQUIP and *QiCheng* participants sign up as individuals, churches and various ministry leaders may wish to consider how they can employ our courses and programmes for the training of their staff and ministry teams. Some pastors rely on our courses and certificate programmes to equip new staff or for the continuing education of their pastoral teams. Many church leadership or ministry teams have attended our courses as a group to learn as well as to shape their ongoing discernment on particular issues together. Some denominations use our certification programmes as a requirement for the licensing of preachers or for upgrading the employment status of ministry staff.

In 2024, EQUIP has revised its mission training programme and now offers an enhanced Licentiate in Mission Practice (LMP). This new programme (see box) serves as a bridge between the missions training that local churches already offer and a full-fledged degree programme. As such, it is eminently positioned to serve Christians who wish to be equipped for short-term missions or are seriously discerning their call into cross-cultural missions or missional entrepreneurship. This is also an excellent training platform for members and leaders of mission committees in local churches. ❖

Equipping Christians for Mission in a Complex World

The New EQUIP Licentiate in Mission Practice

The Certificate in Mission Practice programme that EQUIP has offered for the past six years has been revised and enhanced under a renewed partnership with the Singapore Centre for Global Missions (SCGM). The upgraded licentiate programme brings together instructors and facilitators with both robust theological insight, and rich missionary and missional experience and knowledge.

The Licentiate in Mission Practice (LMP) programme features an expanded scope and emphasises action learning. While robust attention to the theological foundations for mission and the cross-cultural and border missions is maintained, there is also a focus on holistic missions, contextualisation for a changing and complex world, and engaging emerging missional entrepreneurship and innovation. Equal emphasis is given to coursework and the shaping of practices that are essential for mission through either a local or overseas practicum.

See p14 for more information.

Student Council 2024

The TTC Student Council 2024 was installed on Fri 2 Feb 2024. Rev Dr Lim Teck Peng shared 1 Pet 4:10 to encourage the new student council in their service. Incoming President, Mr Benjamin Huang (MDiv 2), urged the community, particularly the student council, to be living reminders of God's grace on the journey together at TTC. The installation ceremony was witnessed by the TTC student community and faculty, including the Dean of Students, Rev Dr Maggie Low. The ceremony culminated with the handing over of a Bible from Mr Ho Qi Heng (MDiv 3), the outgoing Student Council President, to Mr Huang, an act which marked the beginning of the active service of 75th student council. May God grant a servant's heart and joy to the 38 council members as they minister in their newly assumed roles. ❖



1. Huang Qi Yuan Benjamin (President), 2. Chua Wee Lynn (Vice President), 3. Teo Wen Bin Genson,
4. Lim Sze Hui Jean, 5. Lim Zhi Hao Shaun, 6. Peh Kah An Anthony, 7. Poh Siok Ching,
8. Timothy Harold Wade, 9. Koh Xin Yi Michelle, 10. Huang Li Qiang Jason, 11. Kannan s/o Kumaran,
12. Zhang Jiali Kelly, 13. Charles Lee, 14. Nguyen Thi Truc Giang, 15. Cheng Kim Meng,
16. Toh Ching Teen Clara, 17. Yang Jianlong, 18. Sentiakum Yaden, 19. Wang Tianlu,
20. Soh Kiat Sing Andrew, 21. You Ping, 22. Lin Hui Hui, 23. Fang Jou-Yi, 24. Albert William,
25. Lim Yu Siang Justin, 26. Elisha Amalraj Philip, 27. Nguyen Quy Hoang Anh Max,
28. Lee Siew Fen Rachel, 29. Chung Huan-Chieh, 30. Christopher Tychicus Lee, 31. Lin Yiying,
32. Chua Lian Choo Pearl, 33. Lyu Jing, 34. Tan Lee Nah Catherine, 35. Hsu Chih Wei,
36. Yeo Fei Wen Kyle, 37. Oh Chong Yee, 38. Richard Saw

For details on the student council, scan the QR code above or go to ttc.edu.sg/english/StudentCouncil.

Public Lecture by Pauline Scholar

By Rev Dr Leonard Wee, Registrar; Lecturer in New Testament

Dr Trevor J Burke visited TTC during his recent sabbatical in Singapore. Dr Burke is a researcher and tutor in New Testament at the Cambridge Theological Foundation in the UK and a visiting lecturer at the London School of Theology. A scholar in Pauline studies, Dr Burke is the author of two books, namely *Family Matters* and *Adopted into God's Family*, and *Paul and the Corinthians* which he co-edited. He was originally from Belfast (North Ireland), and has taught at the Moody Bible Institute (Chicago) and seminaries in Nigeria, Wales, and Fiji.



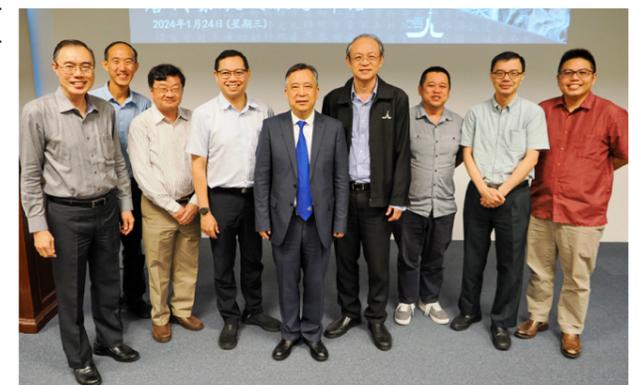
Dr Trevor J Burke fielding questions from the audience.

On 22 Feb 2024, Dr Burke delivered a public lecture at TTC entitled, "1 Thessalonians: An Ecclesial Approach", exploring the use of familial language in 1 Thess that points to Paul's underlying conception of the church as a new family. The use of nomenclature such as "brothers and sisters", the stress on love for one another (eg, 1 Thess 4:9), and word pictures such as a "nursing mother" (1 Thess 2:7) and a "father" (1 Thess 2:11), were discussed in detail during Dr Burke's lecture, and its implications for the church were further explored during the question and answer session with participants. ❖

Visit of Rev Xu Xiaohong

By Rev Dr Lim Teck Peng, Academic Dean; Lee Huai Kwang Professor of Religious Education

On 24 Jan 2024, Rev Xu Xiaohong, Chairman of China's National Committee of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement of Protestant Churches (National TSPM), visited TTC. Rev Xu delivered a lecture discussing his latest book—about Syriac Christianity (景教, *Jingjiao*) in China. Next, Rev Xu met with TTC's administration. Both sides exchanged perspectives on the importance of high-quality theological education for the growth and social engagement of the church.



Rev Xu Xiaohong (fifth from the left) with some members of the TTC faculty.

Since the 1990s, TTC has maintained a close relationship with the China Christian Council and National TSPM (CCC&TSMP; *Lianghui* in Chinese). As the only seminary in Singapore recognised by *Lianghui*, TTC offers advanced theological training to its candidates. Currently, six of its candidates are pursuing DTh/MTh degrees at TTC. Additionally, partnering with the United Bible Society, TTC provides opportunities for Chinese seminary faculty members to visit for one month. Rev Dong Zhengli from the East China Theological Seminary and Rev Wang Xicheng from the Shandong Theological Seminary were two recent participants under this programme.

Rev Xu was re-elected for a second five-year term in Dec 2023. We look forward to continued collaboration and partnership with the CCC&TSMP. ❖

Inter-College Games 2024

By Ms Rachel Lee, BD 1

On Fri, 1 Mar 2024, TTC hosted the Inter-College Games (ICG) here on our campus. Excitement filled the air as students from Singapore Bible College, Discipleship Training Centre, Baptist Theological Seminary, East Asia School of Theology, and TTC gathered for the opening address by Rev Dr Lim Teck Peng, who was Acting Principal then. The TTC praise and worship team then led everyone in a time of worship. It was a wonderful sight and reminder that despite coming from different schools, denominations and nationalities, we are united as the body of Christ, lifting our voices as one to praise God. With an opening prayer, Dean of Students, Rev Dr Maggie Low, kickstarted ICG 2024.

Students got to interact with each other in various sports such as soccer, captain's ball, table tennis, frisbee and a 5km run. There were other games like Chinese and international chess and a Bible quiz which tested knowledge and mental acuity, and others such as Cooking Mama, our very own version of "MasterChef", which incorporated creativity and culinary skills. Additionally, there were also e-games and a telematch which put participants' team dynamics and communication to the test. This holistic diversity of games gave all students and staff an opportunity to participate in ICG2024.

The Inter-College Games is a good pause on the academic rigor and was an opportunity for students to experience spiritual formation fully, through mind, body and spirit. It was also truly heart-warming to see a picture of unity in the larger body of Christ, as the different colleges came together to participate in the games, have friendly competition and forge new friendships along the way. ❖



A team from Singapore Bible College in an event with a TTC team.



A captain's ball game between the Singapore Bible College and Discipleship Training Centre.



The gathering of students, faculty and staff from different schools was a picture of unity in the large body of Christ.



Culinary delights being created at Cooking Mama, our own version of "MasterChef".



Teams from Discipleship Training Centre and TTC at a soccer match.

Chinese New Year Celebration

By Mr Chung, Huan-Chieh, MTS 1 (Translated by Ms Poh Siok Ching, MDiv 2)

On 15 Feb 2024, TTC held its annual Chinese New Year (CNY) celebration. The college dining hall was gaily adorned with red decorations alongside CNY motifs. As festive tunes filled the air, faculty, students and staff came together for the celebration.

An icebreaker filled the hall with buzz and laughter. Next, Rev Dr Chiang Ming Shun elaborated on the history and significance of *Yusheng*, how a family or restaurant activity evolved into a cherished Singaporean tradition. After that, we also partook in *Yusheng* tossing with gusto, exchanging blessings, and then indulging in a sumptuous lunch.

Another fun activity was estimating Rev Dr Jeremy-Joe Tan's height in Mandarin oranges. Each team had to post a picture of their family group on social media and guessing how many Mandarin oranges it would take to stack up to the height of Dr Jeremy-Joe Tan.

This CNY celebration blended laughter, knowledge, and blessings, with faculty, students, and staff thoroughly enjoying ourselves, and enriching our community life with a vibrant cultural experience. ❖



Yusheng was tossed with gusto.

Observing Lent at TTC

By Rev Dr Jimmy Tan, Chaplain; Lecturer in Pastoral and Practical Theology

As a union college, it is our aim to nurture our students in the historic traditions of the Christian church. Hence, following Advent and Christmas (which took place during the mid-semester break), the college opened the new semester on 2 Jan 2024, with a service that celebrated the Epiphany of the Lord. Then followed chapel services that commemorated the baptism and transfiguration of the Lord.

The beginning of Lent was marked on Ash Wednesday, 14 Feb 2024, with an invitation to the observance of the Lenten discipline, praying the litany of penitence, and the imposition of ashes at chapel. The mood was sombre as the community remembered the purpose of the ashes and entry into a time of self-examination and repentance. Lenten devotionals were availed to help with prayer in these forty days. They climaxed in the Holy Week, which was observed through three mornings of focused prayer from Monday to Wednesday, and concluded with foot washing and the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday. Not only did these practices guide us to emulate the humility of our Lord, the final act of the stripping of the altar on Maundy Thursday moved many hearts as it symbolically recapitulated the humiliation of our Lord.

These observances remind us that we are people historically located within the Christian tradition. While they do not occupy the same authority as Scripture, they affirm that we belong to a shared ecclesial location with all the faithful in Christ.

Having observed Lent, we now rejoice in the life-giving season of Easter. ❖



The imposition of ashes at the Ash Wednesday service.

Faculty Publication

By Ms Dorothy Koh, MTh 1

The launch of the book *Asian Feminist Biblical Studies* edited by Rev Dr Maggie Low on 30 Jan 2024 culminates eight years' labour of love. This book brings together the work of 14 biblical scholars from ten different countries in Asia, each with a story to tell about the treatment of women in their contexts, and each seeking to uphold the intrinsic worth of all humans by refuting patriarchy read into the biblical text. Written for seminary students and pastors, it employs a variety of methods such as historical-literary, cultural, sociological, and postcolonial criticisms.

While the editor does not agree with the contents of every essay, the book retains the diversity of interpretations from contributors of various backgrounds. As an introductory text for Asian feminist biblical studies, readers are encouraged to interact with and critique the viewpoints presented while appreciating useful nuggets of insight which one may otherwise miss. May this work aid the move from patriarchy to partnership between men and women, allowing both to use their gifts to build God's kingdom as equals and serve Him together. ❖



Rev Dr Maggie Low at the launch of the book she edited.

Licentiate in Mission Practice



Equipping Christians for Mission in a Complex World

This programme is a robust exploration of **theoretical and theological frameworks** with **hands-on practice learning** by **theologians and experienced missionaries** from **Trinity Theological College (TTC)** and the **Singapore Centre for Global Mission (SCGM)**

Who is this for?

Missional entrepreneurs who are innovating or ideating new ways of reaching different groups of people

Senders who are members of local church missions committees, denominational missions boards, or missions agencies

Short-term missionaries preparing for cross-cultural assignments of 6–24 months

Everyday Christians who wish to be intentional and reflective participants in missional and missionary endeavours

What's in the programme?

This **self-paced programme** will take between two to eight years to complete. It comprises two parts:



How do I register?

To register or to get more information, please email equip@ttc.edu.sg

Get more information also via this QR code or ttc.edu.sg/english/EQUIP-LMP

TRAINING Eight online, weekday evening courses and an in-person workshop held over three Saturdays. The EQUIP course schedule for two years is available at ttc.edu.sg/english/EQUIPcourseschedule

PRACTICUM Either an overseas 5–7 day missions exposure trip OR 40 hours with a local missions partner over no more than three months, and pre- and post-practicum activities

TRINITY NEWS

Congratulations to...

Damien Wong (MDiv 2022) and Matilda Hong who were blessed with their second child, Eleanor Wong Qi En, on 27 Dec 2023.

Illuri Jyothi David Raju (BD 2016) and Mary Shiny on the birth of their second child, Joshua Emmuanuel Illuri, on 4 Jan 2024.

Anna Luu (MDiv 2020) and Denis Yap who were blessed with their firstborn, Yap Ai En Anya, on 4 Jan 2024.

Darren Huang (MDiv 2022) and Denise Ho on the birth of their son, Neil Oliver Huang, on 6 Jan 2024.

Lou Weixin (MDiv 1) and Qimin Lim on the birth of their daughter, Lucy Lou, on 11 Jan 2024.

Daniel Lee (MDiv 2020) and Faith Chua who were blessed with their firstborn, Sophie Lee, on 2 Feb 2024.

Condolences to...

Rev Dr Yu Chin Cheak (BTh 1981), who served as lecturer at TTC from 2002 to 2015, on the passing of her beloved husband, Rev Dr George Robert Martzen, on 19 Dec 2023.

Dr Tan Kim Huat on the passing of his beloved wife, the late Mdm Michelle Oh Chor Huang (MDiv 2001), on 1 Jan 2024. Michelle was a guest lecturer at TTC from 2016 to 2021.

Mr Yip Chee Seng (BD 1999) on the passing of his father, the late Mr Yip Kee Soon, on 6 Jan 2024.

Ms Mary Gan, former part-time lecturer from 1982–1997, whose beloved mother, the late Mdm Tan Siew Eng, passed away on 9 Jan 2024.

Mdm Wendy Wee Guat Keong (BTh 1980), on the passing of her beloved husband, Rev Dr Ronald Ch'ng Teck Huat (BD 1980, MTh 1985), on 10 Jan 2024.

Wong Teck Mee (BD 1997) on the passing of her beloved brother, Ps Elijah Wong, on 12 Jan 2024.

Mrs Nancy Ling and family on the passing of her beloved husband, Dr Ling Tiong Hung (BTh 1962), on 31 Jan 2024.

Mr Richard Seow (MDiv 1996) and his family on the passing of his father-in-law, Dr Aw Swee Eng on 8 Feb 2024.

Ms Karen Kan (Asst Registrar) and Rev Johnny Chin (BD 1998) on the passing of her father, the late Mr Kan Kai Mun, on 13 Feb 2024.

The family of the late Preacher Liew Lee Lee (ACTS 1996), on her passing on 15 Feb 2024.

The family of Ps Rebecca Kwok Lo Chu (MDiv 2016, MMin 2021) whose beloved father, the late Mr Kwok Yan peacefully returned home to our Lord on 17 Mar 2024.

We Invite You to Support the Ministry of Trinity Theological College

Your support will enable our college to:

- keep tuition fees affordable,
- be equipped with a competent and dedicated faculty,
- offer financial subsidies to less fortunate students, and
- house an outstanding theological library.

Here are some ways you may contribute to our ministry. By:

- cheque to **Trinity Theological College**,
- bank or ATM transfer to our DBS current account **033-017261-3**,
- **PayNow** to **UEN T01CC1488C**, or via QR code, or
- a **bequest** to TTC. We would be pleased to discuss a plan with you. Please email us at principal@ttc.edu.sg or call 6767 6677.



To view 角聲, the Chinese edition of the Trumpet, please visit our website at www.ttc.edu.sg



THIRD QUARTER 2024 EQUIP COURSES

TTC is pleased to offer a series of lectures for the Christian public for the third quarter of 2024. The subjects in these courses are explored in depth by EQUIP instructors who include both TTC faculty and other guest lecturers, all of whom are highly qualified subject matter experts in their fields. Many of our own alumni, pastors, Christian ministry staff, missionaries, and lay leaders also attend our courses for their own continuing education.

The Drama of the History of Christianity

by *Dr Leow Theng Huat*
Mondays, 8 Jul–19 Aug
7.30–9.30pm via Zoom

Theology of Mission

by *Rev Dr Andrew Peh*
Tuesdays, 9 Jul–20 Aug
7.30–9.30pm via Zoom

New Testament Survey

by *Rev Dr Leonard Wee*
Wednesdays, 10 Jul–21 Aug
7.30–9.30pm via Zoom

Moral Character of a Christian Leader

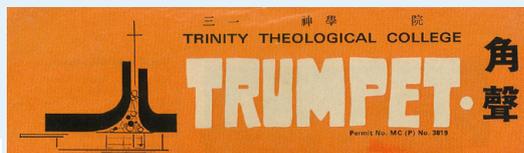
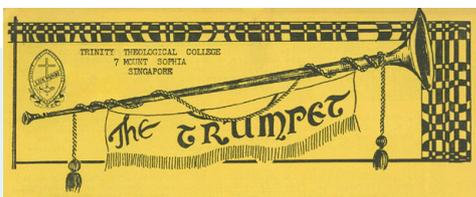
by *Rev Dr Daniel Koh*
Thursdays, 11 Jul–22 Aug
7.30–9.30pm via Zoom

Mobilising Churches for Mission

by *Rev Manik Corea*
Saturdays, 17–31 Aug
8.30am–1.30pm at TTC

IN-PERSON

For details and for online registration, go to www.ttc.edu.sg/english/EQUIPinfo



The Trumpet Through the Years

Did you catch the three-part series by Rev Dr Andrew Peh on TTC's history through the pages of the Trumpet? From the newsletter's debut as two cyclostyled pages in 1960, spanning more than six decades to the present day, snapshots from the Trumpet of our college's past were featured as a reminder of what the Lord has done and continues to do in and through TTC. Read the entire series here at ttc.edu.sg/english/trumpetthrutheyears

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