



Together for God's Glory

Trinity Theological College is the fruit of Gospel-partnership through Christian mission in the context of suffering. Providentially brought together, our founding fathers from the Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches suffered the deprivations of war during the Japanese Occupation. While interned in Changi Prison, their experience of common worship was one in which denominationalism was set aside for what unites the Church of Jesus Christ.

In God's sovereign providence, suffering in prison became the context through which the common worship of God was experienced and hope for a common future forged. That hope was sustained by the vision of a union college which became reality in 1948. In God's faithfulness, the bonds of spiritual kinship which were forged in the fires of suffering, took form through an ecumenical partnership to establish TTC.

Since TTC's founding, we have been doing theological education together. Trans-denominational partnership in Christ for Christian service is in our DNA. The inclusion of the Lutheran Church as our fourth Governing Church in 1963 served to enrich the original union. Published in 1960, the inaugural edition of *Trumpet* captures the spirit of our union partnership well in practical terms:

Standing alone...our witness would be one that stresses our divisions, not our unity in Christ. Standing together, we "bear one another's burdens" in a spirit of Christian unity. An Anglican teaches systematic theology to the Methodists, a Presbyterian teaches Biblical theology to the Anglicans, and a Methodist teaches the New Testament or the Old Testament to all three groups. A spirit of tolerance and good will keeps the wheels turning without friction.

TTC will be facing a huge challenge 21 years from now when our land lease expires in the year 2046. Our college was once situated on freehold land at Mount Sophia. That land was acquired by the Singapore Government in 1999. Leaders of our Governing Churches who were involved in securing our present campus were deeply conscious of the limited time frame. This is evident in the Memorandum of

Understanding (MOU) that was drawn up in the year 2000, a year before TTC moved to our Upper Bukit Timah campus.

Signed by the Heads of our Governing Churches then, the final statement in the MOU reflected their commitment to TTC's future in the light of the lease expiry: "In the event that the lease of the land ceases, that in the same ecumenical and family spirit which has characterized the history of TTC, we shall endeavor to secure a similar arrangement for TTC to continue its existence and ministry."

While capturing the spirit of unity, the MOU does not provide guidance on the specific nature of joint responsibility among our Governing Churches. Concern for TTC's future has led our present Board of Governors to make clear the financial commitment of each Governing Church and TTC towards the lease renewal. This Board initiative was taken out of the conviction of shared responsibility in the same "ecumenical and family spirit" which has marked our history.

The terms of commitment to secure TTC's future have been spelt out in a new MOU. On Friday 4 Oct 2024, TTC made history when the Heads of Churches signed the new MOU at our college's 76th anniversary dinner. Witnessed by around 500 guests, it was an evening that brought much encouragement to the TTC family and friends.

What was true in the founding years of TTC is still true today. TTC continues to serve the Church of Jesus Christ with the same spirit of gospel unity that has so characterised our history. We do theological training together because we cannot do it alone.

As TTC marks our 76th year of ministry, our prayer is that of the Psalmist: "Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness" (Ps 115:1). Do continue to pray for us and partner with us in our endeavour to do theological education together for God's glory. May the peace of Christ be with you and yours this Christmas. ❖