



## A Season of Hope

By Rev Dr Jeremy-Joe Tan

*Akan Datang.*

That's a Malay phrase that can be loosely translated as "coming soon". If my memory serves me right, this was the name of a radio programme which previewed movies back in the 1990s and early 2000s. Synopses and reviews of upcoming blockbusters were broadcast. In a time before smartphones and easy access to the internet, this was one of the ways we found out which movies were on the horizon and whether they were worth watching. Hearing a favourable review on *Akan Datang* would create a sense of anticipation that a good movie was coming soon.

This phrase is not an inappropriate one to describe the current season we are in. The lights and decorations are up along Orchard Road, our calendars are filled up with various year-end celebrations and meetups, and many stores are having their year-end promotions. In short, Christmas is *akan datang*. Yet we know that these things are not the primary reason for the season, even if they are well and good. Jesus Christ is the reason. We celebrate Christmas to commemorate his birth more than 2,000 years ago. With the birth of Jesus, the promise that the Messiah was *akan datang* was fulfilled.

The birth of Jesus is the ultimate manifestation of hope for humanity, offering salvation, forgiveness, and a new beginning.

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## Seventy-Five Years and Beyond

TTC's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was celebrated through various events organised throughout the year. By the grace of God, our college has to date, the privilege of training more than 2,500 alumni for the service of Christ. Being able to serve the church in theological education for three quarters of a century is a milestone.

As we close the year 2023 and cross the threshold of a new one, it is helpful to reflect on the way TTC is preparing for the future in light of our recent past and present challenges. Over the course of our anniversary celebrations, I had offered reflections concerning TTC's journey since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic and our college's posture as we move beyond our seventy-fifth anniversary. Guided by our anniversary theme, Changing World, Unchanging Light, what follows is a distillation of these reflections.

Firstly, engaging the world. Keeping theological education potent in a changing world is an ongoing challenge that every seminary faces at every stage of its development. Being a Christian seminary in the world but not of it requires a twofold commitment: faithfulness to Christ in the stewardship of the Gospel; and prophetic engagement with the world.

The years spanning 2020 and 2022 saw our college wrestling with fundamental issues in theological education in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. The need to use online technology for remote teaching and facilitating community life led to serious and sustained deliberations. The extent of technology's deployment had to be carefully weighed in relation to the nature of theological and ministerial formation.

Not wanting to compromise the quality of theological education for the sake of convenience or survival, policy decisions sought to maintain the integrity of our curriculum. Our college's consistent response has been to adopt a ministerial and not magisterial view of technology. As such, online technology has been deployed in the service of TTC's educational ethos, not by replacing but supporting in-person teaching and corporate formation.

The title of our anniversary book pulls together key issues that challenged us and continues to do so—Becoming a People of Light: For a Phygital, Hyperconnected and Fragmented World. Anchored by our faculty, the book's thirteen English and six Chinese essays map out the landscape of critical challenges which are confronting the church. Signaling TTC's ongoing commitment to engage the world, the book offers biblical and theological resources for times such as these.

Secondly, continuing our mission. TTC continues our God-given mission of equipping the saints for ministry amid the challenges posed by a changing world. God, in his mercy, led and blessed our college with growth. Multiple signs of growth are discernible over the last four years. I highlighted three in my 75th Anniversary Dinner address: 1. Matriculated student enrolment increased annually from July 2020 to date; 2. TTC's sixth professorial chair, the ACS Chair in the History of Christianity, was established in Feb 2023; 3. We have five faculty-in-development currently pursuing doctorates across four theological disciplines.

These are unusual signs of growth among others in very trying times. They are given by God at a time when there is every possibility of a drastic dip in student enrolment, the need to down-size faculty, or simply being unable to survive. TTC's growth is God's doing through the gifts, prayers, and encouragement of God's people.

How then is TTC to advance beyond seventy five? While one might be tempted to offer grand strategies and jump on the bandwagon of future-proofing plans, it is wiser to take bearings from our experience of the recent pandemic and the present post-pandemic wars in Europe and the Middle-East.

The hard truth is that the world is unstable and our future uncertain. TTC's posture beyond seventy five is the same posture that has been formed by God's Spirit through our history and sustained in the pandemic years: obedience to our calling, faithfulness to the Gospel, and integrity in all our dealings in the service of Christ and His church. As we do so, we trust that God who raised us from the ashes of war, will bless the work of our hands beyond what we can ask or imagine. ❖

Or as Paul so eloquently puts it, the mystery "which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Phil 1:27). In fact, Christmas traditions such as decorating trees, exchanging gifts, and singing carols, all carry this message of hope. The decorations and lights symbolise that hope, like light, shines even in the darkest times. The act of giving and receiving gifts reflects the hope for a brighter future and the importance of spreading love and kindness.

What is perhaps less appreciated by many Christians is fact that this season of Christmas holds a second sense of *akan datang*. While we celebrate Jesus' first coming, there is also that anticipation of his second coming. This is captured in the liturgical season of Advent. In fact, the word "advent" is derived from the Latin word "*adventus*" meaning "coming". Advent is a four-week period (specifically four Sundays) that leads up to Christmas. Through this period and especially with the lectionary Scripture passages, we are reminded of the significance of both Jesus' first and second comings.

Jesus' first coming introduces the hope of a new beginning for humanity. It reminds us about our salvation and faith made possible in and through Christ. It beckons us to love God and our neighbours. On the other hand, Jesus' second coming reminds us of the hope of heaven. A place where God will dwell with his people with no more death, mourning, crying, or pain (Rev 21:3-4). It also reminds us that

God will bring his recompense and justice (Rev 22:12). It reminds us to be faithful and to persevere in our walk with Jesus.

In other words, this whole season of Advent leading up to Christmas is really a season of hope. Advent and hope are intricately intertwined. In particular, there is that two-fold hope. The already-established hope of a Saviour, but also the "not yet" hope of Jesus' second coming. This season reminds us of the hope of salvation, the hope of redemption, the hope of fellowship, the hope of God's coming justice, and the hope of eternal fellowship with God. Indeed, such hope is a needful reminder in the times that we live in. The news is constantly filled with wars and rumours of wars, rising costs and tension, and the many challenges and uncertainties we face. In such a world, the hope of Christ is like a beacon of light that guides us through these darkest of times.

In this season of Advent and Christmas, let us be reminded of the hope that we have in Christ.

Let us not lose sight of this beautiful hope in the busyness of our celebrations or in the face of adversity. More than that, let us, as people of hope, be found sharing this hope with others. Let us be found responding like John did in some of the closing words of Scripture, "Amen, Come Lord Jesus!" (Rev 22:20b). Or, colloquially, *Akan datang!* ❖

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**Rev Dr Jeremy-Joe Tan**  
Lecturer in Theology







# Christian Hope is Provocative

By Rev Dr Nathanael Goh

**W**e live in a world where we very much need more hope, not less. No sooner had we come out of the Covid-19 pandemic than our world was hurled into the present chaotic and complex situation. The constant bombardment of news is brutal: armed conflict, ever-increasing costs of living, global financial shocks, geopolitical tensions, climate-change-related weather calamities, and more. Every day it seems the order of creation is in danger of collapsing into disorder.

Pessimism and despair threaten to run amok. And it is not as if we can simply blame the present situation. Ipsos MORI's *Perils of Perceptions* survey, documents pessimism in thirty-eight countries. Their research shows that there was an air of pessimism across the globe even in the years before the pandemic. The 2019 Deloitte Millennial Survey concluded that millennials were "disillusioned with traditional institutions, sceptical of businesses' motives and pessimistic about economic and social progress".

A large part of this pessimism is animated by what Pope Francis in his encyclical *Laudato Si* calls the "technocratic paradigm". This paradigm tends to see all of reality as a problem awaiting an application of scientific and technological power. This paradigm deludes us into thinking that the biggest issues besetting humanity simply await the time when we

become wise and powerful enough to solve them. Pessimism seems inevitable as we witness the unstoppable force of creation's disorder slam head first into the immovable myth of human prowess. Humankind's ability to progress now seems so brittle as confident determination gives way to crushing disillusionment.

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**[Hope] teaches us... to live in a world where we are not in control. It is at once a judgment on our anxiety and a shaping to more fully receive God's grace.**

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The Christian response to this has been to foreground hope for the hopeless. But the cultured despisers of Christian hope are legion. Christian hope has been derided in various parts as an opiate for earthly misery, a gloomy asceticism, or a distraction from genuine progress. For example, in *The Social Contract*, the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau excoriates Christian hope for being, in his view, too otherworldly: "Christianity is a wholly spiritual religion, exclusively concerned with the things of Heaven: the Christian's fatherland is not of this world". Nothing else matters for the Christian "in this vale of tears" but to "get to paradise".

Critics of Christian hope think that we merely swing from one extreme to another. We merely exchange the despair over whether things will ever change for the better for the escapism of another world. Even worse, some suspect that Christian hope is founded on the violent imaginings of apocalyptic destruction in which the future will arrive by annihilating the

present. The irony, however, is that as public life descends from one anxiety to another, the toxicity of pessimism and its siblings of apathy and cynicism have become all too pervasive. We are in a massive hope deficit.

Given that there is a need for renewed hopefulness, how might Christians continue to promulgate the virtue of hope which has been central to Christian thought and practice? Trinity Theological College (TTC) selected, as our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary theme, "Changing World, Unchanging Light". The theme is just four words long, but it taps into an inexpressible and irrepressible fount of Christian confession.

We join our voices in the chorus of saints declaring an unswerving hope not in the circumstances of this life, but in an unchanging God, and in His unchanging truth.

One such exemplary voice is the prophet Jeremiah. Jer 32 is set against the backdrop of despair and pessimism, what Ronald Clements calls a situation "where no human resources of hope remained credible". The city of Jerusalem had been under siege by Babylonian forces for some time.

It was clear that exile was on the horizon, and all hope seemed lost.

Under those circumstances, Jeremiah did what no one else was doing at that time: he bought real estate. Jeremiah purchased a field in his hometown of Anathoth, a short distance north of Jerusalem. The chapter outlines the precision and care with which Jeremiah completes the outlandish transaction. Only a fool would purchase real estate when enemy forces are at the door and exile is inevitable. Where everyone else was cowering in fear and despondency, Jeremiah was making plans for the time after the exile. Jeremiah's explanation of his actions illustrates his defiant hope: "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.'" (Jer 32:15)

True hope, for Jeremiah, distinguishes between facile optimism and wishful thinking. The purchase of a field was not an escapist fantasy that disaster would be averted or postponed. Instead, Jeremiah knew that his people could lose home, security, and land...and yet find that there was no disaster that could take away a hope founded on God. Proper

Christian hope is chastening, unmasking our fragile desires and false hopes.

Buying a field just before exile exemplified a hope that is not simply inner confidence that all manner of things will be well, or transported beyond a world that is not our home. Hopeful Christian engagement with the world is always iconic, telling of deeper realities beyond the present. It teaches us to endure and to live in a world where we are not in control. It is at once a judgement on our anxiety and a shaping

to more fully receive God's grace. It does not promise that our hopes will be realised, but that the will of God will be accomplished.

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**to be a witness does not consist of engaging in propaganda, nor even in stirring people up, but in being a living mystery. It means to live in such a way that one's life would not make sense if God did not exist.**

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What Jeremiah did is paradigmatic. He teaches us how to be witnesses of Christian hope. In the words of the French cardinal Emmanuel Célestin Suhard, "to be a witness does not consist of engaging in propaganda, nor even in stirring people up, but in being a living mystery. It means to live in such a way that one's life would not make sense if God did not exist".

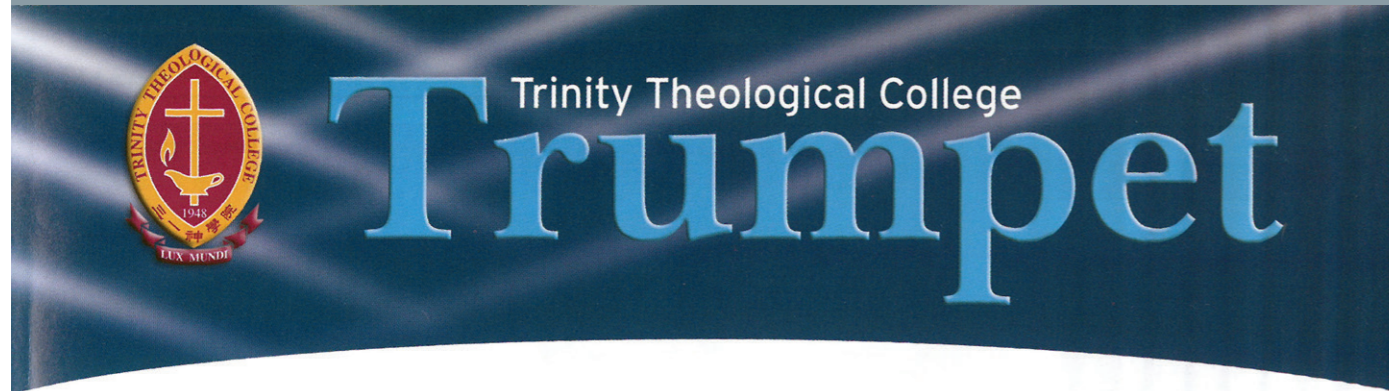
Such Christian hope is what Jürgen Moltmann calls "a theology of combatants, and not of onlookers".

Christian hope is provocative. It is not simply a psychological state. Are we prepared to live in ways that would render our hope senseless if God did not exist? What kind of field-buying, hope-expressing acts might we pursue, that bears profound witness to and incarnates our Gospel hope? Of course, human striving cannot bring about our ultimate destiny, for that lies in the hands of God. Yet to the extent that hope might be witnessed within present history, it is a hope that we must strive to bear witness to in thought, word, and deed. To embody this audacious Christian hope requires our surrender. Then, and only then, can it be hope for the world. ❖



Rev Dr Nathanael Goh  
Lecturer in Christian Ethics



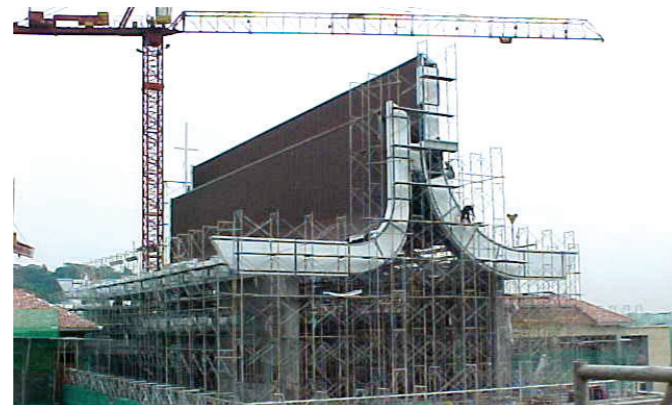


By Rev Dr Andrew Peh

The Trumpet was first published as an occasional newsletter in 1960 and the Chinese publication, 角声, debuted a year later. It became a regular publication from May 1965. The purpose for the publication was for the college to provide updates and information to the wider church to be acquainted with and participate in the life of the college. The name of the publication is based on the verse in Joel 2:1—“Blow the trumpet in Zion...for the day of the Lord is near”.

This series of three articles provide snapshots from the Trumpet in 25-year segments of the college’s history as captured through the articles. It is a reminder of what the Lord has done and what He continues to do in and through the college.

The groundbreaking ceremony for the building of the new campus was held on Fri 3 Sep 1999. There was a unanimous decision to ensure that the iconic design of the TTC chapel at Mount Sophia was retained at the new campus. The stained-glass centrepiece was to incorporate Asian features. A local, Ms Koh Bee Liang, was tasked with the project. It was also decided to “take the communion table and some bricks from the old campus for the new chapel in Bukit Timah. The bricks of the chapel



A view of the rear of the TTC chapel as it was being built at Upper Bukit Timah.

have a long history as some of them were taken from the “old No 7” Mount Sophia, which was built in 1840. The bricks were used to build part of the walls of the present chapel. This makes some of the bricks 160 years old! As Trinity moves, it will take with it the traditions and the history of the college.” (*Trumpet Jul 2000*) In Sep 2000, the Mount Sophia campus of TTC was declared as a historic site of Singapore by the National Heritage Board.

Amidst these developments, TTC’s primary call to serve the church is most poignantly evidenced in the election of the then principal to head the church.

The excitement for the golden jubilee of Trinity Theological College in 1998, when the current college crest was introduced, was palpable. The celebrations, however, were eclipsed by the news of the land acquisition of the Methodist-owned plot on Mount Sophia where TTC stood. Yet God continued to be faithful in the provision of the location for a new campus in Upper Bukit Timah Road. What was required was for the governing churches to work together again, to meet the financial and logistical challenges for establishing a new campus. The principal then, Rev Dr John Chew, reminded the community that “What is really being tested with the acquisition is our ecclesiology and our need for one another in a time like ours. Our Lord’s prayer for the unity of His church in the midst of the “world” (John 17) demands our close attention and prayerful reflection.” (*Trumpet Apr/May 1996*)

At the end of 1999, before leaving to assume the new appointment as the Bishop of the Diocese of Singapore, Rev Dr John Chew outlined “the hardware and software of ‘the quantum move of the college into the new millennium’. The hardware was the new premises at the foot of Bukit Timah while the software included the drafting of a three-pronged strategy of a new integrated Centre for Post-Graduate Studies, Mission Research and Asian Church Leadership Development. This was in tandem with the direction for TTC to be a training centre for national leadership throughout Asia”.

The “software” that is referred to is best enumerated in the development of the ways and means where TTC becomes the catalyst as well as the agency through which the equipping, enabling, and empowering of local and regional leaders is made possible. And to that end, TTC embarked on various dialogues, collaborative discussions, and academic exchanges, such as with other college and seminaries under the Association for Theological Education in South East Asia (ATESEA); the China Christian Council and Three-Self Patriotic Movement of the Protestant Churches in China (CCC&TSPM); the Association of Theological Education of Myanmar; the Vietnam Bureau of Religious Affairs and the Evangelical Church in Vietnam (South). In 2014, TTC partnered with the National Council of Churches of Singapore and the Bible Society of Singapore to pioneer a think tank, ETHOS, in assisting the church in engaging with various societal issues in the public square.

TTC’s “software” engagement is also evident in the continuous development of the Master of Theology (MTh) courses, which has been a way of nurturing regional scholars and leaders. One of the more significant courses was the MTh in Asian Church History in 1997, which was attended by scholars from around the region such as Australia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Taiwan and Thailand. This perhaps helped to precipitate the establishment of TTC’s Centre for the Study of Christianity in Asia to serve the churches in Asia by facilitating in-depth research in the identity and role of the church in the Asian context and the building up of library resources and archival materials so that TTC could become a valuable regional resource centre.

To date, the TTC library is perhaps one of the best equipped theological libraries in the region. It currently has approximately 21,500 items in electronic copies and 105,000 volumes in print, including materials published in 1738 and 1823.

Besides a significant number of Methodist archival material, the library was a recipient of four very

special Presbyterian collections. “The establishment of the Presbyterian Resource Centre Collection aims to promote studies pertaining to Presbyterian doctrine, history and mission, plus the preservation of important Presbyterian historical sources.” (*Trumpet Dec 2002*) Among its prized collections are a set of the Chinese Bible translated by Robert Morrison and William Milne of the London Missionary Society, printed in Malacca at the Anglo-Chinese College Press in 1823, as well as the *Sheng Nian Guan Yu*, a set of devotional materials compiled and translated into Chinese by Jesuit priest Joseph Anne Marie de Moyriac de Mailla, published in 1738.

It was also within this last quarter of TTC’s history where there was a succession of professorial endowments, which include the Chen Su Lan Chair of New Testament (2002), Earnest Lau Chair of Systematic Theology (2002), Chew Hock Hin Chair of Christian Doctrine (2008), Bishop William F Oldham Chair of Old Testament (2009), Lee Huai Kwang Chair of Religious Education (2019), and the ACS Chair of the History of Christianity (2023). These endowments are an essential step in financing further research and publications in these important disciplines of theological studies.

Amidst a rapidly changing context—the coronavirus pandemic, climate change and an increasingly polarised world—Bishop Emeritus Robert Solomon’s words when he was appointed principal, albeit for a short ten months, before he too was appointed as Bishop of The Methodist Church in Singapore in Jan 2000, serves as a timely reminder: “Principals may change but our principles remain unchanged. TTC exists to serve the Church by training her pastors, church workers, missionaries and lay leaders.” Rev Dr Edwin Tay, the current Principal reminds us that as TTC, “we are committed to the church in Singapore, Asia and beyond”. And in order to do so, TTC’s 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary theme well articulates our continuing focus: “Changing World, Unchanging Light”. *LUX MUNDI!* ❖

The defects in the images are inherent to the sources themselves.



Rev Dr Andrew Peh  
Lecturer in Missions & Missions History





# 75th Anniversary— Snapshots of Our Celebration

The year's celebration was based on the theme:  
Changing World, Unchanging Light.

From the fallout of WWII, the Light continues to shine in  
our fragmented world.

## New Professorial Chair

17 Feb 2023



Rev Dr Wilfred Ho was inducted as the ACS Professor of the History of Christianity.



## Thanksgiving Service and Dinner

6 Oct 2023

Bishop Dr Titus Chung, Chairman of TTC's Board of Governors, exhorted all to serve faithfully in our troubled world.

## Anniversary Conference and Book Launch

4-5 Oct 2023



Alumni and students explored the implications of theology and technology.

## Trinity Lectures

1-4 Aug 2023



## Book Launch

23 Mar 2023



The launch of the book, *Chinese-speaking Churches and Chinese Worldwide*, explored the ministry of Chinese-speaking churches in Singapore and beyond.

Please open up  
this fold for more



Prof Murray Rae gave four public lectures on the theme "The Resurrection".

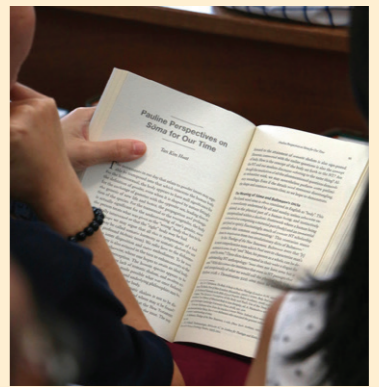
## APECSS Conference

7-9 Sep 2023



TTC hosted the Annual Conference of the Asia-Pacific Early Christian Studies Society on the theme "Pluralistic Contexts in Early Christianity".







# Trinity Lectures 2023: A Feast of Theology

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

**T**TC held its sixth Trinity Lectures series from 1 to 4 Aug 2023. The speaker was Rev Dr Murray Rae, Professor of Theology at the University of Otago. Professor Rae is one of the leading theologians in New Zealand. He has chosen “The Resurrection of Jesus Christ: Its Meaning and Mission” as the theme for his lectures.

As an ordained Presbyterian minister, Professor Rae’s work has no lack of pastoral wisdom on contemporary issues. His four lectures testify both to his keen interest in the interdisciplinary studies of biblical studies and theology, and his pastoral insights.

In the first lecture, entitled “The Evangelical Witness”, Professor Rae deliberated on what he described as Mary Magdalene’s “epistemic privilege” in coming to know before others what happened in the tomb. He then moved on to reflect upon the connection between Mary’s knowledge of Jesus’ resurrection, and her personal encounter with the risen Lord (John 20).

In his following two lectures, respectively entitled “Promise Fulfilled” and “The Creation Made New”, Professor Rae immersed the audience in God’s grand and long-standing plan of redeeming and renewing the fallen world. He then moved on to deliberate on the identity and mission of the Church under the title of “Life in Company with the Risen One” in his fourth lecture. The lectures and Q & A over the four evenings not only widened our theological horizon, they also helped deepen our appreciation and commitment to the mission of the Church.

The Trinity Lectures have been held biennially since 2011 by a succession of eminent biblical scholars and theologians. By inviting experts in biblical studies and systematic theology from around the world to address topics related to the Christian faith and witness, the College hopes to raise the biblical and theological literacy of the Christian community in Singapore. ❖



There were lively Q & A each evening with questions posed by alumni, faculty, students, and other participants.

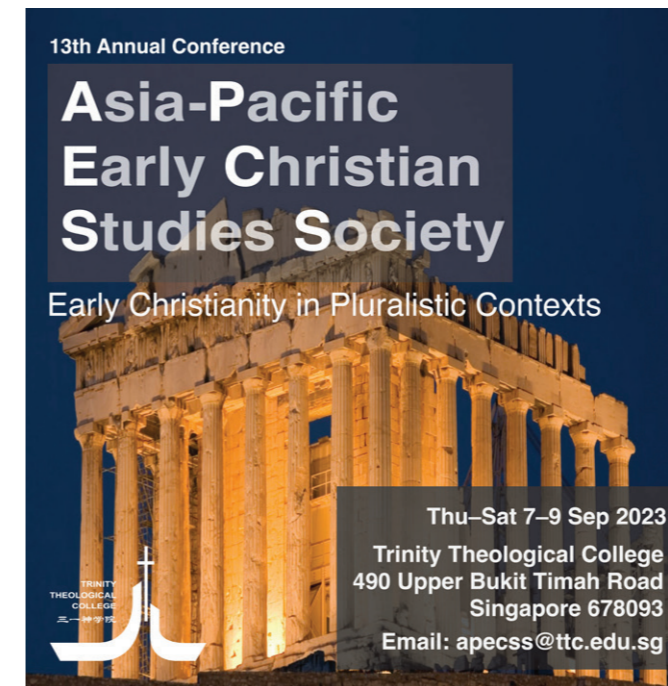


Professor Murray Rae responds to questions with Rev Dr Edmund Fong facilitating the Q & A.

# Asia-Pacific Early Christian Studies Society Conference

By Rev Dr James Lim, Lecturer in New Testament

**I**n conjunction with Trinity Theological College’s (TTC) 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, TTC hosted the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Asia-Pacific Early Christian Studies Society (APECSS) from Thu–Sat 7–9 Sep on the theme



“Early Christianity in Pluralistic Contexts”. The conference sought to address the question: “What was it like to live as a Christian in the first few centuries of the Common Era, where Christianity was still a minority movement in the larger Mediterranean world, and especially when there were significant elements of exclusivism in its faith-based claims?” About 50 scholars from 13 different countries in Asia-Pacific, North America and Europe presented papers in workshops which were also attended by 25 TTC students, exploring strategies evinced in Early Christianity for negotiating a pluralistic world. It was a world where philosophical ideas, religious claims, politics, and social practices sometimes clashed significantly, or even explosively, with Christian tenets.

The conference started and concluded with two keynote lectures by Dr Li Tang from the University of Salzburg, Austria, and Dr Tan Kim Huat from TTC. The first keynote lecture, delivered by Dr Li Tang was entitled “Encountering a Pluralistic World—Syriac Christianity along the Ancient Silk

Road”. It explored issues and challenges faced by early Christians in a pluralistic, multilingual, and multi-religious milieu as Syriac Christianity spread via the overland and maritime Silk Road, crossing various regions all the way to China. The closing keynote lecture, delivered by Dr Tan Kim Huat was entitled “Early Christianity and Anthroponymic Alteration”. It explored not only the fascinating phenomenon of name changes or anthroponymic alteration in early Christianity, but also the anomaly, especially in the New Testament, of the non-renunciation of idolatrous names.



A musical treat by Earnest and Ming Li, friends of TTC.

In between keynote lectures and workshops, participants were also treated to an evening concert of acoustic Christian music by Earnest and Ming Li and a cultural visit to the Asian Civilisations Museum with galleries featuring Asian imagination, craft, and aesthetics through various cross-cultural and pan-Asian themes. TTC also hosted a conference dinner at Chilli Padi Tok Panjang, featuring Peranakan delicacies which celebrate our local food culture.

A conference participant remarked that Singapore was truly an apt location for the theme of this year's conference with its multiracial, multicultural, multilingual, multi-religious, and pluralistic context. The conference ended on a high note with group photographs, interaction, and conversations among the participants as they looked forward to the next conference. ❖



# The Church in a Changing World

By Dr Leow Theng Huat, Lecturer in Theology

Our college's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations reached its climax in the first week of October. In addition to her annual thanksgiving service and dinner on 6 Oct, the college commemorated this special year by organising an anniversary conference with the theme "The Church in a Changing World". The English conference was held on 4 Oct, while the Chinese conference took place the following day. These were hybrid events, allowing for both onsite and online participation.

The English conference began with two keynote presentations. Dr Mark Chan spoke on "Christian Faith in a Hyper(Dis) connected World". He started by giving a detailed description of our era of digital hyperconnectivity, before presenting a diagnosis of the situation and offering insights as to how Christian discipleship is to be carried out. Dr Simon Chan then addressed the topic "Is There Such a Thing as Online Eucharist?". He lamented how our contemporary churches tended to dichotomise the spiritual and the physical, and invited us to recover a robust understanding of the church and the way Jesus is present with us in the Eucharist. These presentations were followed by a lively question and answer session, as the participants raised queries ranging from the impact of artificial intelligence to the status of online worship services.



Authors fielding questions from the audience.

The conference also saw the launch of the college's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary publication *Becoming a People of Light: For a Phygital, Hyperconnected, and Fragmented World*. This book contains articles in both English and Chinese, written by members of the TTC faculty. After complimentary copies were distributed to the conference participants, they had the opportunity to hear three of the authors present their articles: Rev Dr Chiang Ming Shun, Rev Dr Andrew Peh, and Dr Tan Kim Huat.

In order to give more opportunities for the participants to share their responses to the presentations and to hear from one another, the conference had a breakout group segment. There was lively interaction in the various groups (onsite and online), facilitated by our faculty members and senior students.

Our Principal, Rev Dr Edwin Tay, addressed us at the close of the conference, giving an exhortation based on Ps 46. He encouraged us to have a "holy confidence" in God, even as we navigate our "phygital, hyperconnected and fragmented world". All then rose to give a rousing rendition of the Trinity Anthem, before the Principal gave the benediction. ❖

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### What participants say

- I am grateful for this space to think about what we are facing in this world today.
- I am impressed by the depth of research and reflection shown by the presenters.
- I am reminded that theology should be considered ahead of pragmatism.
- I am glad for the opportunity to reconnect with fellow alumni and our lecturers.
- I see more clearly the theological underpinnings of the prevalent and practical questions we face today.
- The conference has given me a biblical and theological basis to reflect on ministry in the digital age.

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# Celebrating Seventy-Five Years

By Rev Dr Chiang Ming Shun, Associate Dean, Lecturer in Church History

TTC's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations were capped on Fri 6 Oct 2023 with the usual thanksgiving service in the morning, followed in the evening by a thanksgiving dinner, the first of such celebration dinners TTC held since the pandemic began.

Members of the Board of Governors who graced both events included Rev Dr Gordon Wong, Bishop of The Methodist Church in Singapore, Rt Rev Lu Guan Hoe, Bishop of The Lutheran Church in Singapore, and Rt Rev Christopher Chia, Moderator of The Presbyterian Church in Singapore, who were involved in the service. Rt Rev Titus Chung, Bishop of The Diocese of Singapore, preached an uplifting and encouraging sermon on the title, "Changing World, Unchanging Light", the same title as our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary book.

The dinner was held once again at the Orchid Country Club, where Archdeacon Daniel Wee represented the Anglican Church in place of his Bishop. Dinner was a large affair with almost 80 tables and nearly 800 diners, one of the largest celebration dinners in TTC's history. Dinner guests were given a copy of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary book and treated to the launch of TTC's new corporate video (available for viewing on our website).

At both events, the TTC choir with alumni was out in full force and full-throated praise, singing among other songs, "Glorious Is Thy Name" and "Our God is Real".

Visitors at both the service and dinner included former TTC lecturers Rev Dr Scott Sunquist and Rev Dr Wayne Ewing. Dr Sunquist is now the 7<sup>th</sup> President of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and the author of a series of books on the History of the Global Christian Movement, used as history textbooks at TTC. Dr Ewing is semi-retired in Colorado, but he nevertheless also made the long journey to Singapore with his son Christopher to celebrate with TTC. Dr Ewing was overheard saying that our late Principal Olin Stockwell, with whom he served, would never have imagined how TTC had grown.

After the pandemic, it was good to be able to have the wider TTC community come together in celebration and praise, and have things return to some sense of normality. Thanks be to God! ❖



Rt Rev Dr Titus Chung presides over Holy Communion.



TTC choir with alumni in praise.



A special birthday cake for the anniversary dinner.



(From left) Rev Dr Wilfred Ho, Rev Dr Wayne Ewing, Mr Christopher Ewing, and Rev Dr Gregory Goh.



# Becoming a People of Light

By Ms Khaw Siew Peng, DTh 3

Launched on Wed 4 Oct 2023 in commemoration of Trinity Theological College's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, *Becoming a People of Light: for a Phygital, Hyperconnected, and Fragmented World* is an anthology of essays written by the college's faculty (thirteen from the English Department and six from the Chinese) covering a spectrum of Christian perspectives on digital technology.

Anthologies are always a risk. Give a topic to a group of academics in different disciplines and you will be surprised at the range and diversity of opinions that come back. For this reason, the editors Rev Dr Bernard Chao and Dr Chan Yew Ming have done an exceptional job, streamlining the substance while retaining the unique voice of each contributor. Alumni of TTC will be delighted to hear, as it were, their lecturers in their element: ranging from the lyrically layered, the laser-focused, the pastorally-oriented, to the covertly humorous. Beyond the unmistakable cadence of each author, every essay is a testament to the quality we have come to expect from our faculty, providing a portal with just sufficient detail from which to explore from different perspectives the implication of digital technology for Christian theology and praxis.

For that reason, one is puzzled at the absence of bibliographies at the end of the English essays. However, this is but a minor gripe; there is much in this anthology to be savoured and pondered over. I would recommend it not just for study, but particularly for the alumnus, as a piece of TTC's history. ❖



# New Book by Faculty

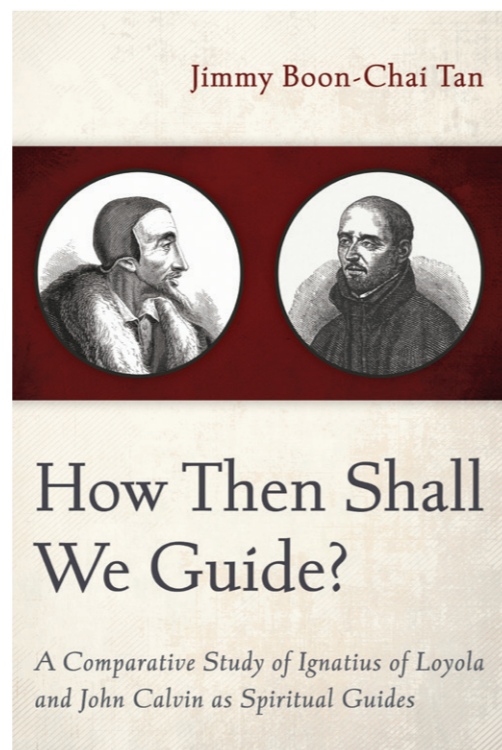
By Ms Bernice Gan, MDiv 2021

A new book by Trinity Theological College lecturer and chaplain, Rev Dr Jimmy Tan, was launched on Tue 8 Aug 2023. The launch was a lively meeting of minds on the practice of spiritual direction with a hearty dose of humour from the writer and Rev Dr Jeremy-Joe Tan, who shared his review of the book.

With spiritual direction in greater demand these days, across different traditions in the Christian faith and even across different religions, Rev Dr Jimmy Tan, in this essential book on spiritual guidance, underscores the importance of critically examining the historical context and theology behind spiritual practices and not simply adopting ecumenical spiritual practices blindly.

Tan surveyed the historical roots of spiritual direction over 1,500 years from early Christianity and outlines the theological framework for Christian spiritual direction, including the doctrinal, missiological and eschatological dimensions. He also examined the continuity and discontinuity between the Ignatian and Reformed traditions and how the two traditions can enrich one another.

This book is a useful guide for all those involved or wish to be involved in the pastoral care of souls, particularly in the area of spiritual direction and formation. Using the three-fold perspective of history, theology, and method as suggested by the author, a spiritual director can design better exercises to guide directees towards spiritual progress by first delving into their personal history and theology. ❖



# TRINITY NEWS

## Congratulations to...

Pastor Adrian Chan (MTS 2018) who was ordained by the Evangelical Free Church of Singapore at the Covenant Evangelical Free Church on 29 Jul 23.

Mr Png Eng Keat (MDiv 2019, MTh1) who was inducted into Societas Liturgica in Aug 23 in Ireland. *Societas Liturgica is an international society of liturgical scholars (300 members worldwide) dedicated to research in the area of liturgy and to ecumenical worship renewal.*

Mr Genson Teo (MDiv 2) and Karissa Chew who were blessed with their firstborn, Luke Teo Zi Heng, on 14 Oct 2023.

Mr Ang Puay Khoon (MDiv 3) and Ms Lim Bi Xiu (MDiv 2022) on their holy matrimony on 28 Oct 2023.

Benjamin Tam & Chan Xin Hui (MDiv 2020) who were blessed with their second child, Tam Ping Yang Zechariah, on 1 Nov 23.

Ilango s/o Yagambaram (MDiv 2020) and Diana Cheong (MDiv 2) on the birth of their second child, Joella Joy Ilango Cheong Min, on 2 Nov 23.

Luke Yan (MDiv 1) and his wife, Abigail, on the birth of their third son, Lemuel Yan, on 6 Nov 23.

Mr Calvin Tan (MDiv 2013) on his ordination to the priesthood in the Diocese of Singapore on 12 Nov 2023.

The Rt Rev Dr Titus Chung on his election as the 7<sup>th</sup> Archbishop of the Province of South East Asia (Anglican). His installation will be held on 23 Jan 24.

## The following alumni on their ordination in The Methodist Church in Singapore

Chinese Annual Conference (16 Nov 2023)

Ordination as Deacon:  
Rev Joseph Chen Yong Chang (MDiv 2021)  
Rev Sharon Lee Li Ping (MDiv 2005)  
Rev Teh You Siong (MDiv 2021)  
Rev Gareth Yeo Yong Tai (MDiv 2021)

Ordination as Elder:  
Rev Timothy Ang Pei-Zheng (MTh 2019)  
Rev Ong Bee Keow (MDiv 2018)  
Rev Joshua Ong Chee Xiang (BD 2018)

Trinity Annual Conference (23 Nov 2023):

Ordination as Deacon:  
Ps Isaac Tan (MDiv 2021)

Ordination as Elder:  
Rev Tay Li Ping (MDiv 2019)  
Rev Jeremy Yap (MDiv 2019)

## Condolences to...

The family of the late Rev Dr Fong Mow Hee (BD 1979, MMin 1989) who was called home to be with the Lord on 13 Sep 23.

The family of the late Pastor Tan Kim Hock (MDiv 2010, MTh 2) who was called home to glory on 26 Sep 23.

Our Principal, Rev Dr Edwin Tay, and family on the passing of his beloved grandmother, Mdm Tan Guey Goh, on 5 Nov 23.

## 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](mailto: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](http://www.ttc.edu.sg)



