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TRUMPET

VIEWS AND NEWS FROM TRINITY THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

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The Lenten Fast

By Rev Dr Samuel Wang

“Lent” comes from the Anglo-Saxon word meaning “springtime”, and it reminds us that this season in the church year is intended to be a holy springtime of the soul; a time for preparation, planting and growth. The Lenten fast is a spiritual discipline for such a purpose. It is a time of repentance, reflection, and renewal for our relationship with God.

While intermittent fasting for health is a familiar concept, the spiritual benefits of fasting are often overlooked. Understanding why and how Christians should use fasting to grow spiritually can be a source of inspiration and motivation.

Why Fast?

Firstly, Jesus encourages fasting as an act of faith. On fasting, he says “when” (Matt 6:16), not “if”. Jesus expects his disciples to fast. For a Christian, the fast is “unto the Lord”, meaning that because we have a relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ, we follow what he expects to see in our lives.

However, fasting is done out of faith in God; that is what Jesus meant by “not be seen by others” (Matt 6:18). Christians who trust in God’s justifying grace depend on the unseen yet all-seeing God for their justification. They need not seek the approval of others to justify themselves by fasting.

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Hence, fasting should not be for the appearance of righteousness (Matt 6:1) but to support a life of godliness. It is not an act of merit or a ritual to appease God but rather a practice to subdue the flesh, humble the mind, and make the person more receptive to spiritual things. Jesus says not to overindulge the body (Luke 21:34), and Paul says that the body should be disciplined and controlled (1 Cor 9:27). When fasting is done with the intent to discipline oneself by controlling our bodily desires, it will help Christians to resist worldly temptations and focus on spiritual matters.

Secondly, fasting without the goal of doing good is simply self-serving dieting or manipulating God. Isaiah 58:3-5 reminds us that God rebuked the people for performing fasting rituals while continuing in sin, showing us that the heart and true purpose behind fasting are essential. Therefore, the idea that fasting by itself (*ex opere operato*) will “force” God’s hand to work is false:

‘Why have we fasted,’ they say,
‘and you have not seen it?’
Why have we humbled ourselves,
and you have not noticed?’
(Isa 58:3)



Instead, fasting helps us train our bodies to do good. The spiritual goal of fasting is to bear good fruits out of faith in Christ.

Thirdly, fasting is urged upon us by theologians down the ages for the same reason. St John Chrysostom says fasting is meant to lead to good works:

Do you fast? Give me proof of it through your work. If you see a poor man, take pity on him. If you see a friend being honoured, do not envy him.

Do not let only your mouth fast, but also the eye, the ear, the feet, the hands, and all the members of our bodies. Let the hands fast, by being free of avarice. Let the feet fast, by ceasing to run after sin. Let the eyes fast, by disciplining them not to glare at that which is sinful... Let the ear fast... by not listening to evil talk and gossip... Let the

mouth fast from the foul words and unjust criticism. What good is it if we abstain from birds and fish but bite and devour our brothers?

Luther wrote, “Of fasting I say this: it is right to fast frequently in order to subdue and control the body. For when the stomach is full, the body does not serve for preaching, for praying, for studying, or for doing anything else that is good. Under such circumstances God’s Word cannot remain.”

How Much and What to Fast From?

There is freedom to decide how much or even what to fast from. Christian fasting can be as simple as not eating during daylight hours or reducing the portion one typically consumes. The purpose is to simplify our lives so that we can focus on God. So, one should not be preoccupied with how much or even what to fast from.

Choose a way of fasting that simplifies our lives and opens us to having more time and focus for God, fasting to the extent necessary to discipline the body. Those who presume works of fasting justify have no regard to disciplining the body but only show (to themselves or others) how much they have fasted. So, fast enough to discipline yourself, not to torture yourself.

Let us practise fasting so that it results in doing the good works that come from faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. ❖



Rev Dr Samuel Wang
Director, Field Education
Lecturer in Theology

On Spiritual Disciplines

Training a seminarian to master the contents of a theological subject involves a fairly straightforward process. There are class schedules to keep, assigned readings to complete, and projects to submit for assessment. A student committed to fulfilling all the requirements of a seminary course would have achieved a reasonable grasp of the course material.

However, mastery of theological content is not an accurate measure of spiritual progress. Experience tells us that a scripturally informed Christian may well be short-tempered and impulsive, while one who is unschooled in theology, patient and self-controlled. Christian doctrine is indispensable for spiritual formation, yet without its disciplined practice, growth in godliness is stunted at best.

The need for disciplined practice or training in the Christian life is a biblical idea. Comparing the Christian to an athlete, Paul exhorts young Timothy to “train yourself for godliness” (1 Tim 4:7). Just as runners discipline themselves to race in such a way as to obtain a perishable wreath, so “self-control in all things” is needed in our spiritual pursuit of an imperishable crown (1 Cor 9:24-27). The single-mindedness of such athletes in the way they compete became Paul’s analogy for his apostolic disposition: “forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil 3:13-14).

It is no accident then that the word *askesis*, ie, exercise, was adopted by the ancient church and applied to the Christian life. Drawn from its meaning in ancient Greek culture for athletic training, *askesis* is the spiritual equivalent to the effort needed to become proficient in art forms such as violin-playing, choral singing, or calligraphy. The main idea conveyed is that of discipline.

Spiritual disciplines such as prayer, Bible meditation, contemplation, fasting, self-examination, confession and holy conferencing, are crucial for training in godliness. They are exercises in the regimen of spiritual training to mortify our remaining sins,

order our interior lives, and rest in the life-giving presence of our loving God.

Any spiritual progress made through these disciplines is not due to transformative powers inherent in them. Neither is progress made due to the exertions of our souls and bodies per se. Becoming like Christ in our desires, thoughts, words and deeds, is the work of God’s indwelling Spirit. Spiritual disciplines are the means of grace to this end. They are freely-performed, divinely-empowered exercises of the Christian life by which the Spirit of Christ forms Christ in us.

Like all good things, spiritual disciplines can be pursued for the wrong reasons. Seeking ecstatic experiences in themselves, wanting to impress others or justify ourselves before God are perennial temptations to guard against. Of course, our motives are always mixed to some extent. Yet awareness of our mixed motives is itself a work of grace. The presence of internal disorder should motivate rather than discourage us from practising the spiritual disciplines. God in his mercy will give us the grace to live into greater purity of heart as we press on with these means of grace.

No Christian, including seminarians, can ever outgrow the need for training in godliness this side of eternity. Catechised in their own churches, students at TTC begin their theological training with some degree of familiarity with the spiritual disciplines. We encourage them to continue their practices, but to do so with a deeper understanding of their theological foundations, a more expansive vision of their historical practice and significance, and a greater degree of intentionality.

We pray that those who receive our guidance to habituate themselves to the practice of spiritual disciplines will be blessed with moments of significant encounter, as David did, with the eternal source of their souls’ deepest satisfaction and greatest joy. “My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips, when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night” (Ps 63:5-6). ❖



Chronic Consumption

By Dr Roland Chia

And he said to them, “Take heed, and beware of all covetousness; for a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.” (Luke 12:15)

One of the most distinctive features of modern capitalist societies is consumerism. However, as several scholars have pointed out, Christian theologians and ethicists have paid surprisingly little attention to this pervasive cultural phenomenon.

According to writers such as Vincent Miller, a consumerist society is one in which there are “high levels of consumption”. But it would be a mistake to regard consumption merely as the act of buying and selling. Consumption is often an intricate and convoluted process of dreaming, shopping, buying, personalising, and disposing of a good.

Furthermore, to describe our culture as consumerist is to suggest that it is a way of life celebrated by many and characterised by material affluence. In our time, consumerism has also evolved into something of an ideology that lauds the market mentality and ethos, valorising individual choice and entrepreneurship.

Scholars argue that capitalism has significantly contributed to the rise of the culture of consumerism.

Christian philosopher Nicholas Wolterstorff highlights that in pre-capitalist societies, the prevailing view of labour was that “a man does not by nature wish to earn more and more money but simply to live as he is accustomed”. However, capitalism brought about a profound shift in this traditional outlook, promoting the idea that individuals should strive to accumulate wealth and acquire goods and services.

Some writers are of the view that consumer culture is so subtle and pervasive that it is nearly impossible to escape its allure and influence. Consumer culture bestows on every member of modern society a fundamental common identity as consumers. It further suggests that it is in the act of consuming, and the things which we acquire and possess, that

shape and define who we are.

Thus, the French postmodern philosopher Jean Baudrillard argues that the commodities that we acquire are never neutral; they are often used to produce social meaning. The market does not merely respond to the needs and wants of consumers, but plays an active, if discreet, role in creating them. Advertisement and branding, for example, often ascribe symbolic meaning to certain goods and

commodities, elevating the social status of those who possess them.

Scripture provides many resources for the Christian response to consumer culture.

There are prohibitions against covetousness (Exod 20:17), and clear exhortations to prefer contentment (1 Tim 6:6-10). It warns against obsession with earthly treasures, stressing their impermanence, and urging believers to focus instead on “treasures in heaven” (Matt 6:19-21). Scripture also cautions against the dangers of greed (Eph 5:5; Col 3:5).

However, it is important that we do not misinterpret these passages to mean that Christians are required to embrace an extreme form of world-denying, anti-materialist asceticism.

The Christian response to consumerism is not anti-consumption, but the spiritual discipline of temperance and self-control, which are essential for being good stewards of God’s gifts. This requires a sound understanding that material wealth and goods are God’s gifts, and a sense of responsibility in how these resources are used.



In a culture that promotes mindless consumption, Scripture reminds us to love our neighbour, as our habits of acquisition and resource usage have a profound impact on others. This includes unseen workers who are exploited by unscrupulous companies that produce the goods that we buy impulsively.

Perhaps in our culture of abundance—and waste—Christians need to reclaim a once-central but



now marginalised virtue: frugality. In a culture of insatiable acquisition, this virtue is not only subversive—it is a form of protest.

The virtue of frugality confronts and deconstructs the powerful myths that the consumerist culture has conjured. It demythologises the view that humans have an insatiable desire for wealth and material goods, and exposes the fact that these wants are often created—and therefore can be restrained.

The virtue of frugality also challenges fashionable ideas such as therapeutic shopping, which presents consumption as the panacea to the feelings of anxiety, loneliness, or powerlessness.

Christian frugality must not be misunderstood as miserliness or a nostalgic return to the Eden of “rural simplicity”. It is in fact the means to an abundant life. It overturns the world’s understanding of what it means by a good life.

Christian frugality shows that the abundant life should not be defined as the plenitude of things, but the relationship we have—with God and with our neighbour—characterised by authenticity, depth and self-giving.

As the Roman Catholic theologian Kenneth Himes OFM has put it so eloquently and memorably, the abundant life “points towards a life of being more, not having more”. ❖



Dr Roland Chia
Chew Hock Hin Professor of Christian Doctrine
Theological and Research Advisor of the ETHOS Institute for Public Christianity



The Road to Nicaea

Source: artofwayfinding.com

By Rev Dr Chiang Ming Shun

This year 2025 is the 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed, originally adopted in AD325 at the First Council of Nicaea. While there is some controversy and dispute about the development of the Creed, it is called the only ecumenical creed because it is the only creed almost universally accepted by the Roman Catholic, the Eastern Orthodox, and major Protestant Churches. To commemorate this anniversary, we launch a three-part series exploring the Nicene Creed or more accurately the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed. Part 1 looks at creeds in general and then focuses on the background to the Council of Nicaea. In Part 2, we will examine the Council and the text of the Nicene Creed with the double procession of the Holy Spirit and the *Filioque*. In Part 3, we will look at what the Creed means for us today.

was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve”. Other similar statements of faith can be found in Phil 2:5-11, Col 1:12-20, 1 Tim 3:16 and 1 Pet 3:18-22.

This proclamation of the good news of Jesus (the *kerygma*) preceded the baptism of people who received and believed this proclamation. For example, in Acts 8, after Philip proclaims Jesus and the Ethiopian eunuch asks to be baptised, in the Western Text variant followed by the Vulgate and the King James version, the narrative continues in verse 37, “And Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” And he replied, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” The word “creed” comes from the Latin *credo* or “I believe”. And so slowly creeds were developed and made necessary for baptisms.

The Nicene Creed is the only ecumenical creed universally accepted by the Roman Catholic, the Eastern Orthodox and the Protestant Churches.

Jaroslav Pelikan and Valerie Hotchkiss in Volume 1 of their edited work *Creeds & Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition*, note examples of these early baptismal creeds. In *The Apostolic Tradition* dating back to AD215, there is a description of a three-fold baptism: the person being baptised (the catechumen) is asked if the catechumen believes in God the Father Almighty, and then in Jesus Christ and then in the Holy Spirit. Each time the catechumen replies, “I believe“, the catechumen is

Since the earliest times of the Bible, there have been brief statements of key doctrines. In Deut 6:4, there is the *Shema*, “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.” When Jesus was asked in the Gospel according to Mark, “Which commandment is the most important of all?” Jesus replied with the *Shema*.

In 1 Cor 15:3-5, Paul gives a summary of his own teachings: “that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he

baptised. Ambrose of Milan also gives an account of an interrogatory trinitarian creed at baptism. Athanasius, addressing the Roman emperor Antoninus Pius, wrote that Justin Martyr in the middle of the second century affirmed a trinitarian creed: “That we are not atheists, since we worship the creator of this universe...and that we with good reason honour Him Who has taught us these things and was born for this purpose, Jesus Christ, Who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, the governor of Judaea in the time of Tiberius Caesar, having learned that He is the Son of the true God and holding Him in the second rank, and the prophetic Spirit third in order, we shall proceed to demonstrate.”

One creed that developed from early interrogations of catechumens was the Apostles’ Creed, traditionally thought to have been composed by the Twelve Apostles with specific lines being contributed by individual apostles. The Apostles’ Creed was first mentioned in the fourth century in a letter to Pope Siricius. The present text itself first appeared in the eighth century in a handbook for pastors by Pirminius of Reichenau. It is simple and uncomplicated, and remains the most common baptismal formula in Western Christian churches. However, the Apostles’ Creed has no place in the tradition of the Eastern Orthodox Church, although it can be found in some Eastern collections of creeds.

The importance of the Apostles’ Creed can be seen not just in its insertion in the liturgy by the Emperor Charlemagne, but also in the Synod of Autun (c 670) mandating that all clergy must be able to recite The Apostles’ Creed and the “Faith of St Athanasius” without mistake. This Faith of St Athanasius is today the Athanasian Creed. It dates from the fifth or sixth century and is in fact not composed by St Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria in Egypt in the fourth century.

Bishop Athanasius was one of the great opponents of Arianism, a form of Unitarian theology proposed in the fourth century by a fellow Alexandrian, the presbyter Arius who was perhaps not its sole originator. Arianism stressed the uniqueness of God who alone is self-existent and immutable. But Arianism then contended that Jesus is not self-existent; he is a created being and therefore cannot be the immutable God.

Athanasius and others argued this reduced Jesus to a demigod and reintroduced polytheism since worship of Jesus continued. Although Arius was condemned at a synod in Alexandria in AD321, he and his followers remained influential and Arianism continued to grow in popularity, spreading across

Egypt and North Africa. Many prominent people, including Bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia who was later to baptise the Roman Emperor Constantine I, accepted Arianism.

Emperor Constantine, then a recent convert to Christianity but still an unbaptised catechumen, learned of this dispute with the potential to split not just the Church but his Roman Empire. He wrote to both parties to seek a resolution. When that failed, the Emperor called for the first council of the Christian Church.



Source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicene_Creed

That First Council of Nicaea was held in an ancient town in Türkiye founded in about 300BC. The town is called Iznik today and it sits on the eastern shores of Lake Iznik. It is about 80km from Emperor Constantine’s capital Byzantium, later Constantinople and then Istanbul. Much later Nicaea would become briefly the capital of the Ottoman Empire. At that first Council in Nicaea, the Emperor Constantine presided over the opening session and hoped that the Council would resolve the whole issue of Arianism and other problems.

Did it? Stay tuned.... ❖



Rev Dr Chiang Ming Shun
Lecturer in Church History

Embodied and Rooted: A Look at TTC's Curricular Ethos

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

The Growth of TTC and Its Curriculum

Church-governed seminaries are not uncommon, but a seminary governed by four denominations and thriving for more than 75 years is a rarity indeed.

Governed by the Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Lutheran Churches, TTC stands as a unique example of a union college. While its governance embodies the spirit of Christian unity in an ever more divided world, the academic life of the college reflects its commitment to both Christian scholarship and pastoral formation.

Over the years, TTC has grown into a mature seminary, widely recognised within and beyond Christian circles for its academic rigour and theological engagement in the public sphere. Its student body and faculty have also grown in diversity. Churches from different traditions, including independent churches, have been sending their members to TTC for training. Theologians from outside the governing denominations have also been engaged to teach at the college.

As the college's website succinctly states, TTC's mission is to provide a curriculum "to develop in students a mature understanding of the historic and biblical faith that is grounded in the reflective study of Scripture and critical engagement with the life and ministry of the church through an academically, spiritually, and vocationally formative curriculum that reflects a variety of church traditions from an Asian perspective."

Pandemic Disruption and Technological Challenge

Five years ago, the Covid-19 pandemic erupted, profoundly disrupting every aspect of human life, including education—theological education being no exception. As that storm subsided, another wave swiftly followed—the rise of artificial intelligence (AI).

This article will first highlight that while the

pandemic significantly impacted TTC, it also presented a crucial opportunity for the college to clarify its curricular ethos. By unwaveringly upholding face-to-face, in-person teaching and learning, TTC has emerged from the crisis even stronger, enriched with a deeper appreciation of the significance of embodied theological formation.

Regarding the impact of AI's generative capabilities in producing new content such as text, images and videos, the second part of this article will examine the enduring relevance of TTC's longstanding curricular emphasis on *ad fontes* ("back to the fountains or sources" in Latin). Why this emphasis has become indispensable in light of AI's growing influence will be briefly explained.

Persevering with Embodied Teaching and Learning during the Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has reshaped not only the way people work but also how they learn. Travel restrictions and lockdowns made online learning a necessity to minimise disruption. Citing benefits such as eliminating the need for commuting and enabling borderless learning, some have gone further, advocating online education as an alternative to traditional face-to-face learning.

To avoid confusing educational strategies with long-term educational aims, TTC has chosen to evaluate the promises of online education in light of the college's vision and core mission.

As previously mentioned, TTC strives to offer "an academically rigorous, spiritually and vocationally formative curriculum". The pandemic disruption provided a unique opportunity for the college to carefully examine the distinct roles of online and face-to-face learning in the process of theological formation.

While acknowledging the convenience and many benefits of online learning, TTC's faculty and administration maintain that theological formation

which encompasses spiritual formation, character building, the honing of ministry skills, and vocation identification, requires a face-to-face, embodied learning environment.

Therefore, even during the pandemic, face-to-face learning remained the norm and the preferred mode of theological education at TTC. Whenever possible and permitted, faculty and students were required to return to the campus.

Looking back, I am grateful for how TTC has emerged from the Covid-19 crisis stronger as a seminary committed to an embodied form of education as an indispensable part of ministry preparation.

Preserving the *Ad Fontes* Ethos in the Age of AI

As the pandemic waned, a new wave emerged—the relentless surge of artificial intelligence, bringing new issues to the surface. While there are undoubtedly welcome developments, there are also problematic practices, such as using AI as a shortcut to generate term papers and even sermons.

How should TTC respond to the growing impact of AI? Rather than focusing on the specifics of academic regulations regarding AI usage—important as they are—we sought to reflect, at a more foundational level, an important resource that has long been TTC's curricular ethos.

Ad fontes is a longstanding curricular focus of TTC. The Latin phrase was a rallying slogan during the Renaissance and Reformation, emphasising a return to original sources. It was used by the reformers to emphasise the need to return to the Bible as the source of Christian faith and practices.

The followings words, found on TTC's website, set forth the back-to-the-sources emphasis underlying the design of TTC's basic degree programmes:

Ad fontes is one major concern but this is emphasised not out of antiquarian interest, but for the sake of feeding upon and mining the God-given resources for the tasks of engaging creatively with the world and shepherding God's flock. Times change but the Word of God endures forever.

As a result of this emphasis, TTC's curriculum places great importance on the rigorous study of the Bible as the foundation of Christian faith and ministry, as well as the source of our vision and aspirations. Students are taught to continually seek and engage with the Word of God, equipping them as future pastors and church leaders to shepherd God's people to witness for Christ, wherever they are, in a creative and biblically faithful way.

As we enter the age of AI, despite the helpful and potentially positive developments that may come with its rise, it would be naïve and disastrous to ignore the dangers of not only fake information but also the distortions of half-truths. Therefore, facing the rise of AI, *ad fontes* remains a timely and indispensable reminder to all of us that nothing—not even a powerful learning machine—can or should substitute our personal study and diligent engagement with the Word of God.

Viewed in this light, preserving the curricular ethos of "back to the fountains" is a crucial starting point of TTC's response to the growing capabilities of AI. ❖

Visiting Research Student from Asian Theological Seminary (ATS)

By Dr Khaw Siew Ping
Warden, Sophia Hall, Research Associate

Ronaldo Magpayo was a visiting scholar who was here at TTC for two months in the first semester of the 2024/2025 academic year.

Tell us more about yourself

I have been pastoring Sumapa Christian Church in the outskirts of Metro Manila for the past 30 years. I am a visiting Professor in the Theology Department at Asian Theological Seminary, and I am pursuing a PhD in Contextual Theology.

My wife is a dietician and I have two children: a girl and a boy.

What is your area of research?

My dissertation explores the Lord's Supper among the Brethren Churches in the Philippines. From the responses I received from church members, people do not understand the importance of the Lord's Supper; we are just following what the older missionaries taught us.

What is most memorable in your time at TTC?

Your superb library! Both the abundant resources available and its quietness. In fact, it was at TTC that I fully appreciated that prayer is listening to God. I have been memorising some psalms to recite from memory every morning.

The chapel services gave me the opportunity to experience more liturgical and sacramental forms of worship. Also, at TTC, I had a chance to listen to José Casanova and Peter Phan teach in person.

I appreciate the community here, especially the Myanmar brothers. Dr Chan Yew Ming and Suat Leng have been very accommodating and helpful too.

How have you benefitted from being at TTC?

Coming here gave me the space to really focus on my research. I produced 20 pages of writing in my two months here, which I presented at the postgrad colloquium on 1 Nov 2024.

Dr Tan Kim Huat was so generous with his time, giving insights for my paper. Dr James Lim gave me very useful input on Pauline writing on the Lord's Supper although he was on sabbatical. Particularly the biblical theological aspect: TTC helped me to focus on the Christological aspect.

At the faculty colloquium, I saw how faculty members presented and critiqued papers and articles with collegiality and professionalism. I will bring these practices back and suggest to the faculty to have this kind of environment to get feedback on our work.

Any downsides?

Too much Singaporean food! But I still long for the comfort of Filipino food. That is why I appreciate Dr and Mrs Simon Chan inviting me to their home for meals.

What will you be doing after completing your research?

After I complete my PhD as a faculty-in-development, I will be teaching in the theological department in Asian Theological Seminary as a part-time faculty member. ❖



Ronaldo (extreme right) enjoying a meal with Myanmar post-graduate students.

Christianity, Power and Violence

On 22 Oct 2024, Rev Dr Chiang Ming Shun presented a paper on *Blood and Love: Christianity, Power and Violence in the Long 19th Century* at the University of Edinburgh. He was invited by the Centre of the Study of World Christianity, and he gave a global survey of how Christianity was not only enmeshed with power, politics and violence in a time of massive transformation, but also how violence



Rev Dr Chiang presenting his paper.

was used against Christians. The paper was a shortened version of his chapter in the forthcoming 19th century volume in the Bloomsbury series on *A Cultural History of Christianity*. Dr Chiang delivered his paper in the



The School of Divinity, New College, University of Edinburgh

University's School of Divinity at New College, in beautiful Hogwarts-like buildings, in the presence of the founding director and current co-directors of the Centre of the Study of World Christianity, Professor Brian Stanley, Professor Emma Wild-Wood and Dr Alexander Chow respectively, as well as the University's Professor of Divinity, Rachel Muers, the first woman appointed to the post since the founding of the university 500 years ago. The event was also live-streamed internationally.

Rev Dr Chiang lectures both in the History of Global Christianity and Methodism at TTC. ❖

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Date and time Fri-Sat 9-10 May 2025; starts 9am on Friday and ends 5pm on Saturday
Venue Trinity Theological College
Retreat directors Rev Dr Jimmy Tan and Rev Dr Niam Kai Huey
Cost \$245, inclusive of accommodation (single room), meals, materials, and GST
Capacity 12 retreatants
Registration Go to ttc.edu.sg/english/EasterRetreat2025, or scan the QR code for details and registration



Student Council 2025

The TTC Student Council 2025 was installed on Fri 14 Feb 2025 by Principal Rev Dr Edwin Tay. Incoming president, Mr Elisha Amalraj Philip (MDiv 2), prayed for God to stir the hearts of the community to love him more deeply, seek him more earnestly, and to serve him more faithfully. He prayed that God would impress upon the new council that the work he had begun in them was not just for that day but a lifetime of service in his kingdom. 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 the outgoing Student Council President, Mr Huang Qi Yuan Benjamin (MDiv 3), to Mr Philip, an act which marked the beginning of the active service of the new student council. May God grant a servant's heart and joy to the 35 council members as they shoulder responsibilities across 41 ministry areas. ❖



1. Elisha Amalraj Philip, 2. Lyu Jing, 3. Chua Hoe Hwee, Justin, 4. Tan Lee Nah Catherine,
5. Albert William, 6. Lin Zhicheng, 7. Tham Zhi Yang, Ezra, 8. Tan Jia Hui, 9. Lim Ai Yee,
10. Yeo Fei Wen Kyle, 11. Lim Jun Bin Edison Daniel, 12. Kannan s/o Kumaran, 13. Zhang Jiali Kelly,
14. Liao Qiewan, 15. Wong Hing Hing, 16. Cheng Kim Meng, 17. Sentiakum Yaden, 18. Xu Jiaen,
19. Sim Kian Huat Nigel, 20. Rastus Chow Yong En, 21. Gan Ying, 22. Seah Pei Tse Sarah Kimberly,
23. Zhu Siyao, 24. Chai Ting Hong Joshua Rusly, 25. Lee Siew Fen Rachel, 26. Lim Yu Siang Justin,
27. Zhang Kun, 28. Angie Chew Lee Cheng, 29. Chen Pian Xiang, 30. Chua Lian Choo Pearl,
31. Yin Limin, 32. Yin, Shengge, 33. Lam Jing Kang Felix, 34. Tay Wei Sheng Benedict,
35. Bok Xin Yi Annabelle

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

Let's Play Ball! Inter-College Games 2025

By Tan Jia Hui, MDiv 1



Five seminaries came together for the Inter-College Games this year.

On a sunny Fri 7 March 2025 afternoon, faculty members and students from the Baptist Theological Seminary (BTS), Discipleship Training Centre (DTC), East Asia School of Theology (EAST), Singapore Bible College (SBC), and Trinity Theological College (TTC) came together for our annual Inter-College Games (ICG).

All participants first gathered at Ang Mo Kio Methodist Church for a simple yet meaningful time of worship and prayer before heading off to Ang Mo Kio-Bishan Park for the kick-offs. On the competition slate that afternoon were games like Bingo, a relay race, soccer, captain's ball, dodgeball, a Bible-based scavenger hunt, international and Chinese chess, and board games.

The normally tranquil AMK-Bishan Park was shaken with claps, whoops and cheers of the crowd of around 300 participants and supporters. While everyone competed with excellence and a strong desire to win, the spirit of unity was evident. We were delighted to retain our championship for soccer and emerged victorious for both dodgeball and international chess.

More importantly, everyone was grateful for the opportunity to build new friendships and renew old ones. It was most encouraging to experience the fellowship amongst seminarians from different institutions, all desiring to be equipped for the furtherance of God's kingdom.

We extend our gratitude to EAST as the host for this year's event and Ang Mo Kio Methodist Church for the usage of their sanctuary, and look forward to next year's ICG.

Glory be to God alone! ❖



TTC representatives skipping their way through the ICG



Team TTC swapped books for boots on the soccer pitch.

Ringling in Chinese New Year 2025

Tan Jia Hui, MDiv 1

On the ninth day of the Chinese New Year, Thu 6 Feb 2025, faculty members, staff, janitors, students, and family members of the Trinity Theological College community came together for our annual Chinese New Year celebration.



A home away from home—family groups anticipate *yu sheng* tossing.

The vibrant, red decorations in the dining hall set the stage for the festivities and traditional Chinese New Year songs lifted everyone's mood. Very quickly, everyone warmed up to one another as we rambunctiously played games to pit our skills and wits on our knowledge of Chinese New Year greetings and song lyrics. Still, each one of us was well aware that the faithfulness of God remained the centre and reason for our celebration. We were reminded to share God's love when we all joined in a simple community dance titled *Living out His Love*. We ended the celebration with the tossing of *yu sheng* and celebratory feasting.

We praise God for his faithfulness last year, this year, and for evermore! May we stay faithful in our journey and service to God, for the advancement of his kingdom! ❖

Ash Wednesday: A Reflection

By Png Eng Keat, MTh 2

On 5 March 2025, Trinity Theological College held its yearly Ash Wednesday midday chapel service, marking the beginning of Lent, the penitential season leading up to the celebration of Easter. The service opened with the Taizé hymn, *Jesus, Remember Me*, echoing the plea of the penitent thief crucified with our Lord (Luke 23:42). Its repeated refrain, "Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom", reminded attendees of their humble position before God and not to presume on their salvation.



The imposition of ashes was observed at the Ash Wednesday service.

Rev Dr Samuel Wang delivered a sermon on Matt 6 that emphasised the right disposition to take toward Lenten spiritual disciplines. He stressed that almsgiving, prayer, and fasting during Lent are not means to earn salvation, or public displays of piety. Rather, they are ways to deepen our relationship with the Father, with whom we already possess a relationship through Christ. As we have been accepted by God, we are liberated from any need for performative spirituality.

The imposition of ashes followed, accompanied by the solemn words from Gen 3:19: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return". This simple ritual act powerfully reminded participants of their mortality, the gravity of their transgressions, and the divine call to repentance. The service ended in the same way it began, with a reprise of *Jesus, Remember Me*, inviting all to enter Lent with reverent and contrite hearts trusting in God's mercy. ❖

TRINITY NEWS

Congratulations to...

Rev Dr Samuel Wang (MDiv 2004, faculty member) on his appointment as a member of the Lutheran-Catholic Commission on Unity by the Lutheran World Federation in June 2024.

Ms Tran Ha Thien An (MDiv 2024) and Mr Nguyen Vu on their holy matrimony on 26 Oct 2024.

Bishop Dr Victor Tinambunan (DTh 2013) on his election as the Bishop of Huria Kristen Batak Protestan, Indonesia on 5 Dec 2024.

Rev Ho Chee Sin (BTh 1963, MMin 1978) on his conferment of the title of Bishop Emeritus of The Methodist Church in Singapore on 5 Dec 2024.

Anthony Peh (BD 3) and his wife, Elora Ang, who welcomed their second child, Ariel Peh, on 7 Jan 2025.

Newly-weds Melody Leong (BD 2021) and Joel Tan who celebrated their special day on 22 Feb 2025.

Ms Divinia Tan (MTS 2) and Mr Anthony Tan on the birth of their firstborn, Elizabeth, on 3 Mar 2025.

Ms Michelle Koh (MDiv 2) and Mr Matthew Ho on the arrival of their bundle of joy, Deborah Ho, on 6 Mar 2025.

Rev Dr Caleb Soo Lee Chong (MTh 1987; faculty member 1994-1998; guest lecturer) on his installation as Moderator of The Presbyterian Church of Singapore at PCS's 51st Session of the Synod Annual General Meeting on 24 Mar 2025. He was elected as Synod Moderator at PCS's 50th Session of the Synod Annual General Meeting on 18 Mar 2024.

Mr Tan Jia Hui (MDiv 1) and Ms Jamantha Lim who welcomed their firstborn, Ava Tan Jing Yi, on 2 Apr 2025.

Condolences to...

Rev Tay Hong Ern (MDiv 2014) and family on the passing of his brother, Mr Tay Mong Ern, on 6 Dec 2024.

The family of the late Mr Shaun Lim Zhi Hao (MDiv 3) who went home to the Lord on 14 Dec 2024.

The family of the late Mr Alfred Chan Hock Yuen (member, TTC Finance Committee) who went to be with the Lord on 17 Dec 2024.

Mr Roger Ong (BTh 2000) and family on the passing of his beloved father Mr Ang Beng Choon@Ong Beng Teck on 26 Feb 2025.

Mr Steven Tan (MDiv 2019) and family on the passing of his brother, Mr Victor Tan, on 23 Mar 2025.



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We would be pleased to discuss this 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



TTC is pleased to offer a series of lectures for the Christian public for the third quarter of 2025. 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.



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

Contextualization and Mission*

by Rev Dr Andrew Peh

Mondays, 7, 14, 21, 28 Jul; 4, 11, 18 Aug
7.30–9.30pm via Zoom

**REGISTRATION
OPENS
WED 7 MAY 2025**

Living Biblically: How to (and how not to) Interpret and Apply Scripture

by Rev Gilbert Lok

Tuesdays, 8, 15, 22, 29 Jul; 5, 12, 19 Aug
7.30–9.30pm via Zoom

Letter to the Romans

by Rev Dr Leonard Wee

Wednesdays, 9, 16, 23, 30 Jul; 6, 13, 20 Aug
7.30–9.30pm via Zoom

Natural Theology

by Dr Andrew Loke

Thursdays, 10, 17, 24, 31 Jul; 7, 14, 21 Aug
7.30–9.30pm via Zoom

Discipling Men for their Kingdom Mandate and Mission

by Rev Kirk Tan, Rev Lek Yong Teck, Rev Hon Chin Foang and Mr Calvin Yeo

**IN-PERSON
WORKSHOP**

Saturdays, 19, 26 Jul; 2 Aug
8.30am–1pm at Trinity Theological College

* A required course for the Licentiate in Mission Practice

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Wed 13 Aug 2025 | 8.30am–2pm
Trinity Theological College
490 Upper Bukit Timah Rd
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2025年8月13日 (周三) | 上午8点30分至2点
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TRINITY THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

490 Upper Bukit Timah Road
Singapore 678093
Email: info@ttc.edu.sg
Website: www.ttc.edu.sg
Tel: (65) 6767 6677

