

LTS

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NEWS

Grow through
the Cracks
on Your Journey
through Life



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Editor:

Dr. Stefan GRADL

Editorial board:

Ms. Piano CHOW, Elder K. C. MA

Publisher:

Dr. Simon CHOW

Mailing Address:

Lutheran Theological Seminary,
50 To Fung Shan Road,
Shatin, Hong Kong.

Telephone:

852-2691-1207

Website:

https://www.lts.edu/2013/e_main.php#e_contact.php

Email:

publication@lts.edu

Statement of Purpose:

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

Donation

To make a donation to support LTS, there are three methods and receipts will be sent back afterwards.

1. A check payable to the "Lutheran Theological Seminary" may be sent to the mailing address above.
2. A deposit may be made to Dah Sing Bank in Hong Kong, Account No: 040-645-701-23889.
3. For US tax deduction, a check in US\$ payable to "Friends of LTS-USA" & Canada may be sent to Mimi Borchers, 160 Third Street, Ste 102 Pittsburg, CA 94565, USA.



A fascinating photo, don't you think?

A plant breaks through the asphalt which seemed to be impenetrable. The soft shoots push through the hard asphalt surface. Green appears where previously only grey prevailed.

At first glance, it seems impossible. And yet it is not. Probably, the shoot in the photo comes from another plant that we don't see at all. Its roots have spread under the tar cover in the ground. From below, the growing plant exerts pressure. Very tiny cracks appear in the asphalt. And the tiny cracks become small cracks, the small cracks become larger ones. All this happens at first unnoticed, in the dark, under the ground. But then the time has come: the plant, which seems so soft and weak, breaks through the asphalt that seems so hard and impenetrable. The plant succeeds and makes its way to sun, air and light.

The moment I write this editorial, all of our lives are challenging. Hong Kong faces different problems. In Myanmar, the military junta rules brutally against its own people. In Europe, one country invades another and wants to destroy it. There is talk of the use of nuclear weapons.

These times are also challenging for the LTS community. The pandemic has changed life on campus a lot. For a long time zoom replaced personal contact. The number of international students has fallen decreased remarkably because, due to Covid and the political situation, students from the Mekong region could not enter Hong Kong. And the future is uncertain: How will everything become? Sometimes, the problems seem to be grey and hard as asphalt, impenetrable and unsolvable.

But there is something else that can give us strength: God's Word. Countless times God calls us to be confident. One example is Joshua. He is faced with huge tasks that can hardly be mastered. Problems whose solution is a long way off. In this situation, God says to him: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9).

God promises Joshua to be with him. And he also gives us this commitment. God's Word gives us the perseverance to get through all the difficulties. God's Word gives us the strength to resist problems. It gives us the power to break through to sun, air and light. The soft breaks through the hard, the green defeats the gray.

A small departure and new beginning is also this LTS News. After years of pause, there is now an English-language edition again. It will be published twice a year, in spring and autumn. It is intended to be a source of information for all those who feel connected to the LTS, in Hong Kong and elsewhere.

In Christ,

Stefan Gradl



Amazing Grace

Sharing before my Retirement

Dr. Simon Chow

President of LTS

Invited by colleagues of the LTS News to bid my farewell before retirement in an article in the coming issue, I would like to share a little the testimony of my life and my ministry with inspiration drawn in the course of teaching “Revelation to John” this semester.

I. The Book of Revelation encourages Christians to be firm in their faith and lead a victorious life through Christ. It also refers to the liberation of the Israelites in the Book of Exodus to emphasize that the Lord is almighty, and He is the Beginning and the End (Alpha and Omega). With steadfast love, He sits on the throne. The purpose of the children of God to be liberated from Egypt is to worship God, as stipulated in Exodus 3:18; 5:1 and 12:31. Perhaps for this reason, there are numerous passages and scenes of worshipping God in the Book.

I am the first-generation Christian in my family. When I was young, I studied at a Christian boarding school where I heard the Gospel and was greatly moved. Unfortunately, in my youth I fell into bad company. Claiming to explore my new world, I left the school and often stayed away from home. I was lost like a prodigal son. For six long years, I was in a deep mire and I could not climb out by myself.

Yet, God saved me. The Gospel seed planted in my heart urged me to repent. What joy it was when I was finally set free by God! How eager I was to worship God when I was free from sin! How grateful and joyous I have been every time I read the scriptures and worship in the church. I well understand that being able to worship God is grace. Little did I imagine that what I learned in my youth is an important message in the Book of Revelation.

In Luke 22:32, the Lord Jesus says to Simon Peter, “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you..., but I have prayed for you that... when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” Likewise, those who have been set free by God should lead other people to liberation from sin and worship God

together. The daily performance of numerous angels, the four living creatures and twenty-four elders in heaven described in Revelation 4:8-11 is to worship God. Isn't it a blessing for us to have a first taste of such joy of worshipping God? To be set free by God is to worship Him. This is my testimony.

II. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in theology from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in 1981, I began my service in church. In the coming July, I shall receive a long service award for forty years of service at the Annual General Meeting of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong. How time flies! Forty years have gone like the wind. I recall the words: “Remember the long way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, in order to humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commandments” (Deuteronomy 8:2). This verse explains to the Israelites God has His reason to let them experience the bitterness in the wilderness, and indeed it is all the grace of God. Isn't it also my life's experience? I still have lots of memories about my forty years of service in the ministry, in which I encountered difficulties, setbacks, temptations and weakness. But God so loved me that He gave me a taste of sweetness every time I ran to Him for help. God blessed me with a warm and loving home and was always there to guide me, refine me, and discipline me. Being the light for my path, He enabled me to get up and continue to forge forward even at times of despair. The tests taught me to follow in the footsteps of Christ, free from fear of suffering. I cheered myself on to bear the unbearable and endure the unendurable. “To be a new creation every day” has become the motto of my life. There is a Chinese saying which says, “An uncut jade is of no use, and wisdom of life is only gained from learning.” The forty years of my service is all of grace. This is my testimony.

III. To the Chinese, sixty years is a “jiazi”, the completion of a full sexagenary circle. I shall turn seventy in



September this year. In the Book of Revelation, there are a lot of “seven”, such as seven seals, seven bowls, seven spirits, seven angels and seven churches, etc. Seven means perfection. Seventy is also a special number in the Bible, as can be seen in Genesis 46:27; Numbers 11:16; 2 Chronicles 36:21; Jeremiah 25: 11-12 and Daniel 9: 2, 24, etc. Psalm 90: 10 says that “the days of our life are seventy years, or perhaps eighty, if we are strong”. Isn't it a blessing for me to reach seventy and still have a vision to serve the Lord with strength?

Seventy is the sum of thirty and forty. God divided my seventy years into two clear phases. It seems that much time in my first thirty years (1952-1982) was wasted. Yet, in retrospect, it was the time when God saved me, educated me, and enlightened me. Less than a year after graduating from the seminary, I was sent as a pioneer to start a congregation on Tsing Yi Island in 1982. Being a novice pastor, failure in the ministry was inevitable. However, with the abundant grace of God and through His blessing and guidance, the Tsing Yi Lutheran Ling Kung Church and Carpenter Lutheran Church were established respectively. When I left for Sweden to further my study in 1988, the former had become a self-reliant and self-supporting church, while the latter was a preaching centre in its early stage.

With the blessing of the Lord, I passed the doctorate oral examination at the Uppsala University in Sweden in November 1995. I was 43 years old by the time I received the doctorate degree after studying for seven years. Yet, I knew very well that my knowledge was shallow. In that December, I returned to Hong Kong to serve in the seminary. In my twenty-six years of service, I took on both academic and administrative

responsibilities. In 2009, I assumed the president post and shouldered the responsibility of leading the seminary. I might seem like a competent leader to some, but I know my limitations. As says in Psalm 127: 1, “Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain”. Without the Words of God and the prayers of many brothers and sisters, both local and aboard, I could not have been humble and listen to advice and, in that case, I who should be leading in the front would have already become the last. In retrospect, what I can say is, “God’s guidance is most amazing”. This is my testimony.

The first and the second half of my life are inseparable. I am grateful to my parents for bringing me into this world in the 1950s and raising me amidst all kinds of hardships. At that time, Hong Kong had an influx of refugees from the Mainland, and the government relocated them to remote hilly areas to build their own shelters. Most were in deep poverty and could barely make ends meet. Many teenagers had to work in factories as child labourers. Growing up in such circumstances, empty reclamation sites, the mountains and seaside became the playgrounds and the arenas of me and other children; and squatter areas, resettlement estates and factories were the world I roamed about. I saw how the poor lived in helplessness in a community full of exploitation, crime, and evil forces. I found how precious were the support and love which remained steadfast when being forsaken and deserted in the midst of danger and calamity. I deeply understand that I would not have been able to get through the second part of my life journey without the refinement of the first.

Praise the Lord for He is praiseworthy. And His faithfulness and planning are the most gracious. I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord (Psalm 116:12-13).

Greeting from our New Faculty Member

Dr. Friedemann Barniske

Our airplane was almost empty when we took off from Frankfurt to Hong Kong in October. It was our first flight since early 2020 and the whole family was more than excited and a bit nervous too when leaving Germany for settling in Asia. The whole family, that is my wife Rev. Miriam Sporn, our three sons Cornelius (12), Benedikt (9) & Ferdinand (6) and myself Rev. Dr. Friedemann Barniske.

Before coming to Hong Kong, we lived in Neuendettelsau where I served at Augustana-Hochschule for seven years as a lecturer of Systematic Theology. When Mission One World was looking for a Systematic Theologian to serve at LTS, we decided to take the challenge and move to another country in order to support the Lutheran Churches in Hong Kong. In fact, I had visited the city before in early 2019 and was grateful for the opportunity to live and serve here with my family.

Born in 1980 I grew up as a reverend's son near Berlin in East Germany where I experienced the life and faith of a Christian minority. At school I had to explain my Christian believe to the other children who did not know about religion at all. Later I followed my parents' footsteps who were both serving the Church. I studied evangelical theology in Halle-Wittenberg (where I met my lovely wife), Jerusalem, Göttingen and Neuendettelsau. There I also received a D. Th. for my dissertation on Hegel's "Theory of the Sublime: On the boundary between Theology and Philosophical Aesthetics" (Tübingen 2019). Crossing a bridge between different people, church and secular world, theology and life, teaching and prayer is my goal. Therefore, I appreciate the true combination of theological academics and church life as practised at LTS. Faith



shall always inspire our academical research as this should help explain Christian faith's essence.

Of course, everyone is facing rather difficult times due to the pandemic. But since our arrival at Hong Kong, my family and I already were lucky to experience God's grace in many ways: We received a very warm welcome by colleagues and students of LTS. We could enjoy a lot of happy services and gatherings on the campus and the Lower Dormitory like the Founder's Day or the celebration of Sweet December, which gave our boys the opportunity to practice their dancing skills. The children found new schools and we settled down in Sai Kung. But most of all, the teaching and praying at LTS is a great joy! May our good Lord bless the community at LTS and keep us in faith always!



Students' Sharing

What a wonderful time in Lutheran Theological Seminary

Karan Besra

I am Karan Besra from Nepal. My church is the Nepal Evangelical Lutheran Church (NELC), Rangeli-2, Morang, Nepal. I was so blessed to study at the Lutheran Theological Seminary (LTS). Like dreams come true. God is so amazing. It is a miracle because He gave me a golden opportunity to come to LTS to get my first theology degree.

To come to LTS was out of my imagination, in those days, I just heard about Hong Kong from a Nepali love song. Hong Kong was only in my dreams and I never thought that I would study theology in LTS. Everything came very surprisingly. I had not mapped out any plan nor firmed up my decision to go to LTS to study theology. I denied the offer many times to go to study theology because my concept was just that it would waste time and money. And the main reason was the money. My family background was middle class, so I used to manage everything for my family.

God is so good all the time. He gave me an amazing surprise and showed me a new chapter of my life. If I tell you about LTS and how good to stay there to study, I cannot express in words nor compare it with other institutions. LTS is not only an academic institution but also a godly and admirable home where I got spiritual brothers, sisters, and friends. I met many enthusiastic hearts who always support me to uplift my academic journey. LTS has rewarded me with a valuable life journey which is the most precious than other valuable things. It has opened my spiritual eyes widely to serve the children of God in this world.

Many things, relatives, friends, and spiritual leaders I have lost during my study in LTS, but in those days, God sent me many spiritual sisters and brothers to take care of me. I was in trouble many times but each and every time, God uplifted me through different honorable professors who have the unconditional love of God. The love of God has power, peace, freedom, comfort, joy, and blessing, and all those lovely things are the fruit of the Spirit got in LTS.

It was a miracle for me when I arrived at LTS for the first time. I found many of God's children in every corner of Hong Kong before my arrival at LTS. They helped me and welcomed me very surprisingly. LTS has taught me many ways to improve my study both spiritually and academically. All such training and teachings were most memorable in my life. God gave me the new and solid foundation of life in LTS. The new foundation of life is to be confident and smart in leadership. A leader in the church should overcome different kinds of challenges, worries, and problems and solve them with the training I got from LTS.

LTS is my Godly home where I learned about various kinds of cultures, through family members from different parts of the world. I met a new community, new families, new cultures, identities, and attractive norms and values. There are some beautiful moments of celebrations in LTS, and I have gained another new chapter in my life.

I got golden opportunities to display my God gifts which are dynamic and the most valuable in my life. LTS has opened new doors for my life to serve people in Nepal. So, I would like to thank so many people I love, viz. president, faculty, staff, students, community, friends, partners, and all members of LTS.

I will miss them always and will remember in my personal prayers about LTS. And there are lots of words to talk about LTS. But there is a time for everything, we should respect and make best use of our time wisely according to the situation. Because God has blessed us all the time. I really enjoyed it, other than studying, also having lots of fun, hiking, games, traveling, swimming, and family gathering which are the most memorable in LTS.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,
Karan Besra

Students' Sharing

Nora Müller

Dear LTS family and readers,

As my time at LTS has come to an abrupt and earlier end, I would like to look back on the time I spent here in Hong Kong and specifically on To Fung Shan.

I arrived here in the end of August, after two weeks of compulsory quarantine, which unfortunately prevented me from joining the LTS Retreat Camp in Cheung Chau. However, even though I missed this bonding opportunity and arrived at a very quiet and empty campus, I was greeted warmly and looked after by the few people there at that time. After my then roommates returned to the lower Dormitory in which I had been given my room they integrated me instantly into the International-Dorm-Family. Thus, the semester started, and I was lucky partake in several very interesting courses (coincidentally many of them by the two German professors at LTS). Especially as we were a very diverse group of students, the class discussions never failed to be incredibly interesting and surprising in all possible ways. Other than that, campus life, though reduced due to the pandemic situation, was rich and a great experience. Festivals like the Lantern Festival, Sweet December organised by my Myanmar roommates or Founders Day were highlights, same as the Campus Family outings where we went swimming, hiking or biking around Hong Kong. Just as much however, I enjoyed the everyday life, playing badminton with my roommates, going for night walks to the Tao Fung Shan Cross, long talks in the common room and chapel meetings in the mornings. Another great opportunity on top of it, was deciding with some of my roommates to go “church-hopping” on the weekends and experience different denominations and congregations all around Hong Kong. Also, outside of LTS I was lucky to find a number of local and international friends, that I could meet up with and explore Hong Kong, both the city and the incredible landscape, go hiking, swimming, camping, to restaurants, cafes and museums and much more.



Sadly, after New Year, Covid hit Hong Kong with a new and great wave of cases and a lot of new restrictions were enforced. One after another, possibilities were shut down and campus life further reduced and ultimately switched to online. Still, even though the situation grew more and more difficult, I was lucky to still use the opportunities left open, such as spending time in nature and exploring mountains and islands. The notice, to leave Hong Kong earlier as planned, due to the instability and unpredictability of the Covid situation, hit me very suddenly. Although certainly the right decision, it hurt to say goodbye to everyone at LTS so early and in a quiet, covid-acceptable manner. Nevertheless, I was glad to be able to say proper goodbyes to my roommates and most of my classmates and friends and I am absolutely determined to come back to Hong Kong and LTS in the future and to meet again with my international roommates from Myanmar and Nepal, and until then to keep in touch digitally with all of you!

I am so grateful for the valuable time I had at LTS and for all the warm and welcoming people I met and got friends with here!

May God bless you all and bless LTS now and in the future!

Nora

A Glimpse of My Life Transformed Through Seeking a Higher Theological Education at LTS

James San Aung



The most historic life-time memories of the incredible servant leadership model of LTS President Dr. Simon Chow on the 108th Anniversary of LTS Founder's Day, 26th November 2021.
Photo credit @ Karan Besra, Nepal



The most historic life-time memories of a wonderful unity of Family of Joy while visiting Peak Hong Kong, 13th December 2021.
Photo credit @ Anonymous Hong Kong Friend

My name is James San Aung, an ordained pastor of the Myanmar Lutheran Church. Our church was established in 1998 with only five members. By God's help, our church has grown to 16 ordained pastors, 5 pastors, and 14 evangelists with the total church member of 3750 by His grace. Then, the Myanmar Lutheran Seminary was established in 2008 to train God's people to know him and to be future church leaders.

When I came at the LTS community for the first time in 2020 with my Myanmar friends, we were greeted with incredible welcome by our professors, staff, and students. Despite that fact that I was going through a difficult time in my life, such as a bereavement, I was comforted by their amazing accompaniment. I have a wonderful time in Hong Kong where I discovered the beauty of God's creation together with my friends via visiting beautiful beaches for swimming, sightseeing, hiking, etc. Everyone in this community is highly supportive, and genuinely cares about one another. It is something I will remember for the rest of my life.

LTS has a very wonderful compound which gives us peace of mind during our studies. Every morning as I climb up 121 stairs, I see the majestic Cross of LTS. Every day, it reminds me that Christ died for me; he gives me a living hope for the future. Then, I cry to the

Lord, "Truly, O Lord, Your Cross bears my anxieties and death. You give me a good rest of my soul. I will be your humble servant for the rest of my life, until you call me back to be with you forever."

By studying the courses on "Introduction to Missiology, Grief counselling, Pastoral Leadership and the Mission of the Church, Theology of Mission, Theology of Ministry, Global Christianity, the Church and Christian Missions," I gained a wealth of in-depth knowledge of worldwide Christianity, a better understanding of God's mission, pastoral counseling skills, improved leadership abilities. When I look back on my life, I can see how much has changed. Not only have I developed my knowledge of academic research for my future doctoral studies under the outstanding professors' instructions and guidance, but I have also gained ton of confidence in my ability to serve for the challenging needs of God's mission in Myanmar through preaching and teaching ministry.

After I have graduated from LTS, I will continue my two positions such as the Mission Director of the Myanmar Lutheran Church, and a Principal of the Myanmar Lutheran Seminary to train more faithful servants to spread the Gospel to all nations. I will train more young people to be educated church leaders, pastors, and the community development leader. This is my sincere prayer to the Lord that may He bless the significant teaching and equipping ministry of LTS more and more with a good support of the generous donors! Amen.

Students' Sharing



Nay Win Tun

I am Nay Win Tun and I belong to the Karen ethnic group which is one of the 135 ethnic groups in Myanmar. I come from the Southern part of Myanmar, from Patheingyi Town which is a very beautiful city. It is especially good for tourism.

There are very beautiful and wonderful beaches for the people who love the beauty of nature. Moreover, my place is a plain area which is good for cultivating rice and agricultural plants. The people of Myanmar call my place “the place of rice” or “the house of rice” like the land of milk and honey. It means that our place provides the rice for the whole people of Myanmar. Before I came to LTS, I served the ministry of God as a lecturer at Ko Thu Byu Theological Seminary in Patheingyi for almost 11 years.

I would like to express my thanks to LTS with all of my heart, soul, and mind because LTS gives me a special chance to upgrade my theological career for my life, for Ko Thu Byu Theological Seminary,

for my Karen people, and for the glory of God. Theologically, ecumenically, and practically, LTS is practicing the ecumenical spirit or the spirit of unity in diversity not only in their community but also working together with different denominations over the world. LTS always opens its horizon for the people who want to upgrade their theological education. Through working together with other diverse dominations and societies over the world, and opening their horizon with inclusive love, the glory of God and the love of God can be seen in work, belief, theology, mission, and practice.

I am doing a three-year D. Th Program at LTS which started in 2019. This wonderful academic year 2021-2022 is my final year in the loving womb of LTS. LTS opens my theological horizon and enriches me. It always shows its love for the people who are coming from different backgrounds. Without the support of LTS, I would not have a chance to upgrade my theological education. One thing I can promise is that I will continue to follow the beautiful ecumenical spirit of LTS in my life, my family, my seminary, and society. After having finished the D.Th program, I will go back and serve the ministry of God for my people and my country. I am the child and product of LTS. Thanks for everything.

Students' Sharing

“My Cherished LTS: A Place of Learning and Sharing God’s Love”

Roi Seng

My name is Roi Seng, and I serve as a lecturer at the Myanmar Institute of Christian Theology Seminary in Yangon, Myanmar. Despite the difficulties of traveling abroad to study owing to pandemics, God gave me a wonderful chance to study at Lutheran Theological Seminary, Hong Kong. When we arrived at LTS on August 22, 2020, we were placed to a 14-day quarantine. I couldn't stand seeing you (LTS) all of your splendour beauty during my quarantine. Because of your incredible beauty, I was taken aback by your beauty after quarantine. Let me refer you as “my cherished LTS.”

My cherished LTS, your beauty teaches us how to live a life of living sacrifice in our Christian lives. Oh! my cherished LTS, your features of 121 steps, and a Big Cross is preaching about God's grace (Eph. 2:8-10). It also proclaims about the conquer of the world (John 16:33). Then you, like a river of living water, since you are carrying so many wonderful servants of God for His ministry (John 7:38). My cherished LTS, your children (all professors, office workers, librarians, and general staff) demonstrate God's love, mercy, patience, kindness, and goodness. They also exemplify what excellent servants are. You are one of components of the Myanmar ministry's accomplishment. You make us at home here for two years of our studies. I can't express how grateful I am and how much I adore you.



My cherished LTS, during these two years, I got so many precious gifts that you have given. You granted me seven wonderful equipment: Ministry with People Living in Poverty, Resurrection in the New Testament, Biblical Perspectives on Diakonia, Asian Theology, The Book of Acts, The Reception and Formation of the New Testament Canon in the Early Church, and Christ and Culture that I will utilize in God's future ministry. You, my beloved LTS, moulded me into a genuine worshipper and a faithful servant of God. You offered your big heart while I was with you. I gained valuable lessons that will help me in my future God-given ministry. Now, I'm not the same person I used to be before we met. My beloved LTS, you shaped my life

in spiritual, mental, and physical ways by God's love.

My cherished LTS, we are together here for almost two years. Time flies by at a breakneck pace. It's time to say my goodbyes, but I don't want to. Even though I don't want to leave you and say goodbye, I am obligated to return to our pitiful homeland. As you may know, the harvests are plentiful, but the workers are few. After returning to our country, I will continue serving as a good servant at our seminary with my new learning lessons. Don't worry, my cherished LTS. I will not wander since you are a God-fearing servant, and I will be an obedient servant like you. May the Lord be with you till we meet again.

Students' Sharing

Rose Mary

My name is Rose Mary. My parents are Mc. Thalei (Father) and Daw Dawpa (Mother). My father is a well-known mediator in the community. My mother is a devout mother who rises at 3 a.m. every day to pray for each of her children. My childhood ambition was to serve God by serving His people. Furthermore, my father's late elder sister was the first female theological student and the first woman in the Mara community to be involved in church ministry. As a result, since I was a child, my aunt has been a source of inspiration to me.

For four years, I was able to study Bachelor of Theology at Lorrain Theological College in Yangon, which was founded by the Mara Evangelical Church. Meanwhile, I enrolled in a three-year distance education BA in History program. In summary, from 2011 to 2013, I worked as a librarian and office assistant. With the agreement of the Mara Evangelical Church, I opted to pursue further studies because I saw the need to equip myself with more information and education qualifications, and to become capable for God's glory. I went to India to pursue a four-year Bachelor of Divinity (BD) degree at Eastern Theological College in Jorhat, India.

After completing my BD studies with the financial assistance of WCRC in 2018, I served as Chaplain of Pakkoku University under the Global Chin Christian Federation (GCCF) till 2020. The GCCF is also one of the Mara Church's ecumenical bodies/partners. After



such an encounter, I am determined and challenged to investigate the significance of church participation in ecumenical groups.

I was given the opportunity to continue my Master's program in 2020. However, because of my Papa's physical condition as a result of cancer's final stage, leaving my father was a very difficult time for me. I was well aware of my father's physical condition by the time I travelled to Yangon, a four-day trek from my village, to take the LTS admission exam, and that I would be unable to see him when I returned home because we live in a rural place without hospital. My father encouraged me to pursue a master's degree in theology. When I appreciate my Father's support, I am disappointed in him for failing to keep his promise not to die in my absence, as he died while I was away for my admission exam. He is, nonetheless, always the best guardian angel for me. Even though Dad is no longer among us, I continue to sense his protection. My father was and always will be a hero to me.

I've gone through a lot of things during my short stay in Hong Kong that I've never experienced before, which has made me understand how unique LTS is, and I'm finally graduating with the help of my fellow students, professors, staffs, and those who help me financially. LTS and Hong Kong are incredible places that will always hold a special place in my heart. Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to God for this opportunity to study at LTS, Hong Kong. May the Lord bless LTS, Hong Kong, and its people with peace and fairness!!!



Recipient of the Hong Kong Chinese Christian Church Union Scholarship 2021

Evicky Yeung

Warm greeting to you all.

I am Evicky YEUNG, a year two student attaining the program of Bachelor of Theology. I would like to share with you the word of God I like most:

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9).

Through the inspiration coming from this verse, I responded to the calling from God to have my theological training. The period from 2017 to 2019 was a tough time for me. God shattered me and then healed my life. Whenever I was sad and down, it was the above verse helping me to get through the turmoil. I do not intend to share my previous experience in this article. Instead, I would like to let you know how the verse keeps on giving me encouragement and comfort since the commencement of my theological training more than one year ago.

I remember when I attended the first class at the Seminary, the professor asked students to have some discussion in groups. During the discussion, I found it difficult to express myself and failed to grasp the views of my classmates. After class, I was downhearted and cried solely in the dormitory room. I prayed and asked God if I had wrongly interpreted His calling. If I failed to understand what was taught in the class, how could I continue my study?

Afterwards, I talked to my senior classmate. She patiently paid heed to my sharing. She then responded: “I had similar experiences and doubts before. Yet, if you remain steadfast, you will experience God's grace and it is sufficient for you. Have faith in God.”

A few days later, my classmates of the same class gathered to pray together. I then learned that besides me, some classmates also burst into tears during the first week of the semester as they worried that they could not keep up with the course. We spurred and encouraged each other in prayers. The above verse then floated again in my mind, reminding me to be strong, not to be afraid as God would be with me. In this way, with the support of my classmates and God's guidance, I felt time flies and soon finished my study in the first academic year.



At the beginning of the semester, the Seminary told me I was nominated to be the awardee of the scholarship offered by the Hong Kong Chinese Christian Churches Union. My gut feeling was how could it be! I really could not believe I was the right one to get the scholarship. After calming down, I was overwhelmed and knew it was the grace of God.

Looking back at my campus life in the Seminary in the past year, it is really not easy.

I am not so interested in reading. Yet, we must read a lot in studying theology. In preparing the book reading assignments, I had to read many English books. But, my English is not good, and I have the phobia to learn foreign languages, not to mention I need to learn Hebrew too. Studying theology really helps me to overcome my limitations. I know that it is not my ability to have such breakthrough.

I have the habit of reviewing my homework repeatedly. When I have a review, in my mind, I always cast doubt on my work. Is it really what I wrote? How could I get such output? I well understand the achievement is not my credit. It is the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

After their graduation, my fellow students always told me, "I don't know how to pass through the theological training in the past few years, but now I am sailing through it. Looking back, the grace of God is abundant and always ready to help."

It is obvious that by my own ability, I could not get this scholarship. Having said that, I still have to appreciate my effort. I have to thank every professor who teaches me; every classmate who supports, encourages, and helps me; every brother and sister who remembers me in prayers, and give special thanks to my family members for their unflinching support. This allows me to be worry-free and have a peaceful mind to focus on my theological training wholeheartedly.

Last but not the least, to God be the glory! Amen.



Prayers for LTS

Dr. Kenneth Tsang

President-elect of LTS

It is wonderful that our LTS News – English version has been resumed! We believe that this is important for our connection with churches, partners, ex-colleagues, alumni, donors, and friends. Hence, the editorial group invited me to give some updates about LTS. These updates are also a prayer invitation to you. Thank you.

Leadership Transition

On June 30, 2022, President Dr. Simon Chow will retire after his faithful service at LTS for 26 years. He has served as our president since 2009 with lots of contributions. The person succeeding in this leadership position is me. Of course, this will be my great challenge. Therefore, please kindly pray for me and LTS for the leadership transition. Please also pray for President Chow's life after retirement. LTS will have a thanksgiving service for President Chow's retirement on June 26, 2022.

Teaching Team

Our teaching team is still in a transitional process. Our senior local faculties, Dr. Peter Li and Dr. Nicholas Tai retired in 2019 and 2021 respectively. President Chow will retire this year. Dr. Pilgrim Lo will retire in 2023. Although they are willing to assist in our teaching ministries after their retirement, we need to develop a new generation. Indeed, we have been working hard on this for years. We anticipate that our faculty development candidates, Rev. Hak-shun Fong (Systematic Theology) and Rev. Joeson Wong (Old Testament), will join the teaching force in 2023.

Besides local teachers, LTS is proud to have overseas teachers in our team sent by our mission partners. We have Dr. Stefan Gradl (Missiology, Christian Education, Pastoral Theology) and Dr. Friedemann Barniske (Systematic Theology) from Mission EineWelt, Germany. We will have one more full-time overseas teacher, Dr. Jukka Helle (Missiology, Pastoral

Theology), from Felm, Finland in Fall 2022. Besides full-time teachers, we are thankful to have several visiting scholars to teach courses for us regularly, such as Dr. Robert Doornenbal (Pastoral Theology) from Kerk in Actie, the Netherlands, Dr. Elgvin Torleif from NMS, Norway, Dr. Göran Larsson (Judaism) from Sweden, etc. Of course, our faithful partners, such as ELCA (U.S.A.) are still looking for suitable teachers for LTS according to our needs.

Enrollment of Students

LTS student body comes from local, Mainland, and overseas (mainly from the Mekong region). We are facing a decrease in past years for local student enrollment, particularly in pastoral training programs (B.Th., M.Div. (3-yr)). Other seminaries in Hong Kong share this challenge too. It is believed that the social movement in 2019, the pandemic, and the recent emigration wave are factors behind it.

For Mainland students, the travel between Hong Kong and the Mainland is under restrictions under the pandemic. We cannot organize face-to-face courses as usual for our intensive program students. In order not to delay their study progress too much, we have arranged Zoom classes for them until March 2022. Now, we are looking forward to resuming face-to-face classes for them.

For overseas students, we had 5 new students from Myanmar in 2020, even under the pandemic. Nevertheless, adding the factor of the political situation in Myanmar, except for an exchange student from Germany, no new students came in 2021. This year, we have finished processing 10 applications from Myanmar and 2 from Laos. We hope that they can come to LTS in the summer.

LTS under the COVID-19 Pandemic

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, Hong Kong has faced five waves of infection. Under these waves, we are moving to and fro among face-to-face teaching, hybrid teaching, and online teaching modes. We are trying our best to prevent an outbreak among our teachers and students, particularly dormitory students. We take every chance to physically hold important events, such as Graduation Photo-taking Day, Graduation Thanksgiving Services, Teacher and Student Retreat Camp, and Founders' Day. Despite facing various

challenges, we are thankful that God provides and protects us. For instance, we are grateful that we did the 1-million dollars project of building the internet optic fiber for LTS in 2017. Without such infrastructure, how can we offer online teaching? In fact, the experience of using online and hybrid teaching modes in these years facilitates us to consider how to incorporate them into our ministries even after the pandemic.

Companion LeShalom Centre and City Classroom in Jordan, Kowloon

This year we celebrate the fourth anniversary of our Companion LeShalom Centre (CLC) set up in Jordan, Kowloon in 2018. CLC is a centre providing Christian counseling services to our students and needy people in church and society. It also provides talks, workshops, and short-term training. Most importantly, CLC is an important platform for our counseling program students to practice what they have learned in classes. We are thankful that God has used our counseling programs to equip more than 200 students since 2017.

Besides emphasizing pastoral training, LTS regards the importance of our Christian leadership training. To facilitate Christians to attend classes after work, we offer more and more evening courses in the city area. To provide stable and convenient places for study, other than our present TEE Centre in Wong Tai Sin provided by the Hong Kong and Macau Lutheran Church, we started seeking a new place for class teaching in 2021. Thank God, we eventually rent a ~544

sq. feet unit just next to our CLC. We named it “City Classroom”. No matter the usage and management, this location is best for us.

LTS New Website

In the digital age, LTS is learning how to enhance our communications through the internet. We have Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/LutheranTheologicalSeminary/>), YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/c/HKLTS>), and IG Account (<https://www.instagram.com/lts.lives/>). We recently launched a new website (<https://lts.edu/eng/home>) with a beautiful design. Compared to our old website, the new one has lots of improvement. Besides clearer and more attractive presentations, people can apply for our programs and activities directly from the website. We will also provide electronic payment functions for donation and application in the second phase.

Thanks for your time to read the updates. Many more things about LTS can be shared, but the editorial group only allows me to write about 1,000 words. Hence, I need to stop here. I am sure that you will be updated again soon. Thanks for your remembrance and prayers. May God bless you and your family.



Snapshot of LTS



Preparation for the Lenten Sacred Music Meditation



2022 Seminar on Commitment via Zoom



Friday Lecture via Zoom



Goodbye to our friends



After the Morning Prayer on 25 April



Lovely Students



Graduation Class Photo-taking Day



Upcoming Events:

- The Graduation Thanksgiving Service will be held on 5 June 2022 (Sun) 4:00p.m. at the ELCHK Truth Lutheran Church.
- Thanksgiving Service on the occasion of the retirement of the President Dr. Simon Chow will be held on 26 June 2022 (Sun) 3:30p.m. at the ELCHK Truth Lutheran Church.

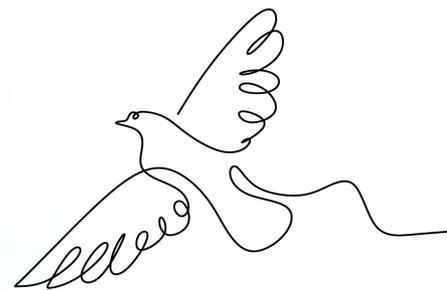


Dr. Nicholas H. F. Tai's retirement in 2021.



信義宗神学院

Lutheran Theological Seminary



Full-time/Part-time Programs

Pastoral Training Programs

4-yr Bachelor of Theology (B.Th.)

3-yr Master of Divinity (M.Div.)

Pastoral Enhancement Programs

1-yr Master of Arts (M.A.)

2-yr Master of Divinity (M.Div.)

Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.)

Christian Leadership Programs

Diploma in Theological Studies (Dip.T.S.)

Bachelor of Christian Studies (B.C.S.)

Graduate Diploma (Grad.Dip.)

2-yr Master of Arts in Theology (M.A.)

Christian Counseling Programs

Higher Diploma in Christian Counseling (High.Dip.)

Master of Arts in Christian Counseling (M.A.)

Christian Spirituality Programs

Master of Arts in Christian Spirituality (M.A.)

Master of Arts in Christian Spiritual Direction (M.A.)

Advanced Study Programs

Master of Theology (M.Th.)

Doctor of Theology (D.Th.)

2022-2023

FALL

Enrollment

2022 Entrance Exams

*only for local applications

May 28 (Sat)

[Deadline: May 10]

August 6 (Sat)

[Deadline: July 18]

Program
Information



Inquiry Email: registrar@lts.edu

50 To Fung Shan Road, Shatin, Hong Kong

