

Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary

The 2002 Annual Report

(1) Nurturing 162 Students

In the academic year of 2002-03, forty-four new students have been admitted to the Ministerial Training Program, including twenty-two in the Master of Divinity Program, three in the Master of Pastoral Counseling Program, one in the Master of Theology Program, fifteen in the B.A. in Pastoral Studies Program, and three as non-classified students. Sixty percent of them came from Baptist churches. They have all been vigorously screened, and are thus of a rather high quality.

There are one hundred and sixty-two (old and new) students in the Seminary, all being called by God to be workers in the mission field, committed to winning souls for Christ, and dedicating their lives to His service. The Seminary will do its best to ensure that both academic training and spiritual formation will be achieved for each one of them.



The Faculty and New Students

We thank God for our group of dedicated and diligent teachers who are here to serve them. In addition to teaching and research, our faculty engage students in extra-curricular activities, living among students, praying with them, sharing their innermost thoughts and feelings, and even playing games and sports with them. The Seminary attaches a high importance to teaching by precept as well as by example. However, it is our sincere belief that only with God's help and the support of all churches will we be able to nurture our students to become future instruments of God.

(2) Graduates Entering into their Ministries

We have sixty-two graduates this year, eighteen from the Master of Divinity Program, seventeen from the Master of Pastoral Counseling Program, two from the Master of Theology, six from the B.A. in Pastoral Studies, one from the B.A. Program with a major in Church Music, four from the B.A. Program with a major in Religious Studies, thirteen from the B.A. in Christian Studies, and one from the Diploma Program in Cell Group Ministry.

We pray that God will guide them into ministries befitting their call. Each graduate has undergone the process of strenuous academic training and spiritual formation, experiencing various trials and challenges in life. At the time of their graduation, their teachers and fellow students would like to shower them with every blessing from God and with incessant prayers that they be faithful in the service of the Lord all their lives, as workers approved of by God and never ashamed of the Gospel.



A Group Photo of Class 2002 and the Faculty

The Fifty-First Graduation Ceremony was held at the Tsimshatsui Baptist Church on November 10. Many church elders and deacons, as well as brothers and sisters, attended the ceremony on this special occasion of joy and gratitude.

(3) Lay Theological Education Department Serving the Churches

Our Lay Theological Education Department has moved to Chung Kiu Commercial Building in Mongkok since 1999. There has been a steady increase in the number of students enrolling in the various programs and courses offered, indicating that there is a high demand for theological education by lay Christians.

The academic year of 2001-02 has witnessed the offering of fourteen programs tailored to the needs of the various churches. We thank God for preparing a group of lay Christians from many different churches to enroll in our various programs. We have an average of 2,737 students every quarter. Of all the programs offered, the Certificate Program in Church Clerk Training, the Certificate Program in Kindergarten Christian Education, the Certificate Program in Christian Sports Ministry, the B.A. in Christian Studies, the Diploma Program in Youth Mentor Training, and the Certificate Program in Christian Women Theological Training have been very successful and well received.

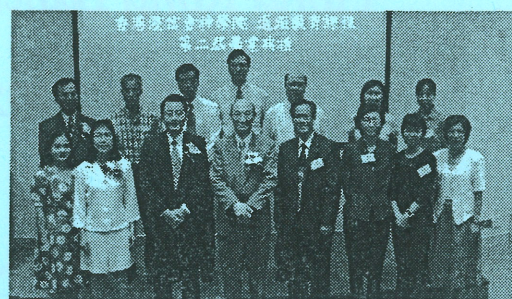
The Joint-Programs Graduation Ceremony for the graduates of eight of these programs was held at the Kowloon City Baptist Church on July 14. We trust that the 250 graduates for this academic year will make the best of what they have learnt in their churches and workplaces, so that they can offer a better service to God and their fellowmen and bear a stronger witness for Christ.



President Kong Exhorting the Graduating Students

(4) Distance Education Program: Breaking through the Limitations of Time, Space and Culture

Distance education has the advantage of overcoming the limitations of time and space. It helps those church members who have a heart to learn to study at their own pace, according to their own personal time schedule, so that they can complete their basic theological training and perform better service in their respective mission field. With the grace of God, the Distance Education Program has witnessed heart-warming progress since its inauguration in 1998, reaching over 400 students from Hong Kong and throughout the world.



The Second Graduation Ceremony of DE Program

At present, the numbers of students studying in the Certificate in Bible Studies (the New Testament), Certificate in Bible Studies (the Old Testament), and Diploma in Christian Studies have reached a total of 160, 68 and 83 respectively. Besides, there are three students enrolling in the Higher Diploma in Christian Studies starting this September. Currently 273 students are from Hong Kong and 41 from the rest of the world. February 2003 will see a new program offered -- the Diploma Program in Biblical Studies. This program is designed for in-depth studies of the selected books of the Bible, dealing with relevant issues, and providing systematic and basic training in exegesis and biblical studies, particularly suitable for Sunday school teachers and small group leaders in the church. For the particular purpose of stimulating students' interest and broadening their spiritual vision, the Distance Education Program conducts seminars on special topics four times each year. The topics for this year were "The Bible and Archaeology", "Prophetic Literature", "Inter-Testamental Literature" and "Introduction to Patriarchal Studies."

DEP has been actively launching ministry to train special groups, those often neglected and destitute in resources. Such ministries include the Onesimus Training Project, started in 1999, and aiming at training prison inmates who have become Christians. In 2002, the "Spiritual Light Project," organized in collaboration with the Christian Ministry to Visually Impaired Persons, was designed to provide theological education for the vision-impaired Christians. There are now nine students in the Project. There is also the "Ezra Project," which has been in good progress for a year. It aims to assist churches in doing evangelistic follow-up training in far and remote areas in Mainland China not easily accessible by land transportation by providing for students printed teaching materials and compiled by the Distance Education Program.

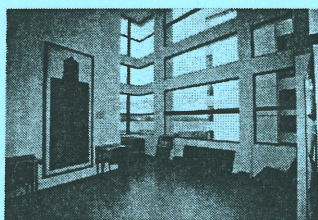
The vision of Distance Education Program is to extend the provision of theological education to throughout the world, regardless of race or culture. We are currently about to launch two more ministries: (i) Theological Education for Filipino Lay Christian Leaders, to begin in 2003, and (ii) the Overseas Extension Program, with its first stage to be conducted in Sydney.

(5) The Library

Along with the development of the Seminary, the Library has been making positive strides over the past few years. From January 2000 to October 2002, the Library has catalogued almost 15,000 volumes of books and video/audio materials, bringing our collection up to 62,000 holdings. For a library of our size, we provide rich resources for our readers. As for electronic information, apart from the library web-site, there are many other relevant web-sites that are listed out in the Seminary web-site (www.hkbts.edu.hk). The Library has collected 280 pieces of CD-ROM for readers' use, and has also subscribed to a full-text electronic periodical on the web-site for use by professors and students alike, in order to promote academic research. This data-base includes sixty English theological periodicals, so that readers can look up articles over the internet at their disposal, with the earliest issues dated back as far as fifty years ago.

The number of books borrowed from the Library has been on steady increase, having reached 49,700 copies since 2000. Worthy of special mention is the fact that there has been a continued increase in the number of graduates coming back to borrow books from the Library, signifying the current challenges to preachers and the need for life-long learning for pastors.

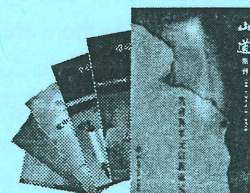
With the opening of the "Applied Theological Education Center" at Mongkok this September, the Library has responded by setting up small-sized resource rooms on the seventh and ninth floors of the new Center, displaying almost 1,300 volumes of Christian devotional books, as well as sacred music and worship related books, in addition to 3,500 copies of songs and musical scores. These two resource rooms have been open for use since October.



(6) The Publication Ministry

The Publication Office, besides publishing the Chinese and the English *Seminary Newsletter* in every three months to share the development of our theological education ministries with the churches, published the bi-annual *Hill Road* academic journal in an effort to share scholarship in academic study and research, and to build bridges between the academic world and the churches. This year we published Issue 9 and Issue 10 on the themes of "The Church in the Context of Pluralistic Religion" and "The Living Word: Preaching in the 21st Century" respectively. Thank God that the academic standard of *Hill Road* has been recognized and affirmed by scholars and pastors and last year we recorded an increase in subscription by more than 20 per cents. Our subscribers, besides local and overseas seminaries, seminary professors and students, include churches, ministers and lay Christians.

As for book publication, we published in June and November three books written by Dr Samuel Tang, *Songs of Hope*, and *Ministerial Ethics* and *Song of Songs: Singing the Canticles* respectively. In addition, in October we translated and published the first two volumes of the Alleluia! Series: *Learning to Worship with All Your Heart* and *Rediscovering the Missing Jewel*. The series is a condensed version of The Complete Library of Christian Worship written by Dr Robert Webber. The series seeks to approach the study of worship from different perspectives, with rich and practical course materials provided and suitable for individual and group study. The remaining five volumes in the series will be published before the end of 2003.



(7) Mission Dynamics and Resources Center

The Mission Dynamics and Resources Center has been established for about a year, aimed at setting up a partnership with various churches, denominations and Christian organizations, with a view to sharing the responsibility of nurturing, educating, and training personnel for missions and evangelism, and of enhancing and strengthening mission education. There are bulletin boards on the outside of the office of the Center for the display of information on various mission activities and conferences, for reference and perusal by the general public. Besides, the first two issues of *The Mission Church*, the Center's newsletter, were published in January and July this year.

The University/Youth Mission Training Camp was held by the Mission Dynamics and Resources Center on August 22-23 with the theme of "Vigorous Advance of the Mission-Minded Man," and attended by sixteen young people of the 17-25 age-group, (three of them being missionary candidates of the Baptist Convention of Hong Kong). The participants of the Camp had the opportunity of not only to attend the various meetings and workshops on special themes, but also to hold person-to-person talk with pastors or the missionary candidates. It was through this channel that they were able to further realize the true nature of the call and training, as well as the necessary physical and spiritual adaptation to being a missionary, as a means of confirming and reinforcing God's preparation and guidance for each individual.

The Seminary will conduct an intensive course on the Higher Diploma of Cross-Cultural Research, the first of its kind to be offered next March, with the second one to be held from June to July next year.



A Group Photo at the
University/Youth Mission Training Camp

(8) *Applied Theological Education Center*

The Seminary has set up the Applied Theological Education Center on the seventh, eighth and ninth floors of the Christian Center on Bute Street at Mongkok, with a total area of 14,262 sq. ft. (4,754 sq. ft. on each floor), purchased in March this year, as an extension of the Seminary in the city. The Center officially came into operation in October.

The classrooms on the seventh floor are to be mainly used for classes run by the Lay Theological Education Department. As there are not enough classrooms on the tenth floor of the Chung Kiu Commercial Building, we have moved some of the Lay Theological Education classes to the seventh floor of the new Center, in order to cope with the overflow of both students and programs. The Pastoral Continuing Education Center is located on the eighth floor, and the Edna Wong Christian Worship and Arts Education Center, on the ninth floor, which are designed for holding continuing education programs for pastors and for worship, arts and music programs respectively.

There are also counseling rooms on the eighth floor, which are used as sites and facilities for field practice for students in our Master of Pastoral Counseling Program. It is our hope that we will be able to nurture high-quality pastoral counseling personnel and to provide Christian counseling services in support of the churches.

The Pastoral Continuing Education Center is mainly intended to serve the needs of in-service pastors, who may want to attend courses and engage in research programs to build up their capabilities and confidence, in a fashion that is both simple and flexible. Based on the wisdom derived from the Bible, theology and church history, and in conjunction with diversified, comprehensive arts training, the Edna Wong Christian Worship and Arts Education Center helps lay Christians to expand their field of vision in worship, to appropriately foster their view on worship, and to apply the use of art to church worship and other ministries.

The Applied Theological Education Center is situated at the hub of transportation, adjacent to the Mass Transit Railway and the Kowloon Railway Station -- an ideal, accessible site for attending classes, lectures and conferences. The Seminary will fully utilize the facilities at the Center, including the Theological Education for Filipino Leaders Program, which is to be held next January, and lectures on special themes organized by the Distance Education Program. All these will be held at the Center.



The Conference Room on the Eighth Floor

Appeal

"Today's seminary students are ministers of tomorrow." For a seminary student to be a good Christian soldier, apart from providing quality education on the part of the Seminary, it is indispensable to enlist the care and concern of various churches, including their prayers and donations. We hereby sincerely appeal to all churches that you would share our responsibility in supporting the development of theological education, by allocating funds in your coming year's budget particularly for this purpose.

Response

Our church hereby pledges support for the Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary:-

- ☐ We shall keep praying for the development of theological education of the Seminary.
- ☐ We shall support the Seminary with a donation of HK\$ _____.

Church: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

E-Mail Address: _____