

The Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary

Annual Report 2006-07



Tomorrow's Ministers

Need the nurture and partnership of

Today's churches and seminaries

● **Voices of some graduate students:**

"All is grace. As I have gone through three years of training, God has demolished my old life in order to rebuild me. He has continued to lead me to see the vastness of the field and to hear the urgency of the cries for salvation..."

"My three years of seminary study have been full of grace, allowing me to understand more clearly the meaning of 'calling' and 'ministry' ..."

"My years of studying in the Seminary are unforgettable. I am grateful for the professors' instruction and their personal concern beyond the classroom. I cherish my fellow students' help and friendship."

God uses our graduates' words to remind us to be faithful in supporting our theological education ministry. Although you and I serve the Lord in different fields of ministry, we are both profoundly aware that today's seminary students will be tomorrow's ministers, taking up these heavy responsibilities of ministering, preaching and evangelizing the world. Since our present students are worthy to assume this responsibility, they challenge the Seminary and churches to join together to provide resources and nurture for their development.



● Prospect and Advance

—from Faculty Retreat to Spiritual Formation Camp



Before the beginning of the new school term (2007-08), the Seminary organized a faculty retreat followed by a spiritual formation retreat camp for students. In the faculty retreat, the faculty reaffirmed their commitment to the Bible as the supreme foundation upon which a practical theology should be built. The faculty asked God to renew their biblical vision as they prepared to guide the students. In the students' spiritual formation camp that followed, students felt the power of their teachers' preaching. As the faculty and the students experienced the power of the Holy Spirit in these two camps, many found healing and transformation.

Through these pre-semester camps, the whole seminary community was renewed and uplifted as we set out on a new year's journey. We believe that theology is not confined to knowing God through our minds alone but also includes reflection upon our faith, the commitment of our emotions and actions, and the continuing formation of our character and spiritual being. The Seminary will continue to advance in this direction: enabling our students to be immersed in God's Word so that they will be ministers whose characters and spirituality testify to God's truth.

● Retrospect and Thanksgiving

While we look to the future of the Seminary, it is worthwhile to review the academic year 2006-07 in order to count God's many blessings.

1. Ministerial Preparation Program

In this academic year, God has guided 42 graduating students to their respective fields of ministry while He has entrusted the Seminary with 36 new students. God renewed our commitment to strengthen Bible teaching and character formation.

God affirms us in this ministry as we see the fruits of our labor in our students' growth. God has also provided for our needs as He has led Dr. Vincent Lau to be our practical theology teacher and Rev. Lam Kwok-bun to be our

Graduating Students	
M. Div. Program	16
M. R. E. Program	4
B. A. (Pastoral Studies) Program	15
M. P. C. Program	6
Adv. Dip. in Inter-Cultural Studies	1
Total	42

chaplain. God continues to give our teachers new insights and wisdom, leading them to produce a steady stream of articles and books. We continue to publish volumes in our Church Ethics series and, our academic journal, the *Hill Road*, continues to lay a

solid foundation for vigorous theological thought. This past year, God has also led us as we have commemorated our fifty-fifth anniversary and has blessed us as we have conducted our first graduation ceremony at the Sai O campus.

New Students	
Th. M. Program	2
M. Div. Program	19
B. A. (Pastoral Studies) Program	10
Non-classified Students	5
Total	36

Furthermore, God has not only allowed the 140 students in the Seminary to be trained both in the classroom and beyond, but they have also learned to be spiritual partners, building one another up through the morning assemblies, noon time silent prayer meetings, fasting, co-walkers projects and the spiritual formation groups. In the past year, God also led our students to 97 churches and para-church organizations to learn to serve God and men while gaining experience and growth. He has also enabled our students to learn to think and exchange ideas, thus widening their horizons and broadening their vision as they have attended various seminars and talks. These seminars include the Belote Lectures with J. Wentzel van Huyssteen as the speaker and the Baptist



Heritage Week with the theme: “Snapshots of Early Baptist Leaders in China and Hong Kong.” Four academic seminars were conducted on the theme “Theology and Arts” as well as seminars on various ministries.

To those interested in exploring theological education and questions regarding Christian calling, the Seminary has provided “Talk on Full Time Ministry,” “Experiencing Seminary Life Camp” and the “Joint Seminars Exhibition.” The Seminary



had the privilege of visiting about 50 churches to lead a Seminary Sunday Service, where we can have face-to-face contacts with brothers and sisters, letting them know more about the Seminary and our needs.

From year to year, most of the seminary’s ministries follow a cycle. Yet even in such a routine, God has been working his purpose out. We see God’s love, His inspiration, His teaching and His chiseling. To us, even the smallest deed we do has significance in the light of God’s presence. As the Bible declares, “They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, ‘The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.’” We want to be a seminary which begins each new day expecting God to do something new and wonderful.

2. Lay Theological Education Department

In Hong Kong there are many lay Christians who love their church and thirst to know God’s Word better. In order to serve God in their churches, they are open to theological education. Honoring the Baptist belief in “the priesthood of believers,” the LTED has developed multiple programs to equip lay Christians to meet many needs. Thank God that in every quarter this year, the average number of students has risen from 800 last year to nearly 900, while the number of course enrollment has increased to around 2600.

LTED now provides eleven programs, including

those leading to a certificate, a diploma, a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree. These programs train students in basic theology while developing ministerial skills. The Seminary and the churches are partners in the ministry of lay theological education. To strengthen ties with local churches, we sometimes hold seminars relevant to their needs. This year, two big seminars were held. The themes included “Out of the Closet: How Should the 21st Century Churches Approach Youngsters?” and “When a Man Is out of Temper: Challenged? Agitated? Annoyed?” respectively. More than 400 people attended each of these seminars. Being aware of the pressing needs of the elderly, we also hold a series of seminars for the ministries for the elderly every three months.



In the 2006-07 academic year, we have 257 graduates: four were in the Master of Christian Studies program; twenty, in the Bachelor of Christian Studies program and two hundred and thirty three, in our various diploma and certificate programs. We pray that God will continue to guide our graduates, helping them use what they have learned in their church ministries and in their workplaces as a witness to God.

3. Distance Education Program

In modern society, many Christians lead busy lives without a regular daily schedule while some must make frequent trips overseas. The Seminary’s aim in setting up the Distance Education Program is to provide correspondence and on-line programs catering to the needs of Christians beyond the constraints of time and place. Since the program’s founding in 1998, there have been 220 graduates. There are presently over 370 students in our various programs, including Certificate Programs in New Testament Studies and Old Testament Studies, Diploma Programs, in Christian Studies and in Bible Studies, Advanced Diploma Programs, in Christian Studies and in Bible Studies and the special New Testament Online Program. While most of the students in DEP

are mainly from Hong Kong, over 60 of our students are from overseas.

We also work with the Gospel Center for the Visually Impaired, offering their members the “Spiritual Light Project.” The third class on the Certificate Program in New Testament Studies began this February with seven students. Besides, we collaborate with the Kun Sun Association to conduct the “Onesimus Project” for those coming to Christ while in correctional institutions. There are now forty students enrolled in our certificate and diploma programs. These Christian inmates hope to be equipped by DEP to give a better witness to Christ.

Since its beginning in 2003, course enrollment in Theological Education for Filipino Leaders (TEFL) has exceeded one thousand. Classes are conducted on Sunday afternoons every quarter throughout the year. The average class attendance has been around 55. By the end of 2005, two new subjects were added to the curriculum: Church Music and Bible Study. In early 2006, a Matching Scholarship was set up in which the Seminary and the church work together to subsidize a student with a one to one ratio. Eighty six students have been subsidized. At the second graduation ceremony held in June, twenty five graduates received their diplomas and certificates.



4. The Applied Theological Education Center

The Applied Theological Education Center includes Pastoral Continuing Education Center and the Edna Wong Christian Worship and Arts Education Center.

- **Pastoral Continuing Education Center**

This center was set up at the end of 2002. In the past months, we had conducted a number of courses and seminars on various subjects to meet the needs of ministers from local churches, offering them

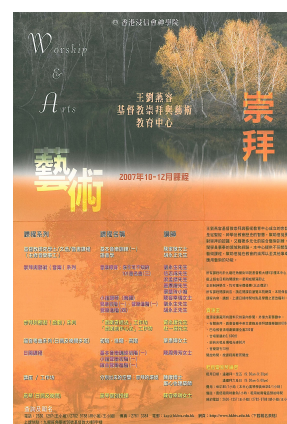
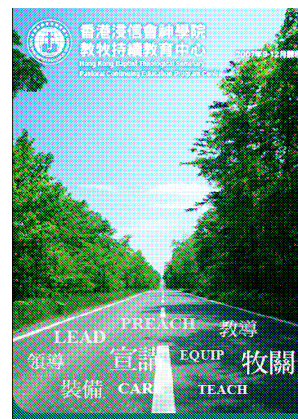
support in different ministry areas and opportunities for further study. These courses and seminars are scheduled around their busy work schedules. In so doing, we have instilled in them new enthusiasm through our innovative teaching.

Courses and seminars conducted in 2006-07 are in the following areas: personal life and spiritual growth, self-understanding, forming an interpersonal relationship network, pastoral care, advanced Bible book study, understanding and skills of counseling tools, a renewal of ideas for worship. Altogether there are more than thirty courses and seminars. This year we have had a total of 440 participants and 1,300 people in attendance, a record high figure for recent years.

Moreover, this year we have had the second Certificate Program in Clinical Pastoral Education. To enable our students to have better quality of study and greater interaction with teachers, we have confined the student enrolment to seven. This program emphasizes group discussion, study and sharing, and equips ministers to be responsible for ministering, caring and doing visitation work with professional training.

- **Edna Wong Christian Worship and Arts Education Center**

The Center aims to promote the study of the theology, history and practice of Christian worship, and the renewal of worship in local worshipping communities. The Center focuses on providing Biblical-based practical trainings on performing arts in particular for Christian worship enrichment and enhancement. In the 2006-07 school year, there were an average of 200 students enrolled at the Center per quarter. The many courses offered include “A Study on Worship Space”, “PowerPoint at the Church: A Powerful Communication” and “A Creative Use of Drama in Christian Meetings.” In addition, courses on singing, keyboard playing, music appreciation,



choral techniques, conducting, instrument playing, dancing, and Cantonese Opera are also constantly offered.

5. Library

We are thankful to God who has made available for us the library which is a place most suitable for study and full of many learning resources. Up to August 2007, our collection had exceeded 93,000 volumes, including 74,000 Chinese and English books, nearly 8,000 audio-visual materials, over 550 CD-ROM discs and 5,000 bound periodicals. At our Applied Theological Education Center in Mongkok, we have more than 6,000 books and music scores. A total number of 22,571 items have been checked out in the past year, an increase of 9.6% over last year. We are happy to announce that the Hong Kong Baptist Archives, which had been planned for quite some time, became a reality in mid June. In order to foster the



preservation and study of the history and development of local Baptist churches, the Archives serves

as the repository for historical information about the work of the Hong Kong Baptist Convention and local Baptist churches. It has maintained a good collection of publications by the Hong Kong Baptist Convention, anniversary reports of local Baptist churches and their associated educational institutions, books published or written by Baptist churches or their pastors. We even have a collection of the Sunday worship service programs dating back to 1954. These materials provide a strong witness of God's many blessings showering on the Baptist churches, be they big and small, and on individual Christian brothers and sisters as well.

6. Publication

The *HKBTS Newsletter* is published quarterly both in Chinese and English as a way of sharing the latest developments of the Seminary with local and overseas churches. In the last academic year we have featured "Voices of Our Graduates," "New Students' Testimonies of God's Calling," "Manuscripts of the Talks in the Baptist Heritage Week" and "Interviews of Students' Families" in which students' spouses shared their struggles and told how God has blessed them. It is hoped that these sharing articles published in the *HKBTS Newsletter* can help our brothers and sisters better understand the Seminary and our students with their many needs so that they can better pray for them.



The *Hill Road*, our academic journal, has been published biannually for nearly ten years. The faculty members have worked hard to develop the *Hill Road* into a platform to introduce important intellectual issues to Chinese churches and Chinese pastors and ministers, allowing them to reflect theologically on different ideologies and their impact on practical situations. The themes discussed in our last few issues have included the following: "Phronesis," "Old Testament Ethics," "Theology and Practice of Mission," "The Body as a Metaphor of the Church." We thank God for guiding and leading us in these ten years of steady growth. We trust that He will continue to water this intellectual garden, using it for His glory.



Our faculty continues to focus their research on the essence of church ethics and its biblical basis. So far, our "Church Ethics" series has published Dr. Joshua Cho's *Narrative and Ethics: Interpreting Postliberal Narrative Theology* (2005), Dr. Andres Tang's *Boundary and Ethics: The Ethical Theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer* (2006) and Dr. Wong Fook Kong's "Old Testament Ethics" (2007). We look forward to Dr. Poling Sun's *New Testament Ethics* coming out next year.



APPEAL

"Today's seminary students are ministers of tomorrow."



For a seminary student to be a crack Christian soldier the seminary has to provide quality education. The support and care of churches in prayers and through donations are also indispensable. We hereby sincerely appeal to all churches that you would share with us the responsibility of supporting theological education by allocating funds in your coming budget for this particular purpose.

Please remember the needs of our students. Your offerings and donations are of immense importance to current and future theological education!

RESPONSE

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

- ☐ We will pray for the development of the Seminary's theological education
- ☐ We support the Seminary with a donation of HK\$_____.



Church: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail Address: _____