

# 神學院通訊

## Divinity School Newsletter



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Tel : (852) 3943-6705 Fax : (852) 2603-5224

Email : [theology@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:theology@cuhk.edu.hk)

Website : [www.cuhk.edu.hk/theology/](http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/theology/)

# THE HONG KONG CHURCH and THE JAPANESE CHURCH — *Let us be one in Christ!*

**Yosuke MATSUTANI**  
*Honorary Research Associate*

It has been nearly two years since I came to Hong Kong. Though I still have eight or nine months more before I return to Japan, I would like to use this opportunity to express my special thanks to The Divinity School of Chung Chi College who accepted me as an Honorary Research Associate to work on my post-doctoral research. Many thanks from the bottom of my heart to all the faculty, staff, students, and brothers and sisters who supported me and my family. Here, I would like to share some of my experiences in Hong Kong and a brief introduction on the current situation of Japanese church.

## **1. The Umbrella Movement and Hong Kong Churches**

Before I came to HK, I read about the "one country, two system" policy from many different sources. However it was not that until I came to Hong Kong in 2013 that I experienced and observed it on a personal level, especially the Umbrella Movement. Since I came to Hong Kong, many people have said to me "You came to the right place in the right time", which indicated that Hong Kong was at the turning point of her history.

As a foreigner, I could not commit myself to the Umbrella Movement, but I tried my best to understand what was happening and what was the movement's background. I went to Admiralty and Mongkok many times to watch and feel the passion of the Hong Kong people for liberty and democracy. I am most impressed by their creativity in expressing their opinions, especially public speech, discussion, prayers, and performing arts such as dancing, singing, drawing, painting, etc. I believe these are essential foundations to future democracy, even without a democratic system at this moment. And this is something lacking in Japan even though Japan has a democratic system.

For most of us in Japan, universal suffrage is something that we take for granted. The present democratic system was “given” as a result of World War II and now people can hardly remember its importance. While Hong Kong people are striving for universal suffrage, Japan was having a national election in December 2014. To my surprise, the number of voters was the lowest since the postwar period. This is a dangerous sign of democracy, I feel that people in Japan have now lost the passion to build and create their own society. Japan has democracy but lacks a democratic spirit; while Hong Kong has no true democratic system yet has a desire for democracy. This gap between Japan and Hong Kong is thought-provoking to me.

While I observed these political and social issues in Hong Kong, I soon noticed that there are so many different voices and opinions among them and even within the Christian circles as well. My heart was troubled whenever I hear that these different political and social opinions caused splits and contradictions within churches and even within Christian families. As for the Japanese church, especially the United Church of Christ in Japan (UCCJ, or *Kyodan*) which I belong to, we also experienced this kind of schism in the 1960s and 70s in matters of social issues. Unfortunately, its negative legacy is still influencing the churches even today.

Nevertheless, it seems to me that Hong Kong churches are much more mature than Japanese churches when confronted by these difficult issues. What impressed me most is that there were many conferences and meetings organized by Divinity School, and also by other Christian institutes, to discuss these issues together. Pastors and lay persons of local churches, teachers of seminaries, Christian students in high schools and universities, etc., often gathered together to discuss and pray even during and after the Umbrella Movement. I believe that such effort to dialogue is essential for future reconciliation. This, too, is something that we Japanese churches should learn from Hong Kong churches.

## 2. Learning Cantonese

Learning Cantonese was also a new and precious experience for me in HK. I had studied Putonghua before, and many of my friends asked me, “Why do you still need to learn Cantonese?” or “of course you can survive with English and Putonghua in Hong Kong!” Yes, it is true

that English and Putonghua are unquestionably useful in Hong Kong and there should be no problem without Cantonese, but according to the saying: “When in Rome, do as the Romans do.” I believe this includes language as well, so: “When in Hong Kong, speak as the Hongkongers speak.” Therefore, I decided to go to the language school called “Yale-China Chinese Language Centre” in CUHK and studied Cantonese for six months. There were classes for three hours, from Monday to Friday. It was not until after several months that I could start to speak simple sentences. I can still remember when I began to have longer conversations for the first time with a Hong Kong local student of Divinity School. He is the first person who talked to me when I just arrived in Hong Kong but I could only converse in Putonghua then. That day, I met him on campus and I tried to speak to him in Cantonese. He looked so surprised but was happy that we could now speak to each other in Cantonese. I was also so glad that I could understand what he was saying and we had an enjoyable conversation despite my poor vocabulary and grammar.

Professor Tobias Brandner, who speaks wonderful Cantonese, once said in his class that “learning language is a kind of spiritual journey.” I am sure this saying comes from his own experience. And I can now understand what he meant. Whether we like it or not, when we learn a new language, we cannot help but realize that we are just like babies who are powerless and weak. Even pastors, teachers, doctors, etc. who are leaders in their homeland must learn from other people in foreign lands just like a baby or a child learns from an adult. This will teach us humility.



We can say the same thing about learning God’s word. We must always learn God’s word with a humble heart. At first, you may not understand what the Bible mean or what sermons are about, just as a little baby cannot understand what other people are talking. But when you begin to understand God’s words little by little, you will be happy and God must be happy about it, too. This is similar to a baby learning language, and as he/she grows up, he/she learns to communicate with other people.

When you learn a foreign language, you are also able to realize how we can learn God's word and how wonderful it is to communicate with God! This is why we can say "learning language is a kind of spiritual journey."

### 3. Japanese Church and Hong Kong Church

Lots of Hong Kong people including Christians love Japanese things such as Sushi, Toyota, Anime and Manga, video games, pop music, etc. In the past two years, many people shared with me about their enjoyable vacations in Japan: where they went, what they ate, what they bought, etc. To my regret, very few people have visited a Japanese church in spite of having been to Japan repeatedly. They told me that they never thought of visiting a local Japanese church when they were in Japan. It came as a shock to me. I don't think they are ignoring the Japanese church, but it is just because the Japanese church is too small and a minority in Japanese society that people overseas hardly have a chance to get information about it.

Similarly, though many Japanese Christians have been to Hong Kong and they like things such as Dimsum and HK movies such as those starring Bruce Lee and Kelly Chan, but they know almost nothing about the HK church. I regret that for both sides, Christians are not interested to find out more about the local churches when they travel. It is also unfortunate that the Japanese Christians do not realize that the Hong Kong churches have been a significant influence in Hong Kong society and also internationally in comparison to the Japanese church.

Why is the situation still like this in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? We now have Internet access and many sources about Japanese and HK churches are available, and so are there now many cheap budget return air-fares between Japan and HK. Nevertheless, it seems to me that we have not become real "neighbors" yet. When we go to Christian bookstores, how many books on Japanese Christianity/HK Christianity can we find on the bookshelves? There are certainly some books on these topics in university/seminary libraries both in Japan and HK, but they are in the original language and have not been translated into Japanese or Chinese. Therefore, only very few people can read them. There are some organizations such as the Christian Council in Asia (CCA) and some church leaders who get together a few times in a year, but this kind of relationship is only among a few church leaders. Local church pastors and laypeople are usually not among them. Some Pentecostal and evangelical groups in HK have started to send some

missionaries to Japan in recent years, but these missions are still very new and not common in ecumenical or mainline church groups.

Despite these problems, I can still see some hope and bright possibilities. The Hong Kong Methodist Church sent a female missionary, an alumna of the Divinity School, to Japan for the first time in its history a few years ago. This summer, a female student of the Divinity School, though she is from mainland China, went to Japan for her summer internship at the two churches of the UCCJ in Tokyo and Nagoya, and this is the first case for both the Divinity School and for the UCCJ. I believe this is a great breakthrough.

Mission always begins from "person" not from theory. Someone must go into another place to build a relationship with a local church there – learn their language and be present with the brothers and sisters there to "rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn" (Romans 12:15). I cannot help but thank God that He sent two people from the Divinity School to the Japanese Church. I do hope there will be more and more people like them. Similarly, I also hope there will be more Japanese Christians like me who dare to come to Hong Kong. It is just the beginning of a new era for Japan-HK church relationships.

### 4. "Smallness" of the Japanese Church

Finally, please let me briefly explain about a current situation of Japanese Christianity. Japan has about one million Christians out of a population of 120 million, where half are Protestants and half are Catholics. This means Christians are less than 1 % of the population in Japan. Excluding a few Pentecostal denominations, the Christian population has been declining in the past few decades. In the case of the UCCJ which is the largest denomination in Japan, there are about 1700 churches from Hokkaido to Okinawa with about 200,000 members. Out of which only 40,000 are statistic regular worshipers. According to one statistic report, the number of pastors and church members will decrease to half by 2030. There aren't many young people in local churches and the average age of the congregation is usually over 60 years old. Overseas churches often commented kindly that the Japanese church has high quality theology despite its low quantity in membership, I think it will be more and more difficult to maintain of the future quality given the lack of young blood to face the challenges of the future.

“Why are there very few Christians in Japan?” “Why is the Christian population declining?” These are the questions that I have been asked more than a hundred times since I came to Hong Kong. It is not easy to answer these questions because different people have different opinions. Here are some common answers that we Japanese Christians often give: 1) For external reasons, Japanese are strongly influenced by traditional religions such as Shintoism and Buddhism, strong family ties; secularization, etc; 2) For internal reasons, there still remains a schism (which I mentioned above): too much emphasis on preserving tradition, failure to recognize the need to renew worship style, etc. These external and internal reasons are correct to some extent and the UCCJ churches and all other Japanese churches should self-reflect and also learn from other denominations as well as overseas churches.

While I think these are valid reasons, I often question myself if I were merely looking for “excuses?” If we consider those external reasons I pointed out above, there are many other places in the world where Christianity is growing despite similar social environment. Therefore I do not think I can use these explanations as something unique and special only in Japan. So what are the other possibilities? Is there one core reason?

Before I answer this core reason, I would like to share two experiences I had recently. Firstly, I had a chance to go to a city in the southern part of mainland China for a week in May. A local Chinese Christian friend took me around to visit some churches and arranged some meetings for me with the pastors. When I talked with a pastor who is the head of a provincial Christian Council, he asked me about the current situation of the Japanese church. I, as usual, explained some general situations such as the problems of aging, lack of young people, secularization, etc. The Chinese pastor, after listening to my explanations, said to me in a thoughtful way, “the situation of the current Japanese church might be that of tomorrow’s Chinese church.” My Chinese Christian friend, who sat next to me, said to the pastor, “Our Chinese church is now growing very rapidly, so how can it be like that?” The pastor said to him, “We do not know what it will be like tomorrow. Chinese church is not as stable as you think”. His response impressed me, because most of the people I have met regardless in mainland China or in Hong Kong, usually responded to my explanations in shock, “How small Japanese churches are!” or “Why is it like that?” or by saying sympathetically “Oh, it is hard to spread the Gospel in Japan,” “We will pray for the Japanese church,” etc. These responses are quite natural and I don’t

mean to criticize those who respond to me in these ways. I just want to emphasize this exceptional response by the Chinese pastor that I mentioned above.

Secondly, when the female student from Divinity School whom I have mentioned above asked me to refer her to a local Japanese church for internship, she wrote the following in her application letter: “When I studied Japanese in the university, it was my dream to visit Japan one day. Fortunately, I came to know Rev. Matsutani and his family in Hong Kong, and my wish to go to Japan once again is rekindled. I heard that Japanese Christians, though small in numbers, are strong in their faith and undaunted at all costs.....Christianity in mainland China has been growing rapidly in the last thirty years, but the number of pastors and ministers are far from sufficient to face the insurmountable challenges. I believe I have a lot of things to learn from the Japanese church.” Though it seems to me that she gave the Japanese church too much credit, but I am still very glad to know that she has a wish to “learn” from the Japanese church, not to “teach” something.

Through these two recent experiences, I began to reconsider my own views on the “smallness” of the Japanese Church. As a pastor myself, of course, I also want the Japanese Church to grow, but I now realize that smallness has its own meaning. The bigger church can learn from the smaller church while the smaller church can learn from the bigger church at the same time. If churches in the East Asian regions, such as Japan, mainland China, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, etc., were all big ones, they would just compete with each other. East Asian churches have diverse Christian population rates and I believe these are all in God’s wonderful plans.

Some Japanese pastors and theologians think that they have nothing to learn from other Asian churches and just look to the Western churches and theology as their ideal model. Some people even asked me, “Why are you going to Hong Kong for your overseas study? Why not other seminaries in Europe or USA?” Despite such thoughtless opinions, I chose to come to HK for my further research program, not only to do my personal research project, but also to “learn” from the Hong Kong churches and mainland Chinese churches. At least for now, there are a few people from Hong Kong, not many enough though, who have gone to Japan to “learn” from the Japanese church, because I was here.

This is my theological answer, not a sociological one, to the question “Why are there very few Christians in Japan?” I believe God allow each one of us to be different

so that we can respect and learn from each other, and this is the same for the church. Because each local church is different in numbers, liturgy, etc., we can learn from each other. This is not only the case for East Asia, but also for the whole world. Churches in the north, south, west and east, they are all parts of the One Body - our Lord Jesus Christ, and we can learn from each other. Learn what? We not only learn how to become one body in Christ, but also learn how wonderful it is to be as one body. So please come and see my beloved and small Japanese church, one of the parts of Christ's body!

Allow me to conclude my short essay by quoting First Corinthian Chapter 12:12-28.

*For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.*

*Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were*

*an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.*

*Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues.*



# Call me “Angela”

– Prof. Angela W.C. Wong (85 BA; 89 BD)

*Angela Wong graduated with a B.A. programme (Major in Theology) and B.D. (Hon.) programme from Chung Chi Theology Division. She also completed and was awarded her Ph.D. with the University of Chicago. She was a teacher in our School, and currently the Associate Professor of the Department of the Cultural and Religious Studies.*

## Theology and Society

Although Angela Wong currently concentrates on research on culture, gender and religious studies, she was previously involved with Theology. During her years in Secondary School, she frequently participated in the various services organized by the S.K.H. Light. At that time, the motto of the church was “Care for the Society”, which she wholeheartedly supported as this was what she values and believes in. She claims, “I believe that the Church has the capacity to change society drastically. And through my Theology degree, I was given the opportunity to lead numerous church activities.” Later on, she joined a group that strongly encourages religious reflection and care for the society.

The group became an organization for a local movement and within the group, she served the community faithfully and diligently. She says, “There is a close relationship between faith and society. Therefore, caring for the poor and needy should be done through the means of theological education.” When she was in her third year of her University program, she did her internship on a full time basis with the Industrial Committee, where no students had gone before.

Besides her involvement in social service, Angela was also active in social movements. She participated in discussions ranging from social problems to student movements. “The conflict was between radical students and conservative students. On one occasion, there was a fierce debate on the imprisonment of students who were involved in social movement.”

## Feminism and Theology

Why women in swimming suits are the ideal marketing tool for bottled water? Why is the body of a woman the focus point in a beauty pageant? These are a few of the questions she used to ponder after Liu Po-Chuen impressed upon her to think critically about the oppression of women in our society.

Feminist Theology emphasizes women’s dignity and proclaims that women share the same image of God as men. In our social structure, female was never on the same status as male. Angela became zealous and is passionate in her pursuit researching topics on women, she embarks on research about women, theology, and biblical interpretation. She is grateful to have received three research grants to work on the study of relationship between women, religion and families. In 1995, while I was teaching Feminist Theology and Practical Theology at Divinity School, I was also writing my doctoral dissertation on Asian Theology and Women’s stories in Hong Kong with the University of Chicago. To this day, she continues on her quest to understand society and at its core, feminism and theology.



## Potholes in our Society

As a feminist advocate, she is concerned about the way people call her. "I prefer to be recognized as 'Angela' or 'Ms. Wai Ching' instead of 'Mrs. Lai'". She understands that being a wife of Mr. Lai is one of her identities. Therefore, she would never force other to call her by her preferred address. "One of the basic principles of feminism is not to force others to follow your rules, but to let others develop themselves in their own ways."

Previously, Angela considered it a waste of opportunity when women who had attained higher education chose to stay at home as full time home-makers. Later, she realized that everyone is only trying to find their place in the society. It is not necessary that every woman goes to work, especially when that is not their purpose in the first place.

While she has accepted their choices, she has yet to question the traditional and customary practice of women. She remarks, "In a wedding ceremony, a father hands his daughter to another man. Whenever I see this, I cringe inside." A woman is neither inferior nor an auxiliary product of man. As a result, she decided on her wedding ceremony, to show impartiality for both genders, she got her parents as well as her in-laws to-be to march alongside with her to the altar. She affirms, "obedience and love have nothing to do with one's gender. All in all, conflicts are inevitable in every family, and the answer to that must be mutual respect."

## In Solidarity with the Weak

Angela, like most Hong Kongers of her time, was born to parents in the working class. They received low income and struggled like everyone else for survival. She recalls, "my father would always tell me about the strenuous work conditions at work." Therefore, she encourages people to understand the conditions of workers through different ways other than the media. Workers are not mere machines, and they should not be treated as such. They should know their rights and fight for them valiantly when they are not respected.

## Life Companion

She found her life companion, Lai Chi Tim, in the Chinese University of Hong Kong. "He is a quiet and serious man, but when it comes to some theories or issues, he can be ebullient in our mini debates. I appreciate his attitude towards scholarship and research." Angela describes, "He is an observer and I am a participant; he cares about the overall event and situation, while I care about the people involved."

## The Divinity School and me

"The School was in financial crisis when I was studying here," Angela recalls. "The situation has improved with the efforts of Rev. Lo and the rest of the colleagues. More teachers have been employed and more students are admitted, and there can be more theological discussions." She still remembers these words of Dr Shen vividly, "Theological education is not only for today's church, but also the foundation for tomorrow's Church." She hopes that Divinity School will keep training more students to be broad-minded, think theology critically, and be persistent in their struggle for social justice. She concludes, "there are thousands and thousands of conflicts in society today, be it gender equality, democratic rights, or the mainland-Hong Kong relations; they can be avoided with just understanding and mutual respect. The School must be the one to build a bridge over troubled waters, but first and foremost, the church needs improvement."



# Fund-raising Events

## MUSICAL CONCERT



# “This is My Story, This is My Song”

# The Life and Songs of Fanny Crosby”

“This is My Story, This is My Song – The Life and Songs of Fanny Crosby”

This concert, a rerun and this time to raise fund for the Chung Chi Theological Education Fund of our School, Ebenezer School & Home for the Visually Impaired and Christian Ministry to Visually Impaired Persons was held on April 11 and 12, 2015 at the Concert Hall of Hong Kong Cultural Centre. The concert is a musical entitled, “This is My Story, This is My Song – The Life and Songs of Fanny Crosby”. The concert was organized by the Alumni Association of Divinity School of Chung Chi College and our school is the co-organizer.

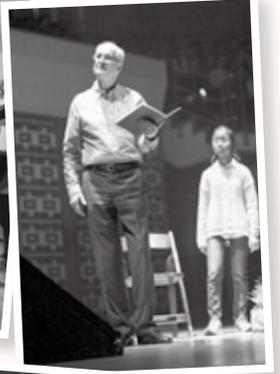
### Opening Ceremony Highlights

The opening ceremony took place on April 11, 2015 at YMCA of Hong Kong. Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang (Director, Divinity School of Chung Chi College) delivered the welcome speech. Prof. Joseph J.Y. Sung (Vice-Chancellor and President, CUHK), Prof. Fong Wing-ping (Associate Head, Chung Chi College, CUHK), Mr. Clifford A. Hart, J.R. (Consul General of the United States to Hong Kong & Macau), Mrs. Fanny Lam (CEO, Ebenezer School and Home for the Visually Impaired) and Dr. Daniel B.M. To (Chairperson, Christian Ministry to Visually Impaired Persons) also delivered their speeches respectively.

Besides the honorable guests mentioned above, we also have Mr. Lau Chun-chuen (CYMCA), Rev. Dr. Li Ping-kwong (CYMCA), Mr. David P.H. Wong (YMCA), Rev. Yuen Tin-yau (MCHK), Rev. Eric S.Y. So (CCC), Elder Dr. Wong Fook-ye (TSM), Prof. Lo Lung-kwong (DSCCC) and The Very Rev. Chan Hin-cheung as our officiating guests. The souvenirs were presented to the production team, orchestra, choir, actors and donors to thank them for their support to the concert.

Rev. Victor Y.N. Cheung (Chairperson, Alumni Association, Divinity School of Chung Chi College, CUHK) closed the opening ceremony with a moving message on Fanny Crosby's hymns and life experience, as he thanked the artists and all for their fabulous performance.





# WALK a THON

The 2015 walkathon was successfully held on March 8. There were over 70 participants who joined the walkathon and more than HKD 630,000 was raised. The Very Revd. Chan Hin-cheung (Chairman, Theological Council), Rev. Li Ping-kwong (Member, Theological Council), Dr. Jane M.C. Cheung (College Secretary, Chung Chi College), Mr. Timothy W.K.Chan (Pacific Plan), Rev. Prof. Lo Lung-kwong (Former Director, DSCCC), Rev. Ng Ping-wah (Associate Director of Pastoral Programme), Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang (Director, DSCCC), Mr. Chan Kwok-fai (10'MACS,

13'MATS, MDiv 2)(President, Student Union), Ms. Yiu Kwan-pik (President, Fund-raising committee) were the VIP guests for the opening ceremony.

After the walkathon, there was a food and entertainment fare held on the grounds of Divinity School. Activities ranged from selling buns, homemade breads, and drinks at the stalls run by our students to a live band with singing hymns. At the Thanksgiving Service, Rev. Wong Ka-fai delivered the sermon, "The Joy of Offering".

**Every year we have children joining us with gleaming smiles, blasting spirits and jovial hearts, and here are some pictures of them this year!**

**There were bazaar, mini music concert and food stalls all around Theology Building.**



# End of Term Service



The End of Term Service was held on May 7, 2015. The Very Rev. Chan Hin-cheung, Rev. Li Shung-kin, Prof. Tam Wai-lun and Rev. Wong Ka-fai, and the faculty attended the service. Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang, the director, delivered the sermon entitled "Emmaus". At the end of the service, students presented their gifts and blessings to Rev. Ng Ping-wah who was retiring on July 31, 2015.



## Church Visit

On March 29, 2015, there were 5 teams of students led by Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang, Prof. Common L.P. Chan, Rev. Prof. Lo Lung-kwong, Prof. Francis T. W. Yip, Dr. Marina X. J. Wang, Prof. Nancy N.H. Tan, Rev. Prof. Tobias Brander, Prof. Eric K.C. Wong, Dr. Leo K.H. Li and Rev. Ng Ping-wah to the following churches: S.K.H. Holy Nativity Church, Tai Po Wing Kwong Pentecostal Holiness Church, Hong Kong Methodist International Church, and Cheong Lo Church (Hong Kong Church of Christ in China) and Tsung Kyam Church (Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong).



## News on Pastoral Programme

### Graduation Ceremony

The graduation ceremony for the Foundation Diploma Programme in Biblical Studies which was jointly organized by S.K.H. Holy Trinity Cathedral was held on March 22, 2015 at the Cathedral. Five students graduated in the ceremony.

A summer intensive course for the Diploma Programme in Biblical Studies was held on July 6-16, 2015 at Theology Building for about 90 pastors and lay leaders from China.

The "Young Pastors Support Network" Programme 2015-16 will be launched in September 2015. Last year (2014-15), there were 18 pastors who joined this programme.



A course by Dr. He Zhiyong on "Pastors and Healthy Lifestyle" was held on April 27, 2015 at the Hong Kong Productivity Council with 21 participants.



A course by Mr. Raymond Fung and Rev. Timothy K.C. Lam on "Isaiah's Mission" was held on 20th and 27th April 2015 at the Hong Kong Productivity Council with 22 participants.

### The Centre for Christian Studies (CCS) and Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion and Culture (CSCCRC)

#### Public lecture

#### "Paul Jefferies: God's Silent Servant, Hong Kong 1952-1966"

A Public Lecture on "Paul Jefferies: God's Silent Servant, Hong Kong 1952-1966" organized by RCCCS, Divinity School and The Methodist Church, Hong Kong was delivered by Revd. Dr. Michael P. Wilson on March 19, 2015 at President Chi-tung Yung Memorial Building. Dr. Wilson is a British Methodist minister and the son-in-law of the late Paul Jefferies. His doctorate was on the work of Austin Farrer and the philosophical theology of the self. Mary Jefferies, the daughter of Paul Jefferies was present too. The Rev. Dr. Li Ping-kwong and The Rev Ralph T.S. Lee were the respondents. About 80 people attended.

### Theological Exploration Conference 2015

Hong Kong Theological Exploration Conference 2015 on "No Universal Suffrage for H.K. in 2017? Theological Reflection and Imagination" organized by the Hong Kong Christian Council, jointly hosted by the CCS and Department of Religion and Philosophy was held on May 1, 2015 at the Chinese Methodist Church. About 260 people participated. The morning featured a plenary session with four speakers of different "generations" speaking on their vision of Hong Kong after the Umbrella Movement. Later in the afternoon, there were nine workshops offered for the participants to select. Each workshop focused on specific topics related to Hong Kong society and culture. This full-day conference ended with a worship service.



## The Film “Preacher”

A Film “Preacher” was shown on May 9, 2015 at Yasumoto International Academic Park. Director Lin Jin (Independent Filmmaker), Dr. Yam Chi-keung (Research Associate of CCS) and Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang (Director of Divinity School) co-chaired the roundtable and shared their ideas with more than a hundred participants. The event was co-organized with CSCCRC, Chinese Independent Documentary Lab and Christian Times. The Film narrates the Internal Disputes of Shanxi Christian Churches among their clergy.



## The 9th International Symposium on the History of Christianity in Modern China

The 9th International Symposium on the History of Christianity in Modern China on “Chinese Christianity after 1949” was held on June 12 and 13, 2015 at Council Chamber , Shaw Tower, Shaw Campus, Hong Kong Baptist University. It was co-organized by the Chinese Church Research Center (CCRC), Alliance Bible Seminary and Modern History Research Centre, HKBU and hosted by SSHCC. Prof. Yang Feng-gang and Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang were the Keynote speakers.

## News on The Centre for Quality-Life Education (CQLE)

A 12-hour long, Life Planner Training Programme 2015 organized by the Centre for Quality-Life Education and YMCA, was held on June 9, 16 and 23, 2015. Dr. Roger Cheng, the Honorary Associate Director of the Centre was the Lecturer. 22 social workers attended and the responses were all positive.

## News on The Society for Study of History of Christianity in China (SSHCC)

An Open Lecture organized by SSHCC on “From Wellington Street to Caine Road: The difficulties of the formation of Hong Kong Catholic Church” was held on January 24, 2015 at President YCT Memorial Building. It was delivered by Prof. Louis Ha, Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of Cultural and Religious Studies. About 30 people attended.

## SU news SU news

A drama “You Can Shine”, organized by Student Union was shown on May 12 and 13. Nearly 200 came to watch the play. It is about the life of our students studying in Divinity School, in particular how they experienced campus life in relation to not just study but also how the students shared with those who participated in the social movement. The audience appreciated and responded to it positively.



# PEOPLE IN THE NEWS (April 2015– July 2015)

## Personnel

Prof. Milton W.Y. Wan has been awarded Outstanding Teaching Award 2014-15 of our School.

Prof. Ying Fuk Tsang has successfully received a Research Grant subcontracted from the Purdue University, USA for the project "The Survival and Revival of Protestant Christianity in Communist China: An Oral History Project". The project is part of the "Chinese Religious Markets and Spiritual Capital" project which is awarded from the John Templeton Foundation to map the religious and spiritual landscape in China and study how religions have flourished in the post-Communist country.

Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang has also successfully received a Direct Grant for the project "Fallen Crosses in 'China's Jerusalem' and Its Implication on State-Church Relations in Contemporary China".

Prof. Nancy N.H. Tan has successfully received a Direct Grant for the project "In the Image of God: Negotiating Interpretation in the Hebrew Bible for the Disabled".

Ms. Natalie C. L. Wai has been employed as Executive Office II since July 1, 2015, continuously serving as the School Secretary for the Divinity School.

As the Love Your neighbor Service Learning Programme came to an end in mid July 2015, the two staff of the programme Miss Anna P. Y. Yip and Miss Prisca W. P. Chan finished their contracts on July 15, 2015 and July 1, 2015 respectively. May God bless their future endeavors.

Rev. Ng Ping-wah retired from his post of Associate Director of Pastoral Programme and School Chaplain since July 7, 2015. Rev. Wong Ka-fai is seconded from Hong Kong Church of Christ in China to take up the post from July 2, 2015. Rev. Wong is our alumni (95 BD) and formerly served as the Pastor-in-Charge at HKCCC Leung Faat Memorial Church.

Prof. Simon S.M. Kwan has been successful in the advancement to full Professorship. The appointment is effective from August 1, 2015.

## Director in News

Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang was invited to Taipei, Taiwan during April 14 to 15, 2015 to deliver a lecture on behalf of Academic Exchange with Taiwan Top Universities. Prof. Ying delivered a speech on "Perspectives on the History of Christianity in China After 1949" at Graduate Institute of History, National Central University.

Prof. Ying was invited to Chung Li, Taoyuan, Taiwan on April 16, 2015 to attend the opening ceremony of Christianity Archive Center, Chung Yuan Christian University Library. Prof. Ying was the seminar speaker on the theme "Christian Archives".

Prof. Ying and Rev. Victor W.C. Chan were invited to Guangxi, China on May 17, 2015 to visit the Literature and Law College of Wuzhou University for academic exchange purposes.

## Professor in News

Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang, Rev. Prof. Lo Lung-kwong, Dr. Marina X.J. Wang, Dr. Leo K.H. Li and Rev. Ng Ping-wah led 24 students, 4 alumni and spouse, 1 honorary research associate and 1 guest on a study tour to Fuzhou and Xiamen, China for the course "THEO5959 Special Topics on Christianity in China II" during May 15 to 22, 2015. Prof. Milton W.Y. Wan and Prof. Common L.P Chan joined the tour on May 20.

## Rev. Prof. Lo Lung-kwong

Rev. Prof. Lo was invited to Nagasaki, Japan from April 20 to 25, 2015 to attend an international "Christian Forum for Reconciliation in Northeast Asia" which was organized by the Duke University Divinity School Center for Reconciliation. Rev. Lo delivered a speech on "Reconciliation Toward What? The Gift of a New Creation".

Rev. Prof. Lo was invited to Taipei, Taiwan to deliver a sermon at the Center-City Methodist Church on June 21, 2015.

Rev. Prof. Lo was invited to Taipei, Taiwan by The Methodist Graduate School of Theology for the period June 22-24, 2015 to be the keynote speaker on the topics "Who is the challenge of the pastor?" and "Challenges Today". Rev. Lo was invited to be the guest of honour of the Graduation Ceremony of The Methodist Graduate School of Theology on June 22, 2015 and delivered a sermon.

## Rev. Prof. Tobias Brandner

Invited by the United Board, Tobias Brandner organized an academic retreat for teachers from various theological schools in Myanmar under the theme, 'Moving Theology'. The retreat was attended by many of our Myanmar alumni. It was held at Pyin Oo Lwin, Mandalay Division, Myanmar from 28 April to 2 May. Tobias Brandner gave a keynote lecture on 'Theological Education and Empowerment.'

On May 11, Tobias Brandner gave a public lecture at the Hong Kong Foreign Correspondents' Club on 'Life in Hong Kong Prisons.'

# Introduction of IASACT 2015

IASACT, the Institute for Advanced Study in Asian Cultures and Theologies is a four-week residential program that provides space and time for scholars to deepen their understanding of theologies and cultural traditions in Asia. Participants undertake research and writing in the broad area of Asian cultures and theologies and complete a working paper while in residence. The IASACT aims to strengthen theological education in Asian Christian universities and colleges, encourage cross-disciplinary as well as inter-religious discussions and enable scholars from different countries or of different nationalities to work together toward an intra-Asian theological and cultural understanding. Since 2004, over 170 IASACT scholars from 86 institutions in 15 Asian regions have benefited from the program.

Funded by the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, IASACT is administered by the Divinity School of Chung Chi College starting from this year. IASACT 2015 consisted of 16 scholars from Asian universities and seminaries in 9 countries including India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, China, Philippines, Vietnam, U.S.A. and Hong Kong. There are two scholars who respectively come from U.S.A. and Gambia but are now doing research in China and Indonesia. IASACT was held from May 31 to June 27 this year and was kicked off by an Opening Worship on June 1, 2015 and accomplished with a Mini Conference which scholars were assigned into different panels for giving presentations over the topic "Intellectual Praxis: Can and How Can, Research on Religions & Cultures Help Transform One's Country?" Scholars also had chances to explore the local cultures and religions via various excursions such as visits to Tao Fong Shan Christian Centre and Ping Shan Heritage Trail.

From May 12 to 19, he was invited by the Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, for a series of lectures, partly for students, partly for a broader public. The topics of his lecture include 'Christianity in China', 'Christianity and democracy', and 'Christian faith in prison'.

From June 12 to 25, Tobias Brandner visited Switzerland for the 200th year anniversary celebration of the Basel Mission. He gave several lectures in churches on topics related to Christianity in China.

## **Dr. Yam Chi-keung**

From April to May, 2015, Dr. Yam was invited by V.W. Link to deliver a short term course "I cook, I eat, I believe: Food and Faith."

## **Dr. Marina X. J. Wang**

She was invited to Taipei, Taiwan on May 5, 2015 to deliver a speech on "A Study on Cheng Jingyi" at Chung Yuan Christian University.

## **Congratulations**

Patrick Y. S. Chu (14 MDiv) was ordained to be preacher by the Reacher Swatow Christian Church on August 31, 2014.

Ms. Caly K. L. Fung, our colleague in the School, married Mr. Lam Cheuk-hei. The ceremony was held at Hong Kong Church of Christ in China Cheung Lo Church on January 10, 2015.

Mr. Xiao Xiangyu (14 MACS, MATS) and Ms. Qu Yanjing (14 MACS, MDiv) were married at Dongguan on March 11; a thanksgiving service was held on April 11 at the Divinity School.

A baby son was given birth by Ms. Chen Mingli (07 MACS, 08 MATS, 13 PhD) on May 3.

Khin Khawsiamia (12 DTheol) was elected to be the principal of Myanmar Theological College.

Ms. Kwok Pui-lan (76 BA, 78 BD, 80 MTheol), professor of Episcopal Divinity School in US, was granted the Gutenberg Research Award. This award is issued by Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz to give credit to the outstanding scholar for research.

Rev. Yuen Tin-yau (78 MDiv, 90 MTheol) retired from the post of the president of the Hong Kong Methodist Church, and the successor is Rev. Lam Sung-chi (83 BD).

## **Obituary**

Ms. Luk Ching-mui (08 MDiv) passed away at home last year.

Rev. Fan Xiuyuan (Guangzhou Christian Council), Rev. Fan Kin-pong's (00 BD) father, passed away on November 12, at the age of 91. The funeral service was held on November 21, 2014.

Dr. Philip Fu, the Former Head (1981-1988) of Chung Chi College, passed away on May 4, 2015 in Naperville.

Mr. Lai Kin-fat (97 BA) passed away at home and the funeral service was held on March 20 at Sha Tin Po Fook Hill Funeral Home.

Our deepest condolences to their families.

# Congratulations

Bill Cruse was an exchange student from Episcopal Divinity School (EDS). He graduated on 21 May 2015 with an MDiv from EDS and a Certificate in International Ecumenism and Mission from the Boston Theological Institute. He was ordained to the Transitional Diaconate by The Rt. Rev. A. Robert Hirschfeld on June 6, 2015 at St. Paul's Church, Concord, New Hampshire, in the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire, a diocese of The Episcopal Church. Being ordained as a Deacon is a requirement before ordination as a priest in the Episcopal Church. Ordinands will serve as Deacons for at least six months before becoming Priests. Bill was ordained with 4 other ordinands at the joyful celebration with family and friends. Bill's DSCCC classmate Grace Chan was joined by another friend from Hong Kong who also attended the ordination. "All those who have been baptized are called to serve in Christ's name. We require those who are following a vocation to the priesthood to serve first as 'deacons,' from the Greek word meaning 'servant.' The intent is to impress upon them the mind of Christ who laid aside privilege or honor in order to be in solidarity with those in spiritual, social, and material need," explained Bishop Hirschfeld. "Being able to ordain these five who are so eager to build communities of prayer, love, and service to a world in need gives me such hope for the future of God's mission in the Church," he added.



Rev. Cruse will resume his work with the Kaleidoscope Institute facilitating workshops for churches and denominations that prepare them to lead sustainable multicultural and missional ministry in a diverse changing world. He also hopes to be called to parish ministry.

PS - I'm wearing a replica of the DSCCC Nestorian Cross that was an ordination gift from the Episcopal Church Women of my sponsoring parish, Christ Church, North Conway NH.

## Visitors

Organisation	Name
Shandong Theological Seminary	Rev. Lin Xicheng Rev. Wang Mengkun
Shandong Jinan Church	Mr. Ding Jiyu
Guangzhou Shamian Church	Mr. Dong Mian
Qingcaodi Church, Beijing	Cai Zhuohua
Zhengzhou Aids Patient Gospel Group, Henan	Zhang Liang
Aijiabei Church	Meng Yuanxin
Andingmen Bible Group	Kong Chen
Zhongxin Church, Beijing	Wei Jumei Hua Huiqi
Henan Home Church	Wang Yinuo
Beijing Foreign Studies University	Yang Huiling
Nanjing Union Theological Seminary	Lin Peiquan

Organisation	Name
Beijing Overseas Friendship Association	Lian Yun
Amity Foundation	Zheng Wei
Beijing	Li Zhimin
J.F. Oberlin University	Inoue Taiei Xue Enfeng
Tel Aviv University, Israel	Prof. Israel Hershkovitz
Centre for the Study of Religion, Leiden University, Holland	Liu Ji Feng
The United Methodist Church, U.S.	HiRho Y. Park
Presbyterian Church in the United States of America	Choon Shik Lim
Mission 21, Basel Switzerland	Katharina Gfeller Thierry Ruetsch