

Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary

Annual Report 2007-08



Today's seminary students, who will be tomorrow's ministers, need to be co-nurtured by our churches and the Seminary.

- *“The kingdom of God challenges more workers to be willing to consecrate and fully devote themselves to ministry. My present working environment is so stable that I can continue to lead my life safely. But does such a stable way of life do any good to the kingdom of God? When we face God in the future, can I say that I myself have loved God with all my heart, all my soul and all my mind? ...”*

~ Excerpt from a student's testimony of God's call

- *“On the road to equipping myself, even though it has been I who has studied, what has enabled me to complete my study are the teaching and encouragement of my teachers, the support and concern of my family, the intercession and prayers of my home church and Christian brothers and sisters. Of course the most important is the Lord who has been walking all the way with me and I must thank God for all that which is his grace.”*

~ Excerpt from a graduating student's sharing

From a new student to a graduating student ready to enter the ministry field, every seminary student must tread a difficult path. Since the road of consecration is full of challenges, our churches and the Seminary must walk with them, enabling them to be fully equipped to shoulder the heavy load of ministry, preaching and doing missions work later on.

Without the bow, one arrow after another cannot be shot out; without the offerings and prayers of churches and Christian brothers and sisters, it would be almost impossible for us to commission one graduating student after another to go into the ministry fields. We hope this *Annual Report* will challenge you to continue to support us.

● **Prospect and Going Forth**

In the academic year 2007-08, we faced with a number of difficulties and changes; however, “our hearts had not turned back, our feet had not strayed from your path” (Psalm 44:18). This has been the time when we have needed to learn not to stray from his path, but rather go forth with self-control, humility and dependence on God, striding boldly into the academic year 2008-09.



In the new semester, the Seminary has needed to make changes in both subjects and teachers. Our Lord cares for our needs and supplies us with scholars like Dr. Ng Wai-man, Dr. Philip Chia and Dr. Sher Hing-kee as our adjunct lecturers. At this time, the Seminary is recruiting more teachers to expand our faculty in the areas of biblical studies, church music, missions and religious education. We are already experiencing God's guidance and wait eagerly to experience his wonderful preparation. Meanwhile, further development in the curriculum in the area of preaching, the writing of the religious education curriculum, the revision of the pastoral counseling curriculum and the expansion of the distance education program are some of the Seminary's development plans for the coming years.

In the new semester, the Seminary continues upgrading our academic level and takes steps to undergird students' spiritual discipline, especially in the realm of prayer. From the pre-semester spiritual formation camp,



the Seminary prayer meeting at the beginning of the fall semester and the morning prayer meetings each Wednesday and Friday morning to the Seminary-wide fasting, silent prayer meeting on Wednesdays at noon, students are encouraged to develop their prayer lives. This is the direction in which we are heading and signifies the Seminary's new beginning. We aim to be a seminary that puts prayer into practice and provides a place to mold and build up our students' prayer lives. Our renewal effort also includes nurturing our students' musical lives with the hope that our students can experience God afresh through singing hymns so that they can go on to be ministers leading their congregations to praise God with singing.

Besides encouraging the practice and discipline

of prayer and singing, teachers will gather our resources for further studies in spiritual theology. This will be an important direction of development as our teachers will devote themselves to writing on various topics in spiritual theology from the perspectives of church history, pastoral theology and systematic theology. The first book in our "Spiritual Theology Series" will be Professor Joshua Cho's *Spiritual Friendship*.

● Retrospect and Thanksgiving

As we look to the future, we also like to look back and reflect over the 2007-08 academic year, recounting God's rich blessings to our Seminary:

1. Ministerial Preparation Program

In this academic year, God led 38 graduates into the ministry fields. Meanwhile, he has also entrusted 31 new students to our Seminary. We understand that

Graduates	
Master of Theology	3
Master of Divinity	18
Bachelor of Arts in Pastoral Studies	15
Master of Pastoral Counseling	2
Total	38

theological education not only emphasizes a cognitive

New Students	
Master of Theology	2
Master of Divinity	21
Bachelor of Arts in Pastoral Studies	7
Non-classified Students	1
Total	31

understanding of God, but also emphasizes a reflection of faith, emotional participation and action, and the building up of character and the spiritual life. We

thank God that our teachers have devoted themselves to leading their students to highlight character, ethics and spiritual theology while also ensuring that all 137 of our students are fully equipped through morning prayer meetings, the chapel services, the co-walker scheme and spiritual formation groups, to learn to form their own spiritual character and to be watchpersons for one another as they develop soul mate relationships to ensure their spiritual growth.

In the past year, God also led our students to do their field practicum in 66 churches and Christian organizations, to have opportunities to take part in ministry and to have different learning opportunities. This summer vacation, some of our students have had their practicum in Mainland China or overseas, acquiring some cross-cultural ministerial experiences. Besides, God allowed our students to sharpen their thinking, exchange ideas and expand their vision after attending various seminars on campus. These seminars include (1) the Baptist Heritage Week Seminar entitled "Snapshots of Early Baptist Leaders to China and Hong Kong (II)"; (2) the Mission Week

Seminar, entitled “Evangelistic Ministry on Campuses in Mainland China”; and (3) other seminars such as the practicum seminars, seminars on a variety of local ministries. For example, Mrs. Chiu Leung Bik-min from the Mission Department of the Baptist Convention of Hong Kong was invited to share their ministry in Mainland China, and Professor Robert Jewett, a renowned New Testament scholar, was asked to share the essential theme of the book of Romans.



In an effort to recruit students, God continues to draw Christians willing to serve him full time to know more about the Seminary through the “Full Time Ministry Seminar” and the “Experiencing Seminary Life Camp.” God has also allowed the Seminary to visit 39 different churches to conduct the Seminary Sunday Worship Service. While we preach sermons and minister to churches, the churches are attentive to the Seminary’s educational ministries and needs. Furthermore, Professor Joshua Cho, our Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, made a preaching and teaching tour of churches and seminaries in Beijing and also in Shan Tung Province in June. Before and after that tour, he visited the States and South East Asia to preach and meet with local Baptist pastors, ministers and overseas alumni.

Whether we engage ourselves in the routine, regular ministries or face times of change and difficulties, we continue to witness God’s new loving concern and work at the Seminary and in our students’ lives. Even when teachers and staff do their best, they may not offer everything students need, but as long as we do not stray from God’s path and keep step with the Lord, we can then walk with students on the road of consecration and walk with the churches that we serve.

2. Lay Theological Education

Baptists have always emphasized the priesthood of believers; the purpose of the Seminary to set up LTED is to provide diversified programs,

catering to different needs so that Christian believers can be equipped for their future church or work place ministries. Thank God that in this academic year the average number of students has increased from 900 to 1,000 with a total number of class registrations up to 2,800 each quarter.

The Lay Theological Education Department is currently offering 11 Certificate, Diploma, Bachelor’s and Master’s programs, including Christian Studies, Lay Theological Training, Women Theological Training, Elderly Ministry, Youth Ministry, Childhood Ministry, Early Childhood Ministry, Sports Ministry, Mission Ministry, Church Administration and General Affairs, and Ministry Calling and Preparation. These programs stress both basic theological training and equipping our students to do ministry. Besides providing different programs, we also conduct seminars on topics to reflect on our Christian faith and face to the challenges of our times. This April, we organized a large-scaled seminar on “A Little More Love in the Family – A Family-Based New Blueprint for Cultivating Children” with more than 550 people attending. From this response, we



can see the attention and concern of the church and Christian believers regarding children nurturing. To meet the needs of the church, in October we promptly set up the “Childhood Ministry Diploma / Certificate” to equip those interested in ministering to children holistically and systematically.

In the 2007-08 academic year, there will be 372 students graduating, including 12 in the Master of Christian Studies program; 27 in the Bachelor / Diploma / Certificate of Christian Studies programs; 333 in the non-degree programs. It is our strong desire that God will continue to use us to help our graduates to put into practice what they have learned, to do a good job in their church ministries and to be a powerful witness for our Lord in their profession in the marketplace.

3. Distance Education Program

In the hustle and bustle of our modern society, many believers lead hectic lives and sometimes must make overseas trips. Yet, they have a passion to pursue further their Christian faith to serve God better at church or in their work place. The DEP is designed to provide correspondence study or online study for students, whether in Hong Kong or overseas, allowing students to be equipped without the constraints of time and space. The programs offered include the following: the Certificate Program in New Testament Studies, the Certificate Program in Old Testament Studies, the Diploma Program in Christian Studies, the Diploma Program in Bible Studies, the Advanced Diploma Program in Christian Studies, the Advanced Diploma Program in Bible Studies, and the special New Testament Online Program. Until now, over 250 students have graduated and 350 are now enrolled in the programs. While students taking DEP are mainly from Hong Kong, more than 70 students are from overseas. At the close of 2007, the Tenth Anniversary Thanksgiving Meeting was held with both DEP's students and tutors gathering together to recount how our Lord's grace had been working in their lives.



We are happy to report that the Seminary and the Gospel Center for the Visually Impaired have joined hands to offer the "Spiritual Light Project" to Christians with sight problems. In May this year, the first Certificate Program in Old Testament Studies got underway with a total of 11 students; the third Certificate Program in New Testament Studies has proceeded smoothly with 4 students participating. We have also just started the "Sound from the Sky Training Project" to provide training for aurally-impaired Christians. We also collaborate with the Hong Kong Christian Kun Sun Association to set up the "Onesimus Project" for prison inmates who have come to Christ while in correctional institutions. There are over 40 students enrolled in the diploma and certificate programs. We thank God for making it

possible for these Christians to be theologically equipped through the DEP so that they can witness for our Lord while in the correctional institutions.

The Theological Education Program for Filipino Leaders (TEFL), inaugurated in January 2003, has had a class registration of over 1,000 since its beginning. All classes are conducted on Sunday afternoons with an average of 40 students enrolled in the program each quarter. In early 2006, a Matching Scholarship was established. This is a one-to-one course fee matching scholarship developed, using the Seminary's subsidy and church offerings, and tailored for each student concerned. A total of 145 students have been subsidized by this arrangement. This July, we have launched the Bachelor Program of Theological Studies, initially offering three courses and having an enrolment of 70.

4. The Applied Theological Education

Conveniently located in Bute Street, Mongkok, the Applied Theological Education Center includes the Pastoral Continuing Education Center and the Edna Wong Christian Worship and Arts Education Center.

• Pastoral Continuing Education Center

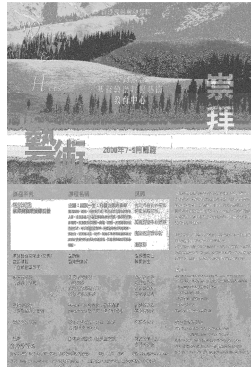
PCEC has entered its sixth year, providing a rich variety of programs and seminars. We offer support in different fields of ministry to ministers and pastors, allowing them to take courses or seminars according to their practical needs. The center helps them acquire new knowledge and continue equipping themselves.

In the 2007-08 academic year, we provided new opportunities for ministers to study by developing new curricula and formats. Besides the formerly-conducted seminars, this year we tried offering courses requiring more sessions (from 9 to 18 hours) to give students an in-depth understanding and knowledge of the subjects. Moreover, some new courses such as "PowerPoint and Its Application at Church" and "Growth Group for Ministers" were being offered for the first time. Other courses such as "Counseling Tools and Skills," "In-depth Bible Book Study" were among the most popular subjects for ministers.

The courses and talks offered by PCEC deal in areas such as missions, leadership, equipping, teaching and guidance, and pastoral care. Last year over 30 courses and talks were conducted with 300 pastors or ministers joining these courses or lectures throughout the year with a total enrolment of 1,300.

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

The center aims to instill in lay Christians a renewed understanding of worship based on the wisdom of the Bible and the study of theology and church history. Moreover, by receiving diversified and integrative training in the fine arts, students can broaden their vision and the scope of their ministry and increase their ability to use art in church services or their other ministries.



In the 2007-08 academic year, an average of 200 students was enrolled in courses each quarter. The subjects offered included “The Space Set Apart: The Environment for Worship,” “PowerPoint at Church: A Powerful Means of Communication,” “Drama at Church: A Creative Workshop of Short Dramas for Christian Meetings,” and “A Report on the ‘Battle’ of Worship: In Search of a ‘Peaceful’ Solution” led by Dr. Terry York of George W. Truett Theological Seminary, Baylor University. These courses are both theoretically-based and practically-oriented. Furthermore, there are also day and evening courses, including vocal performance, keyboard music, music appreciation, choral music, conducting, Chinese and western musical instrument performance, dancing, drama and theater, cinema and regional opera classes.

5. Library Resources

We thank God for providing our students a library rich in resources. As of August 2008, the total size of the collection had reached over 100,000 items, including 79,000 Chinese and English books, 9,000 audio-visual materials, more than 580 CD-ROMs, over 5,000 bound periodicals; and 6,500 books and music scores kept in ATEC at Mongkok. It is indeed God’s grace that has allowed the continued expansion of our library collection. It is our strong hope that these resources not only can help our students in their courses and our teachers in their preparation and research but also that they can provide support for the continuing education of our alumni and ministers.

Madam Tse Ng Tao-kit (Dr. Tse Chi-wai’s wife) has retired from the library at the end of September. Mrs. Tse has been our Honorary Chief Librarian and Honorary Library Advisor for ten years. We

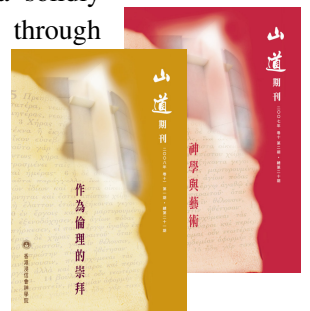
earnestly thank Mrs. Tse who has shouldered heavy responsibilities of leadership and planning since 1998. She has made tremendous contributions during our move (1998-99) to the new Sai O campus and the expansion (2005-06) of the Seminary’s library.

6. Publication

We publish the HKBTS’s *Newsletter* quarterly in both Chinese and English to share the latest developments of the Seminary with local and overseas churches. In our *Newsletters* published last year, there were feature articles on “Voices of Our Graduates,” “New Students’ Testimonies of God’s Call” and a Chinese translation of the address by Professor Robert Jewett, a renowned New Testament scholar, in a morning chapel. We also made an in-depth report on the “Experiencing Seminar Life Camp” held in February. The HKBTS’s *Newsletter* is also posted on our website, allowing Christian brothers and sisters to log on at their convenience.



We have published biannual academic journal, the *Hill Road*, since 1998. After 10 years of publication, the *Hill Road* is a solidly established academic journal through which our faculty can share the latest scholarship and it has become a platform for mutual intellectual exchange and for thinking through a certain topic of interest among local Chinese seminaries and Chinese churches. The themes of some of our latest issues include the following: “Body as a Metaphor of the Church,” “Theology and Art,” “Worship as Ethics,” and “Forgiveness.” Throughout the publication of *Hill Road*, we continue to experience God’s grace and leading. For all this we must offer our heart-felt thanksgiving.



As for book publications, in July 2008, we published Dr. Samuel Tang’s *Psalms of Prayer II*. In the following few months, we will publish Professor Joshua Cho’s *Spiritual Friendship* (the first volume in our “Spiritual Theology Series”) and Dr. Samuel Tang’s *Synthetic Psalms* (the final volume of the “Psalms among Psalms Series”).

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: _____