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Message from the Director.....

2018 has been a year of abundant blessings in the ministries of the Lutheran Study Centre. While we did not have large, high profile events of the same magnitude as the 2017 500th Anniversary events, the LSC had a wide range of

programs and events that contributed to the lives of the churches in the region and supported the formation of students at Sabah Theological Seminary.

This year marked the first time that the introductory course, "Lutheran Identity," was offered in all three languages departments of STS. This means that all STS students that come from a Lutheran church and anticipate graduating in 2018 or 2019 have now taken a course in the core markers of a Lutheran understanding of Christianity. Several of the students have even expressed an interest in finding ways to take further courses on Lutheran perspectives.

Along with courses for all three language groups, we were also able to sponsor seminars in three languages again this year. You will find the details of these events within the pages of this newsletter. Taking a broader view here, I more personally wish to comment on how wonderful it is to have the

LSC be able to be a resource for such a range of groups from within the churches. It fills me with joy to hear the LSC space reverberating with many different languages.

Some of the important developments of this past year have been considerably less visible. For instance, use of the LSC library has increased significantly this year. That is a wonderful development. It also means that we need to upgrade our system, from the simple honor-system manually signing out books in a notebook that worked when we only had a few people who used the library to adding a scanner in order to integrate the LSC office computer into the main library system. We have also needed to upgrade our sound system and projector as we hold more frequent events. These are good signs of growth.

For the long term future of the work of the LSC, the most exciting developments of this past year are our graduates.

In addition to the students who have taken the basic course, we have two students who completed advanced degrees with a focus on Lutheran studies. Josip Dazong of PCS completed his M.Div.II with a Lutheran Studies concentration. Joeferick Ating of BCCM-BM,

meanwhile, completed a Master of Theology degree with a major in Lutheran theology. Both of these graduates will continue to support LSC work in the future, and took the time to share some of what they have learned in these pages.

As 2018 comes to a close and we prepare for 2019, I look forward to continuing to partner with the churches in finding ways to provide resources and support for their ministries. As always, we are led by God's grace to be transformed and to be transforming the world around us, and it is a blessing to be in this work with the FELCMS churches and STS through the LSC.

In peace,

Eric Trozzo, Director

New Books:

The LSC library is continually expanding. It contains many of the latest works in Lutheran-related studies. This year there we particularly emphasized improving our Chinese collection. Of course, more is available in English than in Chinese or BM, and so the English collection has the greatest variety.

A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF LUTHERANISM



VOLUMES 1 AND 2

Eric Lund & Mark Granquist (Editors)

One new book in English worth highlighting is *A Documentary History of Lutheranism*. It is a two-volume set, released by Fortress Press in 2017. The first volume covers the Reformation through Pietism, and is edited by Eric Lund. The second volume is from the Enlightenment to the present, and is edited by Eric Lund and Mark Granquist.

These volumes are truly impressive in the amount of documents and perspectives from the Lutheran tradition they bring together in just two volumes. Key writings from major debates are brought together, making this set an important first research stop for anyone seeking to write a paper on a Lutheran-related topic. Particularly impressive is that it truly includes up to the present, with writings as recent as 2015. The contemporary section also includes a significant global section, including about twenty documents dealing with Asian Lutheranism. It is available in the LSC library, for those desiring to use it for research or understanding.



Sharing from our new program coordinator:

Rev. Joefererick Ating

Rev. Joefererick Ating of BCCM-BM, completed a Master of Theology degree with a major in Lutheran theology.

I am Joefererick Ating, and was a student at Sabah Theological Seminary (STS). I took Lutheran Theology as my major for Master of Theology through the Lutheran Study Centre here. It is only by God's grace and the love and the support by the Church that I was finally able to complete my studies at STS. It has been both a challenging and exciting journey! The exciting part was my personal encounter with the gospel and how I have been transformed by the gospel through my Lutheran lectures. I never thought or expected that the gospel would speak so loudly and clearly through theological lectures and study. My first encounter and experience with Lutheran theology was with the theology of justification and theology of the cross.

These two aspects in Lutheran theology directly spoke to me because of their compelling message of God's grace to the weak: spiritually, physically, socially, economically and ecologically — that we are sinners and the victims of sin. Marginalization, poverty, sickness, disability and all form of social evil are results of sin and sinful people.

If you ask me, "Why should we care about Lutheran theology?" My answer is: the **Gospel**. The gospel saves, liberates and motivates me to be a neighbour to other people within the community. Lutheran theology, through the work of the Holy Spirit, brings me to the central person and message of our faith: **Jesus Christ and the Cross**, which I believe would do the same to my neighbours.

For me, the significant role of Lutheran theology is to keep the gospel flourishing in the life of church and the society, where the church is located. This is the message of hope that I would share with the church community and to the Malaysian society, and even to our world today.

I would like to thank all the lecturers who have inspired and helped me through my studies, especially Dr Eric Trozzo. I would also like to thank *The Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malaysia and Singapore* (FELCMS) for the scholarship support. Thank you for prayers and support. May God's grace, love, and peace be with you always.

Seminars



Rev. Graham Harms



Rev. Bonar

Several seminars were organized this year for pastors and lay people. All of our guest lecturers were willing to include seminars during their time here.

Rev. Kempe led three of the seminars. With BCCM-English, he held seminars on ministry to the dying and their families, as well as on clergy mental health. With LCM, he conducted a seminar on the structures of the church, including the

role of lay people. Rev. Harms, meanwhile, conducted a seminar in BM on the book of Revelation, with members of BCCM-BM and PCS attending. With BCCM-Chinese, Dr. Li spoke about the structures of the church, including the role of the pastor and a Lutheran understanding of the function of the sermon. In addition to these seminars by our guest lecturers, Rev. Bonar Lumbantobing from HKBP

in Indonesia and Dr. Eric Trozzo led a seminar with PCS.



Topics addressed included the Word of God and righteousness, the structures of the church, and Lutheran understandings of worship. Overall, LSC sponsored four one-day seminars and two two-day seminars in 2018. Between them, approximately 350 people attended these events.



Program Coordinator

Beginning in January 2019, we welcome Rev. Joeferick Ating as the Program Coordinator for LSC. He will be responsible for organizing seminars and other continuing education events, as well as assisting in other aspects of the LSC's operation. He will also be serving on the STS faculty as part of this role. LSC welcomes him and the gifts that he brings!



Guest Lecturers

LSC was blessed to have three guest lecturers in 2018. Together they were able to support both the basic Lutheran Identity courses and master's level courses on Lutheran-related topics.



The Lutheran Church of Australia arranged to have Rev. Robert Kempe spend nearly six weeks in Malaysia, teaching English languages courses.



Rev. Graham Harms also came from Australia for several weeks, teaching in the BM department.



Rev. Dr. KS Peter Li, meanwhile, came from Lutheran Theological Seminary – Hong Kong to teach in the Mandarin department. Each of these guests brought great wisdom, knowledge, and faithfulness to LSC programs. Hearty thanks to all three!

Sharing from Rev. Josip

Rev. Josip Dazong of PCS completed his M.Div.II with a Lutheran Studies.



I am Josip Dazong, a student of Sabah Theological Seminary. Recently I graduated with a Masters in Divinity II degree. My area of specialization is on Lutheran Studies which I pursued through the Lutheran Study Centre (LSC). All this was possible only by God’s love and grace; He strenghtened each step of the way. Praise and honour to our Lord Jesus Christ.

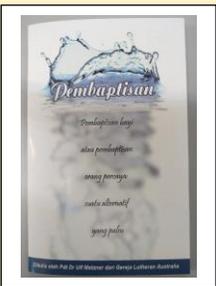
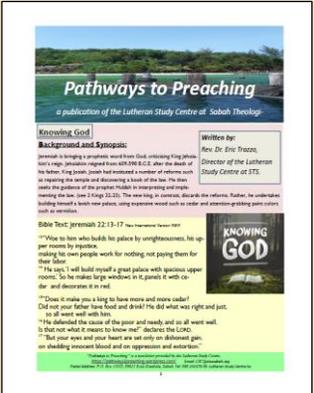
The opportunity to learn about Lutheranism was something new and a challenge for me. But every question I had was answered through the lectures. Lutheranism does not only address the historical relevance of Martin Luther, but also the contextual theological and doctrinal fundamentals that developed by reflecting on issues and struggles within the society and church; both past and present. Hence, I realized the importance of understanding Lutheranism so that the current lack in terms of confessional identity within the Malaysian Lutheran Church and members could be corrected.

The Lutheran understanding is not only relevant to its’ original context but also relevant to the people in every context. Therefore, in the context of Lutheranism in Sabah, where the understanding is relatively new, it is very much required that a clear understanding of Lutheran history, doctrine, developments and contextual application is necessary. It is important to note that this study program is not meant merely to indoctrinate and change one to become a Lutheran but to help one understand what it is to be a Lutheran and contextually apply it within the Asian context. It helps to develop an appreciation by noting the differences and similarities and understanding of what makes Lutheranism unique to the context. Namely, the authority of the Bible (Hebrew 4:12) and God’s saving plan for the sinful people by His grace through Christ Jesus’ atoning work (Romans 3:24).

New Resources

The LSC continues to work the produce resources to support congregations and pastors. Several items have been produced this year.

1. *Pathways to Preaching*, the LSC’s newsletter designed to help preachers think about biblical texts for preaching using a law/gospel format, added three new issues this year. Each of the issues highlights two different biblical texts. In the past, these newsletters have been released in English and BM. This year there were requests for a Chinese translation as well, so that has now been added. If you want to be included in the email distribution list, Please contact the LSC office.
2. *Pathways to Preaching* is also available in blog form. The English is available at: <https://pathways2preaching.wordpress.com> BM, meanwhile, can be found at: <https://lalanberkhutbah.wordpress.com>. The Chinese website is found at: <https://xuanjiangdetujing.wordpress.com>.
3. “Pembaptisan,” a translation of a tract on baptism from Australia’s Lutheran Tract Mission into BM, was printed in July. It is aimed at helping lay members of congregations understand baptism more clearly.



By Dr Eric Trozzo