

## New Horizons for ATA

By Dr. Bruce Nicholls, ATA Senior Advisor

I have a growing concern that ATA must give stronger leadership in responding to the emerging theological issues we are facing in the Middle East, Asia, and the South Pacific. I mention three:

- The secular lifestyle which is devastating churches in the West is now influencing our urban churches and some theological colleges in Asia.
- The extremist groups are wiping out visible Christianity in country after country in the Middle East. Their next targets are in Asia and the South Pacific.
- A devastating apocalypse is looming in some countries in Asia where the underground water which is needed to sustain the green revolution is running dry. Some have predicted that the next world war will be fought over the diminishing supply of water.

What have these crises to do with theological education? Everything! The internet revolution means that our theological institutions are now responsible to train the whole people of God for mission in every part of society,

not just training pastors, Christian educationalists and missionaries. Billy Graham has said, "I believe one of the next great moves of God is going to be through the believers in the workplace." We are called to be bridge builders, training students to meet human need across vibrant cultures, and to take the Gospel across the bridges we build. If we are going to train leaders for the professions, government service and the market place of commerce and industry, we must embrace God's gift of the internet, enabling us to develop online continuing education. This means re-tooling our faculties to meet these wider needs. We need to accredit those seminaries who are developing their own MBA program alongside their M.Div. and M.A. courses.

Where do we begin in order to meet these exciting challenges? In our research I believe we must put greater emphasis on contextualizing our message for our differing cultures while maintaining the uniqueness and universality of the Gospel. At present we have many M.Th. candidates in our three AGSTs, all writing theses. Can some of these be edited down



and published as monographs by ATA? In his time Bong Ro published 35 short monographs. In the last five years we have published three. A second challenge is for each of our seminaries to divide their faculty into small research teams of 5-7 members, commissioning them to undertake their own research projects, with each meeting regularly to share their progress. Islam is succeeding in capturing the social media. We Christians are far behind. May the Lord expand our horizons as theological educators and enable us to take risks to meet the new challenges. ■

## Indonesian Seminary Pioneers an Online Course



Dr. Bruce Nicholls with some faculty members and students of Bandung Theological Seminary discussing about producing an online course

The Bandung Theological Seminary, three hours by bus from Jakarta, is pioneering an online semester-long course, primarily for Christians in the professions, the public square and marketplace. This equivalent to a semester-long course is on "Our Christian Worldview in the Context of Indonesian Culture."

In one week in January 2015, faculty member Iwan Tansusaputra (iwan.tansusaputra@gmail.com) produced the course, supported by faculty members Grace Emilia and Pauline Wijaya. Dr. Bruce Nicholls and Grace drafted the script for five modules; Derek Chirnside, formerly of the University of Canterbury (Christchurch) and now at a polytechnic, assisted by Johan Daniel, filmed these lively modules using faculty and students as the "filmstars." Each fifteen-minute module has assignments equivalent to two weeks' work. The modules were filmed in both English and Bahasa Indonesian. The subjects covered are *Introduction to Indonesian Culture*, *a Five-step Model for Forgiveness in the Workplace*, *Restoring Honor from Shame*, and *The Appeal of Irresistible Love*.

When edited, the course may be accessed for personal enrichment or for credit for those completing the assignments. A small fee must be paid to Bandung Theological Seminary to access the course. Campus-based educators could also use these modules to supplement their teaching. Other seminaries in Asia may be challenged to develop their own online courses. If the marketing of this course is successful, other courses will be considered.

The digital revolution in communication is destined to be a revolution in our educational methods. This is the greatest change in education since the discovery of the printing press. We look to ATA and to our member colleges to be leaders in this new approach to theological education. If your seminary is also pioneering online courses, then share it with us in the next issue of ATA News. ■



## THE IMPORTANT ROLE AND MINISTRY OF ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

### ATA/ICETE ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP SEMINAR AUGUST 6-9 2015 | BANGKOK, THAILAND

This seminar is for leaders of ATA member schools. Be part of a learning community of academic leaders. Find a support group for the important and challenging role you play in fulfilling your institution's vision and mission.

#### REGISTRATION:

- Seminar fee with food & accommodation (4 nights with free breakfast)
  - i. Single room - **US\$ 280**
  - ii. Twin sharing (per person) - **US\$ 220**
- Seminar fee w/o accommodation: **US\$ 150**
- Seminar fee includes meals and snacks (from Thurs. dinner to Sunday afternoon snacks)

Check in 6th August (Thursday) 1:00pm  
Check out 10th August (Monday) noon

Bangkok Christian Guest House  
123 Saladaeng Soi 2  
Tel: (+66) 02 233 6303  
Fax: (+66) 02 237 1742

Opening Session will start at 7:00 p.m. (Aug. 6)  
Closing Session 4:00 pm (Aug. 9)  
(with an option to join the Dinner Cruise after)

For more details/to register, go to: [www.ataasia.com](http://www.ataasia.com)  
Registration Closing date: July 15, 2015

**N**epal has experienced a massive earthquake at 7.9 Richter scale magnitudes on April 25, 2015 at 11:56 AM. This earthquake has claimed more than 9,000 lives and 16,000 have been injured and about 300,000 houses are fully destroyed and another 300,000 houses damaged. This figure will increase as the rescue still continues and relief goods are being distributed to the affected areas. We thank God that the 12 member schools of ATA were spared of the devastation brought about by this earthquake.

We need to pray for the people of Nepal for their physical, emotional, and mental healing as well as spiritual awakening. The people should realize that there is no protection in the world but only in God through Christ. This message of peace and hope is also the message this nation needs, today and always. Let us together make safe and prosperous Nepal.

For your donations, pls. contact [ataasia@gmail.com](mailto:ataasia@gmail.com). ATA will connect you to its member schools in Nepal.

### Visit to Nepal Theological College



**A**TA Visiting Evaluation Team (VET) consisting of Rev. Ram Kumar Budhathoki, Principal of Nepal Ebenezer Bible College; Rev. Vishwas Padole, Manager (Finance and Admin.), ATA India; and Rev. Dr. Paul Cornelius, Regional Secretary, ATA India, visited the Nepal Theological College (NTC) in Kathmandu on March 30-April 1, 2015.

Recognizing the urgent need to train pastors, evangelists, and leaders for the Assemblies of God of Nepal, which was formed in 1975, the movement established the Discipleship Training Center offering a three-month program in 1978. Subsequently, as the number of churches began to grow, the course was modified into a one-year Certificate of Theology, which was further expanded to a two-year Diploma of Theology program. Later, as the vision and need grew,

the leadership of Assemblies of God of Nepal (AGN) drew up plans to set up a permanent campus to increase the training capacity. The three-year B.Th. program began in 2007. Both the Diploma in Theology and the Bachelor of Theology programs were given accreditation in 2010.

NTC trains men and women to fulfill the mission of the Church as taught in Scripture—shaping servant leaders with knowledge, skill, and passion to equip the church and evangelize the world in the power of the Spirit. One of the key objectives keeping the Nepali context in mind is to “provide culturally-relevant ministerial training for pastors, missionaries, evangelists, teachers and counselors and the institutional leadership.” The school offers Diploma of Theology and Bachelor of Theology. ■

### Visit to Nepal Baptist Bible College



**T**he ATA VET consisting of Rev. Ram Kumar Budhathoki, Principal of Nepal Ebenezer Bible College; Rev. Vishwas Padole, Manager (Finance and Admin.), ATA India; and Rev. Dr. Paul Cornelius, Regional Secretary, ATA India, visited the Nepal Baptist Bible College (NBBC) in Kathmandu on April 1-3, 2015.

The NBBC is the Education Ministry of the Nepal Baptist Church Council. It aims to bring glory to God by equipping disciples for effective Christian ministry through theological education that they might fulfill the Great Commission.

The Nepal Baptist Bible College was initially established in 1998 as a training center, with the name Nepal Baptist Bible Institute, in Damak Baptist Church to meet the urgent need of Baptist churches in Nepal. Subsequently, due to the lack of trainers it was moved to

Kathmandu. A second move to Itahari in East Nepal took place due to financial constraints after which the training was shut down in 2004. Upon its revival in Kathmandu, NBBC expanded its vision to begin offering a B.Th. degree and the name was changed to Nepal Baptist Bible College. Currently 31 students are enrolled in the B.Th. program. ■

### Visit to Maktab Teologi Sabah (Sabah Theological College)



**O**n March 9-11 the Visiting Evaluation Team consisting of Dr. Ng Peh Cheng, Associate Secretary of Accreditation and Educational Development, ATA; Dr. Madeline Vega, Faculty, Asian Theological Seminary, Philippines; and Dr. Augustine Pagolu, Faculty, Sekolah Tinggi Teologi, Bandung, Indonesia, visited Maktab Teologi Sabah (Sabah Theological College), Malaysia.

Maktab Teologi Sabah (MTS) was founded as the Sekolah Teologia Pertama (STP) in 1965 by the SIB Sabah (Evangelical Church of Borneo in Sabah). The leadership of SIB Sabah saw the need to have its own theological institution to train locals for the ministry. It was upgraded to be known as MTS by the General Conference of SIB Sabah in 1993. The school's mission is to equip and train full-time workers of SIB and from other denominations to serve in the areas of evangelism, pastoral, Bible teaching, and Christian education in the local context and overseas.

MTS offers Certificate in Theology (Cert. Th.) in MTS Namas campus; Certificate in Theology (Cert. Th.) in MTS Melangkap extension campus in Kota Belud; Diploma in Theology (Dip. Th.) in MTS Namas campus; and Bachelor of Theology (B. Th.) in MTS Namas campus. ■

## Visit to Christian Leadership Institute



The ATA Visiting Evaluation Team consisting of Dr. Theresa Lua, ATA CAED Secretary (Philippines); Dr. Jeannette Shubert, Faculty, East Asia School of Theology (Singapore); and Dr. Jonathan Ro, Associate Program Director, GETS (California) visited Christian Leadership Institute (CLI) in Sunnyvale, California on March 18-20, 2015. A separate visit to the CLI extension centers in Asia was done by Mr. Percy Deng, Regional Director, Overseas Council (Taiwan).

CLI was established in response to God's calling to equip Christian leaders, especially

Chinese speaking believers in North America and Asia. Its vision is to equip pastors and servant leaders as Kingdom workers through quality theological education and to fulfill Jesus' Great Commission using theological education as a medium/channel for mission work. CLI was founded by Rev. Dr. Jack Cheng in 2005. The current president, Dr. Frank Liu, has been leading the institution since 2010.

It was officially registered as a non-profit corporation in the USA in 2005 and approved by the city of California to offer higher education programs in 2011. In 2013 the

California Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE) acknowledged CLI's Verification of Exempt Status as a religious non-profit organization not offering physical science degrees. In 2014 CLI became an Associate member of ATA.

As an independent Christian institute, CLI is not affiliated with any specific church or denomination. It offers Graduate Diploma of Christian Studies, Bachelor of Christian Studies, Master of Christian Studies, Master of Divinity, and Doctor of Ministry. ■

## Visit to Anglican Training Institute



The Anglican Training Institute (ATI), Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia was visited by ATA Visiting Evaluation Team consisting of Dr. Ng Peh Cheng, Associate Secretary of Accreditation and Educational

Development, ATA; Dr. Madeline Vega, Faculty, Asian Theological Seminary, Philippines; and Dr. Augustine Pagolu, Faculty, Sekolah Tinggi Teologi, Bandung, Indonesia last March 12-14, 2015.

ATI began as Theological Education by Extension (TEE) using Moore Theological College study materials. In 2011 it was renamed the School of Ministry and Mission (SOMM) and the Certificate of Ministry was initiated. In 2013, the school changed its name to Anglican Training Institute. A major curriculum review in 2014 resulted in upgrading the programs to Certificate of Theology, Diploma of Theology, and the introduction of Bachelor of Theology.

ATI is church-based theological education equipping pastors and committed members to build strong local churches throughout Sabah and beyond that are passionate in worship, powerful preaching, and prepared for effective mission and evangelism. The school offers Certificate in Theology (Bahasa English, Bahasa Melayu, Bahasa Chinese) and Diploma of Theology (Bahasa English, Bahasa Melayu, Bahasa Chinese). ■

### Visit to Malaysia Tamil Bible Institute



**M**alaysia Tamil Bible Institute (MTBI) in Negeri Sembilan was visited by the ATA VET consisting of Dr. Ng Peh Cheng, Associate Secretary of CAED, ATA; Dr. George N. Capaque, Dean of Discipleship Training Centre, Singapore; and Dr. Paul Cornelius, Regional Secretary, ATA India, last April 15-18, 2015.

MTBI is an institution of the Assemblies of God of Malaysia which exists to train students who are Tamil speaking Indians and others for ministry in Malaysia. The institution was founded in 1972 by Dr. CD

Thomas who was then the superintendent of Assemblies of God of Malaysia. It began in Penang and moved to its present premises in 2010.

MTBI trains men and women who will continually propagate the Gospel of Jesus Christ and in the process establish churches, educational institutions, counseling centers, skill training centers, and rehabilitation centers. It offers Diploma in Biblical Studies, Diploma in Biblical Theology, Certificate in Ministry, and Certificate in Biblical Studies. ■

### Visit to Asia Graduate School of Theology Alliance



**T**he AGST Alliance was visited on April 21-23, 2015 by the VET consisting of Dr. Ng Peh Cheng, Associate Secretary of Accreditation and Educational Development, ATA; Dr. Purnawan Tenibemas, Director of Doctoral Program, Sekolah Tinggi Alkitab Tiranus, Indonesia; and Dr. Fong Choon Sam, Dean of Academic Studies, Baptist Theological Seminary, Singapore.

The AGST Alliance prepares scholars and leaders for the Church and society in Asia since 2004. It seeks to align itself with the stated mission and thrust of ATA and AGST Asiawide. AGST Alliance's programs are aimed generally to equip Christian leaders in mainland South East Asia, and more specifically, faculty of the member institutions, with higher qualifications. It offers Postgraduate Diploma in Theology; Postgraduate Diploma in Education, Spiritual Formation and Discipleship; Master of Theology (Theology); Master of Theology (Education) in Spiritual Formation and Discipleship; Doctor of Philosophy (Theology); Doctor of Philosophy (Education); and Doctor of Education (Education). ■

### Visit to Gilgal Biblical Seminary



**T**he VET consisting of Dr. Theresa Lua, ATA CAED Secretary (Philippines); Dr. Paul Cornelius, ATA Regional Secretary (India); and Dr. John Somaiah, President, Telugu Khraistava Vedanta Vidyalaya (Kuwait), visited Gilgal Biblical Seminary (GBS) in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates on June 3-5, 2015.

Gilgal Biblical Seminary started in 2001 at Union Church, Sharjah, UAE, with a Diploma course in Malayalam. Through the vision and hard work of its founder, Dr. K.O. Mathew, the seminary is now offering Diploma, B.Th., and M.Div. in Sharjah and Dubai. It also serves as study center for the M.Th. program of ACTS, Bangalore. GBS was granted ATA accreditation in 2010.

The institution is affiliated to the Church of God but operates independently as an interdenominational seminary. The Church of God, USA has accredited GBS with Level IV status (Masters level). Dr. Mathew is also the founder and National Overseer of Church of God, UAE and the Senior Pastor of Gilgal Church of God and the permanent Secretary for Sharjah Worship Center.

GBS has a strong missional focus and aims at providing training for both pastors and lay people. Students come from 10 nations such as India, Philippines, Kenya, Pakistan, etc. The seminary is allowed to offer training programs within the church. GBS courses are being held at the Sharjah Worship Center and the Holy Trinity Church in Dubai. ■

## ATA Publications in Progress



ATA Publications Committee discussing significant concerns about JAET, JAM, and ABC series during its annual meeting

### ATLA and ATA Journals

We are delighted to announce that our two journals—Journal of Asian Evangelical Theology (JAET) and Journal of Asian Mission (JAM)—have been accepted by the American Theological Library Association (ATLA) starting this year. This means that people around the globe can now have access to articles written by our Asian theologians and scholars. ATLA is one of the largest online full-text collections of major theology and biblical studies journals. It is used by libraries, religious leaders, scholars, and students around the world. This will surely encourage our Asian theologians/biblical scholars to write their articles and submit to our editors. We are grateful for the efforts and hard work of Dr. George Harper and Dr. Anne Harper, editor for JAET and JAM, respectively.

### Asia Bible Commentary Series

There is a new excitement for our editorial team working for the Asia Bible Commentary series as a result of the partnership with Langham International. We now have a monthly production meeting with Langham Publications to

make sure that we are meeting our goals. Our goal is to publish three volumes per year. And we are happy that we now have three manuscripts in their final stage of revisions. God willing, we will have three new commentaries next year – Judges, James, and Epistles of John.

The Lord is good in bringing not only partner institutions, but more importantly, individuals who offer their expertise for the realization of our ABC series. Last month, Rosario Yu, a former United Bible Society editor, has joined our team to serve as one of our English editors. Her careful and exhaustive knowledge of editing is a great blessing to ATA. Also coming alongside to assist us in the commentary series is Isobel Stevenson, senior Langham editor. Her experience working with the Africa Bible Commentary and the forthcoming South Asia Bible Commentary will be an invaluable resource for our own work. This coming August she will lead a regional retreat in Bangkok, Thailand for our commentary writers.

### New Consulting Editors for ABC Series

Rev. Dr. Yohanna Katanacho, the Academic Dean of Bethlehem Bible College has

agreed to be one of our new Consulting Editors for Old Testament. Dr. Brian Wintle, General Editor of the South Asia Bible Commentary, has also agreed to help us with the New Testament as one of the Consulting Editors.

Praise the Lord for how he is working in our ATA Publications. Let us continue to pray for the Lord's guidance and strength upon our writers as well as their families. Please pray also for our editorial team as they work together to ensure that our books are not only of good standard, but that these are also pastoral, contextual, and accessible to our churches in Asia. ■

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## ATA news

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### ANNOUNCEMENT

We need writers for the following books of the  
Asia Bible Commentary Series:  
**Joshua, Ezekiel, Esther**

If your area is on Biblical Studies and you are  
currently working in Asia, please email our Project Editor,  
Bubbles Lactaoen: [pe.atapublications@gmail.com](mailto:pe.atapublications@gmail.com)