The Official Newsletter of Asia Theological Association

news online

ATA GENERAL ASSEMBLY SUMMARY



DR. STEVE CHANG

My name is Steve Chang and I teach New Testament at Torch Trinity Graduate University in Korea. Let me introduce to you the Listening Team for this GA (Stephen Pardue, Dick Eugenio, Sooi Ling Tan, and myself). As the Listening Team, we were All Ears! When GS Theresa asked me to summarize this GA, I knew right away her values; she values humor more than intellect and wisdom! So let me entertain you with my signature Light Bulb Jokes!

1. How many pre-millennials does it take to change a lightbulb?

- Four!
- one to argue that the lightbulb will not be changed until the end of the tribulation
- one to point out that the changed lightbulb should last a literal one thousand years...
- [wrong PREMILLENNIAL!]

2. How many (generational) premillennials does it take to change a lightbulb?

- 300! one to change the lightbulb
- two to ask why millennials aren't changing lightbulbs
- three to complain about how millennials don't have an attention span long enough to change a lightbulb
- four to preach that the future of lightbulb changing belongs to the millennials
- 290 to discuss about how to get millennials to engage lightbulbs and participate in lightbulb changing for the sake of the future church...

3. How many millennials does it take to change a lightbulb?

- Seven! one to say that lightbulb changers are misunderstood.
- one to say, "there's a mobile app for changing lightbulbs."
- one to take a selfie while talking about lightbulb changing

- one to document the whole lightbulb thing on Instagram
- one to make a viral video about attractive lightbulb changers
- and two to demand that all lightbulbs be green LED-type and complain that premillennials are killing the planet.

As a way of summary, I'd like to offer you something that embodies what we have heard about millennials, their characteristics and desires. After trying to come up with a way of wording bite-sized summaries of each plenary session, I sent it off to the Listening Team. Within a matter of minutes, the millennial member of team, who shall remain nameless (but his initials are DE!) came up with some amazing, tweetable lines. And then I asked a millennial among us to come up with some fitting #s. If you don't understand them, join the club! I'm not sure I understand them! So here is the embodied summary, "For Millennials,

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by Millennials, with 8-second attention spans, bite-sized microlearning, ready to publish on social media!"

Session 1: Joey Asher Tan

Understanding the Millennials and Post-Millennials

"Learn to bait millennials with minibites of learning"

#ShortAttentionSpan

Session 2: So-Young Kang

Digital Christianity "Online living spaces must provide space for human-like living." #MyCrib

Session 3: Dwi Maria Handayani

Building Communities

"Millennials create communities wherever they are present; our role is to creatively make our presence felt in their communities." #TheCrew

Session 4: Samuel Koshy

Authenticity "Millennials value truth that they can trust." #RealTalk

Session 5: Rei Lemuel Crizaldo

Arts and Spirituality "If we seek to communicate with millennials, we need to learn their language." #Artstagram

Session 6: Victor Lee

Theological Education and the Millennials

"Making a difference among millennials might imply approaching them differently." #StayFresh

Session 7: Motoaki Shinohara

Evangelical Diversity "Millennials will lead in creating unity among evangelicals." #OneFam

On a more serious note, I must offer a "Theological Response." One

millennial among us noted that there wasn't much of a "theological response" in the presentations and the Listening Team also found it difficult to find theological responses among the breakout sessions. As a theological response, let me share three points based on the acronym, ATA (since millennials love short acronyms!). We are ATA! Asia Theological Association.

Reconceptualizing "Asia"

What is "Asia"? We think of Asia as a geographic term. As opposed to the West or other major regions of the world, Africa, Latin America, etc. But ATA has already redefined "Asia" as an ethnic identity of people on the

Reaffirming "Theological"

What is "Theological"? The devotionals this week by lvor Poobalan, Yohanna Katanacho, Michael Ortiz, and Bennet Arren have reminded us that our foundation, our hope, our dream, our empowerment is found in God alone, through JC alone. ATA have always insisted on being "theological" in that sense that we hold to a limited set of timeless truths. Truths about the timeless God, about God's timeless Word, the Scriptures, and about God's timeless mission of the Gospel. We must continue to insist that God is relevant, that God's word is relevant, that God's mission is



move, i.e. diaspora Asia. And so ATA has extended its ministry into the diaspora. Now, I believe the Lord is telling us that ATA's mission must be generational, not just geographic or ethnic. Geography is not our mission; it's the people. Some mission movements have recognized that our mission is not geographical but generational: 4-14 window; Compassion International, etc. We must come to terms with the fact that 1/3 of India (more than 440 million) are millennials and beyond; 400 million in China are millennials. The mission of ATA must be reconceptualized, more than ever before, in generational terms.

relevant, to everyone, including the millennials. Interestingly, this solid foundation is exactly what today's anxiety-laden millennials want. They are looking something solid to hold on to in the tumultuous seas of today's Asian cultures. The strength of ATA must be our evangelical theology.

Reframing "Association"

What is "Association"? Related words we have heard from our speakers: connection, community, and collaboration. First, millennials are looking for connection. The technology invented and used by millennials, even to the point of addiction, is driven by the search for connection. The irony,

2



Last August 12-16, ATA held its Triennial General Assembly in TCA College, Singapore with the theme "The Future Church: A Theological Response". This General Assembly also kicked off ATA's 50th anniversary celebrations. It was a rich, memorable, insightful, and spirit filled week for those who came- and here are some of the highlights:



Volunteers from TCA college were also present to warmly welcome the participants, making them feel at home.





Aside from the warm welcome from ATA Staff and TCA College volunteers, the GA participants were warmly greeted by Dr. Andreas Himawan, ATA Chairperson; Dr. Dennis Lum, President of TCA College; and Dr. Theresa Lua, ATA General Secretary.

The chapel of TCA College was full, with 343 participants from over 30 countries.

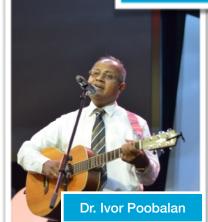


Hallelujaho



But more than a chapel full of participants, we had a place filled with the presence of His Spirit as we worshipped together.

We also had spirit filled devotions that moved the hearts of many.





Dr. Yohanna Katanacho



prophecies previo by them you may holding faith and rejecting this, som reir faith

Dr. Bennet Arrei Lawrence

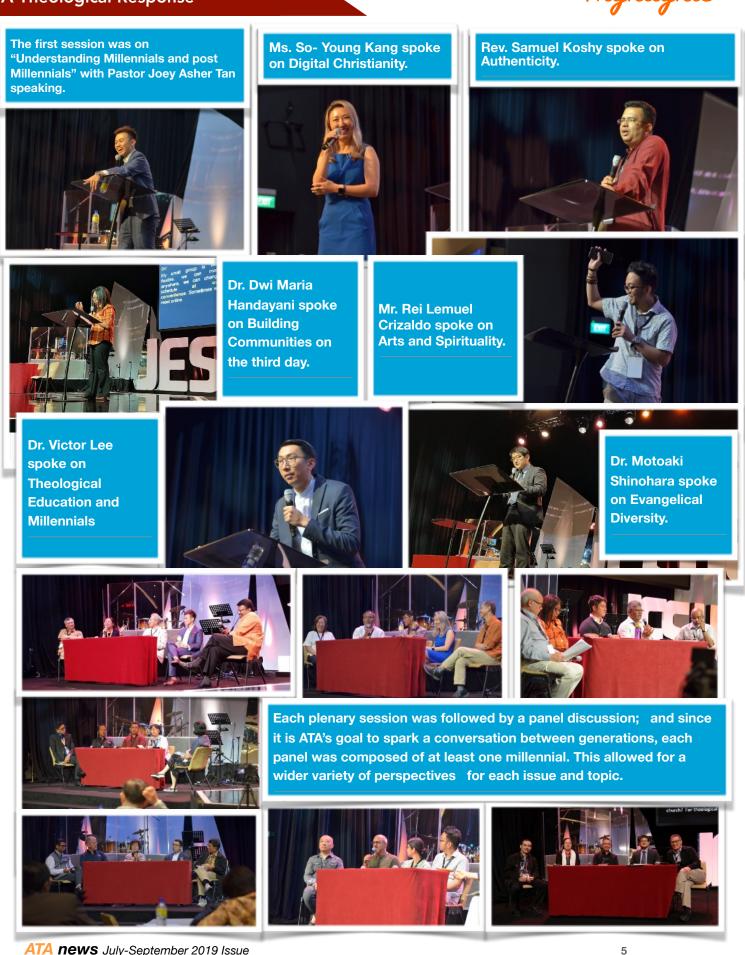




The General Assembly began with a blast! Aside from spirit filled worship and warm welcomes, ATA launched its newly published ABC Commentaries and the ground breaking "Asian Christian Theology".

ATA news July-September 2019 Issue

Highlight



ATA news July-September 2019 Issue







Well, apart from having an intergenerational panel discussion, there was also an intergenerational table talk. Participants were encouraged to have at least one millennial in their table. This was again to allow their voices to be heard and listened to and open a variety of perspectives.







To strengthen the insights gleaned in the plenary sessions, the participants had 18 breakout sessions/ interest groups to choose from.











What if I kept all th research?















ATA news July-September 2019 Issue

ignlights







Worship was compelling and spirit filled.

This year's General Assembly also served to launch ATA's 50th anniversary celebrations. Celebrations began with a powerful opening prayer, led by Dr. Richard Hart, wherein all the participants held hands and prayed as one.



Dr. Ralph Enlow gave a very moving talk during the anniversary launch, speaking to the hearts of each participant.



Of course, part of the celebration was honoring all the former ATA General Secretaries, along with one of the founders, Dr. Bruce Nicholls (far right), who tirelessly and zealously served the Lord through this ministry. The General Secretaries are L-R): Drs. Bong Rin Ron, Ken Gnanakan, who was represented by his son, Santosh, and Joseph Shao.



Apart from a very moving message, there were testimonies from representatives of different regions on how God used the ministry of ATA.



To officially close the General Assembly, communion was served.

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as some speakers have pointed out, is that millennials today are some of the loneliest people on earth. Second, millennials are looking for authentic community, we have heard. They are not looking for a loose "association" (this part of our name is not very appealing to millennials), but they are looking for real relationships and authentic sharing of life. We must deepen our sense of "association," in ways that are more akin to ancient Greco-Roman associations. They ate together, they drank together, they worshipped together, and they buried and mourned each other. In such a context, the NT church was born and formed a new "association." Perhaps ATA must go back to this type of "church association." Finally, millennials want to collaborate for a cause greater than themselves. They want to work and do things together. They innately know that two are better than one. How ironic that the church today, arguably the most collaborative, missional entity on the planet, is losing the millennials! We need to collaborate with millennials not only for conferences about reaching millennials, but for every meeting, every theological consultation, every theological institution, and every mission we serve. The goal of ATA must be inclusive of millennials at every opportunity.

Listen and Love

We all should be on the "listening team" and all be ALL EARS. Ralph Enlow repeatedly said last night, "Give me your heart!" I felt that that's what the millennials are saying to us; Ralph was embodying the cry of the millennials! We need to listen, really

Prayer of Melanie Lim

Lord, thank You for ATA, for what You are doing in the Asian Church. Thank You for how You have shaped and formed the Asian Church, so diverse in so many ways for You love diversity, and how You have put together different ethnic, generation and denomination that we find in Asia. listen, wholeheartedly listen to the millennials. The way that James says, "quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become frustrated..." (Jas 1:19).

By listening, we are loving the millennials. It was heartwarming to show our love to our seniors and patriarchs last night. Asians are good at affirming our seniors (filial piety) but not so much our juniors. But I would argue that, more than the seniors, the millennials need us to say, "We love and appreciate you!" Look at the All Ears photo again. The Listening Team have made the Korean millennials' sign for "love," crossing the thumb and index finger. I am reminded of the apostle John's plea to the believers in Asia Minor: "Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth." (1 John 3:18). This is what millennials want from us, "to love with actions and in truth." This is our "theological response."

I want to congratulate the ATA board and leadership for thinking seriously about the future and deciding to focus on probably the most important issue of our time. Especially as we approach the 50th anniversary of ATA, it is critical to invite the millennials and post-millennials to the table. In a conference like this, follow up is far more important than the conference itself. We must give our heart in listening to the millennials, and love them with actions and in truth. That is the future church of Asia. That is the future of ATA!

I'm convicted that this summary should have been done by a goodlooking millennial, not by me! (I'm good looking but I'm not a millennial.) So I asked a millennial among us, Melanie from Malaysia, to come and bless us, and pray for the future of ATA from her heart! Let us extend our hearts and pray with Melanie.



Dr. Steve Chang beautifully summarized all that had transpired in the General Assembly. To add to the beauty of the summary, Melanie Lim, a millennial, said a heart warming prayer for the Asian church.

Lord, as we look to the Future Church, we look back at how You have led the Church, and we say, Lord we trust Your leadership. You are leading us forward, and You will continue to lead us in all that we are doing. You lead us, Lord, and show us what You are doing, that we may be sensitive to see what You are doing in our generation, that we may be able to partner with You in what You want to do in this world. Lord, thank You for those who have gone before us - who have mentored, who believed in us, who cared for us, who listened and loved us. Thank You for the focus in this GA that we are looking and trying to understand. I see how the generations that have gone before me are loving my generation. Lord, I thank You for this love, for this is only possible because of You Lord. *Continued on next page*

Prayer of Melanie Lim

Lord, I thank You for the gifts and challenges that the younger generation are giving us as a Church, to take seriously how You have created us as human beings - not just rational beings with brains to learn truth, but affective, volitional, relational beings - who are to be discipled, to be transformed into the image of Your Son, Jesus, and to redeem this world that You have created. You are the only one who can reconcile all things to Yourself.

Lord, I take this time as well to ask for Your forgiveness. Forgive us millennials, Lord, for having zeal without knowledge, for making ourselves the locus of our orientation, for failing to pay attention to what You have done before us, for being entitled and failing to be grateful for those who've gone before us, and for being overly optimistic in our human ability to build utopia on earth. Lord, we need You. And our hope is in You alone. We say that the burden to save the world is not on our shoulders. You alone can save us.

Lord, we need You. Give us grace to be Your agents of reconciliation. To bring the message of reconciliation not just to those who are yet to know You but to bring reconciliation between theological institutions and churches, among different nations, denominations, and generations, that we, of different nations, denominations, and generations, may all be one as You and the Father are One, that we may be in You and You in us. Lord, we need You, and we can't do anything apart from You.

Lord, in all that we do, may You be glorified, in having a people who is fully alive, a Body that exemplifies the peace that You have made possible, and a Body that loves and has concern for redeeming not just us humans, but the society and this world, for Your glory. May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace, in believing in Your leadership, that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may abound in hope, as we persevere in endurance in all that You are calling us to do.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

NEWS UPDATES

ATA TURNS 50: THE 2020 CELEBRATIONS!

Next year, ATA will officially turn 50! So, to celebrate the goodness and faithfulness of our Lord to this ministry, a handful of celebrations will take place throughout the year. So, take note of these dates, mark your calendar, and join us as we rejoice in all that God had done throughout all these years and look forward to 50 and more years of God moving through this ministry:

Regional Celebrations

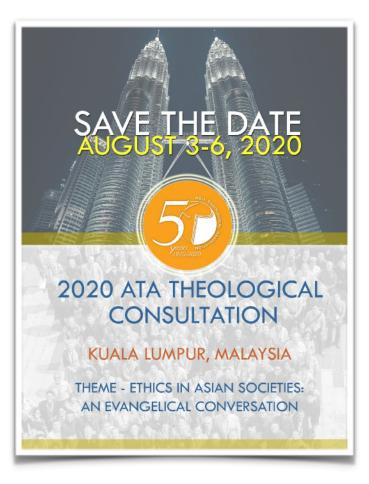
May, 2020 - ATA Korea June, 2020 - ATA Japan July 29-30 - ATA India

Theological Consultation and Golden Anniversary Celebration

August 3-6, 2020 - Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia Theme - Ethics in Asian Societies: An Evangelical Conversation

In this current climate of ethical ambiguity, Christians seek answers to how they ought to be, the values they hold, and the kinds of actions they ought to perform or avoid. As such, contemporary ethical issues arising in Asian societies particularly in the areas of gender, sexuality, politics, business, family, and living together in plural societies, need to be engaged with and addressed urgently.

The 2020 ATA Theological Consultation with the theme, "Ethics in Asian Societies: An Evangelical Conversation" provides a vital space for these needful discussions, as we consider together faithful evangelical Christian responses to current ethical questions.



But apart from these celebrations mentioned above, all member schools are entitled to availing courses in the ICETE Academy for free! This promo will be good for the entire 2020.

So, come and join us as we celebrate 50 years of God's goodness and faithfulness and look forward with much anticipation of many more amazing things that He will be doing!

The leaders of the Asia Theological Association Years 2019-2022

On one of the afternoons of this year's General Assembly, the Executive board, members, and leaders gathered for ATA's business meeting. It was in this meeting that the leaders of the Asia Theological Association were ratified. It was also in this meeting that Dr. Theresa Lua was reappointed and given another term as General Secretary. So, for the years 2019 up until 2022, we will have the following lead us in this ministry:

BOARD MEMBERS

Dr. Andreas Himawan, Chairperson Dr Jung-Sook Lee, Vice Chairperson Dr. Clement Chia, Secretary Dr. Manoch Jangmook, Treasurer Dr. Ronni Sikai Poon, CAED Chairperson Dr. Samuel Sidjabat, Publications Chairperson Dr. Sooi Ling Tan, AGST Presiding Dean Dr. Sooi Ling Tan, AGST Presiding Dean Dr. Sanyu Iralu, ATA India Chairperson Dr. Jin Sup Kim, ATA Korea Chairperson Dr. Masanori Kurasawa, ATA Japan Chairperson Dr. Theresa Lua, General Secretary (Ex Officio)

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Please do uphold our leaders in prayer and encourage them as they serve the Lord through the ministry of ATA.

No Goodbyes, Only A See You Around!

After six years as ATA's Publications Secretary and General Editor of the Asia Bible Commentary Series, Dr. Federico "Rico" Villanueva has stepped down in order to begin a new chapter in his ministry. Dr. Rico will now be serving the Lord through Langham Literature as its Commissioning Editor for Asia.

Dr. Rico began his ministry as Publications Secretary and General Editor of the Asia Bible Commentary series in August 2013 and under his leadership the publications ministry of ATA began to take shape. Likewise,



under his leadership, several commentaries were completed and published. Dr. Rico is well loved by the ATA community. A pastor at heart, Dr. Rico's warm countenance and words of wisdom has been an encouragement to many. His constant presence in the ATA community will definitely be missed. Yet while Dr. Rico begins a new chapter with Langham, this does not mean ATA will totally bid him goodbye since Langham is a close partner of ATA. Furthermore, Dr. Rico will continue to teach with AGST. So, this is not a goodbye but a see you around for the ATA Community.

On the other hand,

effective September 2019, Dr. Andrew Spurgeon will serve as the new Publications secretary and General Editor of the Asia Bible Commentary Series.

Let us uphold both Drs. Rico Villanueva and Andrew Spurgeon in our prayers as they both begin a new chapter in their ministries.

NEWS UPDATES

Vital Sustainability Initiative (VSI) India Cluster: Strategic Planning Engagement

By Dr. Paul Cornelius Regional Secretary, ATA India

The second stage of the VSI engagement with the India cluster took place over a period of two weeks, from August 26 – September 6, 2019. The team, consisting of Dr. Emmanuel Bellon (Vice President, Scholar Leaders International), Dr. Theresa Lua (General Secretary of ATA International), Dr. Linzay Rinquest (Principal of Cape Town Baptist Seminary) and Dr. Paul Cornelius (Regional Secretary, ATA India), visited four schools for these Strategic Planning sessions. These four schools are as follows:

•Shalom Bible Seminary, Kohima – August 26-28

•Oriental Theological Seminary, Bade – August 28-30



Asian Christian Academy, Hosur – September 2-4
Centre for Global Leadership Development – September 4-6

These were days of intense and focused conversations around the key areas of mission, vocation, prophetic voice, curriculum, faculty development, teaching and learning, technology, finance, partnerships, leadership and governance. All four institutions were able to formulate, with the team's guidance, key strategies to guide them for the next 3-5 years. Each of the leaders gave testimony to the value of

taking the time to chart their institution's growth and direction.

The SLI/ATA partnership is proving to be fruitful in our endeavour to enhance ATA's Value Added Services. Our goal is to take this engagement to more ATA member institutions in the future. We are grateful to God for Dr Emmanuel Bellon and the SLI team who are committed to helping us in South and South East Asia.

Year 2 GATE Workshops in North India And Mongolia

Exciting things happened in the month of September as two GATE workshops were conducted in two different countries, with both workshops offering the second-year curriculum of the program. These countries were North India and Mongolia.

The year 2 GATE workshop in North India was held last September 9-11 and was facilitated by Drs. Theresa Lua, Paul Cornelius, and Manoja Korada. It was held at the Caleb Institute in Furukhnagar in the state of Haryana, adjacent to New Delhi. It was attended by 22 faculty from the following institutions:

1. Caleb Institute, Farukhnagar

2. Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Dehradun

- 3. Doon Bible College, Deharadun
- 4. New Theological College, Dehradun
- 5. Filadelfia Bible College, Udaipur

It may be well worth noting that while the Caleb Institute has taken part in this workshop, many of its faculty were unable to attend the year 1 workshop. So, in order to prepare them for the GATE year 2, they were given an overview session of the Year 1 workshop last September 10. On the other hand, the year 2 GATE workshop in Mongolia was held last September 18-10 and was facilitated by Drs. Theresa Lua and Joanna Soberano. It was held at the Union Bible Theological College in Ulaanbaatar. It was attended by 43 faculty from the following institutions:

1. Union Bible Theological College, Ulaanbaatar

2. Kingdom Leadership Training Center, Darhan

3. Darkhan Union Bible Theological College, Darhan

4. River of Life Ministry School, Ulaanbaatar

5. Assemblies of God Bible College, Ulaanbaatar

NEWS UPDATES

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6. Mongolian Theological Education by Extension, Ulaanbaatar

7. Mongolia Evangelical Lutheran Bible School, Ulaanbaatar

The Assemblies of God Bible College, Mongolian Theological Education by Extension, and Mongolia Evangelical Lutheran Bible School, all located in Ulaanbaatar, were not able to take part in the year 1 workshop but requested that they be accommodated in the year 2 workshop. So, just as Caleb Institute in North India, they were likewise given an overview session of Year 1 last September 17 to serve as their preparation.

We praise God for the growing interest in the GATE workshops and for participants who came this year. Please pray that they truly take to heart all that they have learned from this year's workshops and apply them in their classrooms and institutions.

About the GATE Workshop Year 2: Teaching Methods for Transformational Education

In this workshop, participants explore classroom methodology that leads to life transformation rather than the mere processing of information. Participants discover that designing educational experiences that promote transformational learning involves more than just organizing and delivering content. Special attention is given to the wide variety of methods used by Jesus as well as the purposes he had for using different approaches.

Sessions:

Jesus the Transformative Teacher How Humans Learn Methods of Teaching for Transformation Planning for Learning: The Antecedent Steps Planning for Learning: Objectives and Tasks



Participants of Year 2 GATE workshop with the facilitators in North India



Participants of Year 2 GATE workshop with the facilitators in Mongolia



We have a new number! Get in touch with us at (632) 8-668-1906



For updates and the latest news, like us on facebook: *Asia Theological Association* or follow us on Twitter @*AsiaTheoAssoc.*

VET Visits

Three Visiting Evaluation Teams sent out in the Third Quarter of this year

Three Visiting evaluating teams were sent out to and welcomed by three schools, all in Southeast Asia, this quarter; two of those schools in the Philippines and one in Malaysia. The schools in the Philippines were the Grain of Wheat College and Seminary and the Presbyterian Theological Seminary & College of Advanced Studies (PTS-CAS) while the school in Malaysia was the Malaysia Bible Seminary.

The Grain of Wheat College and Seminary was visited last August 22-24 by a team composed of Drs. Ng Peh Cheng, Associate Secretary of Accreditation & Educational Development, ATA; Madeline Vega, Adjunct Faculty, Asian Theological Seminary, Philippines; and Jose Abraham, Academic Dean, Asian Seminary of Christian Ministries, Philippines.

On the other hand, the Presbyterian Theological Seminary & College of Advanced Studies (PTS-CAS) was visited last August 26-28 by a team composed of Drs. Ng Peh Cheng, Madeline Vega, and Dick Eugenio, Academic Dean, Asia-Pacific Nazarene Seminary, Philippines.

And finally, it was last September 3-5, that the Malaysia Bible Seminary (MBS) was visited by a team composed of Drs. Ng Peh Cheng, Bernard Koh, Senior Lecturer, School of Theology (Chinese), TCA College, Singapore; and Pastor Eva Wong, Faculty, Bible College of Malaysia, Malaysia. Let us continue to uphold these three schools in prayer as they continue to pursue God's unique calling for their respective institutions.



Photo above: VET with the some students of PTS; photo below: the leaders of PTS.



VET with leaders of Grain of Wheat College



VET with the leaders of Malaysia Bible Seminary

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