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Principal's Welcome

As ETCAsia commences a new academic year there is much to give thanks for. In spite of the many changes and challenges faced since the start of the COVID pandemic, we are greatly encouraged that the work of the college has continued on. We are not the first to say this, but it's been a great reminder that the gospel of Christ can never be locked down. Due to the current COVID situation here in Singapore, the college community has once again been meeting online rather than on site since the start of the new semester. Without a doubt, we would all prefer to be meeting in person and we very much miss our vibrant college community life, but we pray that it won't be long before we're back together again.

At the end of the last semester, it was with much sadness that we farewelled Andrew and Heather Reid, but we're very grateful for their years of dedicated service, and we wish them all the very best in their new ministry at the Cross and Crown Church in Melbourne, Australia. Also with much sadness, we farewelled Ro, Rita and Charis Mody, but are delighted that Ro is able to continue on in his role as our New Testament lecturer from the UK.

Mercifully, God has provided the college with godly and gifted new faculty members to replace departing faculty, and what a pleasure it is to welcome them! We look forward to the arrival of Ben Thompson, our Old Testament lecturer and his family. We continue to pray that they will soon be granted entry into Singapore from the UK. In the meantime Ben's Zoom lectures have been wonderfully received by our students! We are also delighted to welcome Alistair McEwen, our new Hebrew lecturer who Zooms in from Melbourne Australia, and John Chua, one of our recent graduates who is now our Greek lecturer. Also, the ETCAsia board of directors has appointed my wife, Jenny Foord as the new dean of women. In addition to faculty, God has provided for the college, godly staff members who are highly capable and efficient, as well as a new cohort of first year students. Our gracious God continues to raise up labourers for his harvest field.

And finally, words fail to express just how thankful we are for your continued prayers and support. You are our faithful partners in the gospel, and it's no exaggeration to say that we could not do this work without you.

Your brother in Christ,

Marty Foord

Partner with
ETCAsia
Towards
[Vision 2024](#)

Motivation Matters

By Marty Foord

A recent survey by LG found that nine out of ten people "felt panic" when their mobile phone battery dropped below 20 percent. It triggered a fear of being without a smartphone. And so our smartphones are marked by what has been called "Low Battery Anxiety", the worry that our smart batteries won't last the entire day. Companies are pouring huge resources into battery technology, trying to discover what will make batteries last longer. But a far more pressing issue for a Christian is what makes our "spiritual batteries" last to the end? That is, what makes a believer persevere to the end, not least, leaders in Christian ministry?

The apostle Paul answers just this question when farewelling the elders of the Ephesian church. Knowing he will never see them again, he says:

Now I commit you [elders] to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. (Acts 20:32, NIV)

Paul does not leave the Ephesian elders helpless. Rather he entrusts them to God ("I commit you to God") because God is ultimately the one who empowers believers to persevere to the end: "[God] can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified". Paul is confident that God can enable their spiritual batteries last.

But how? How does God enable believers to persevere? Paul provides the answer: "I commit you to God and to the word of his grace". When Paul entrusts the Ephesian elders to God, it also means entrusting them to "the word of his grace". The way God keeps their spiritual batteries charged is by the word of God's grace—the gospel.

But notice the crucial characteristic of the gospel that Paul emphasises: "the word of his grace". The gospel rightly understood is about God's grace. Christ's death for sins, and resurrection to new life, reveals what God is like: he is a God of grace. Or put another way, the gospel reveals that God is loving. But this isn't any kind of love, God's love is gracious love. And it is this grace that charges our spiritual batteries.

What causes grace to seem so average and not very amazing? It's simple. Grace is a gift to an undeserving person. And grace ceases to be amazing when we forget how undeserving we are. There's nothing that kills grace more than thinking that we deserve God's gift of salvation. The more a Christian matures, the more undeserving of salvation they know they are. C. S. Lewis helpfully said, "God gives his gifts where he finds the vessel empty enough to receive them."

It's only when we see the depths of our sin that we can begin to grasp the heights of God's grace. And the splendour of those heights recharges our spiritual batteries so we may joyfully persevere on our way home to heaven.

This all has implications for ETCAsia. If ETCAsia is to train gospel workers who will survive the difficulties of word ministry, then ETCAsia as a community must proclaim and practice grace. Too often a graceless culture, which subtly praises performance, undermines the very gospel itself. Gracelessness is seen in practices like: motivation by guilt, having favourites, placing too much weight on marks or success, complaining, cynicism, and comparing ourselves to others. All these erode the simple fact that we are all undeserving sinners. They hinder our joy and sap our spiritual batteries.

You see, at the end of the day, motivation matters. It's either grace which sustains us, or something else which will not. Please pray for ETCAsia that we preach and practise grace because, "'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far and grace will lead me home."

ETCAsia [Faculty](#)

Dr Marty Foord - (Principal) Theology

Dr Ro Mody - New Testament

Dr Ben Thompson - Old Testament

ETCAsia Adjunct [Faculty](#)

Dr Stuart Morgan - History, Biblical Theology

Mr Mike Raiter - Mission, Preaching

Dr Alastair McEwen - Hebrew

Mr John Chua - Greek

Dr Jenny Foord - Dean of Women

ETCAsia Operation [Staff](#)

[Wilson Oon](#) - General Manager

[Joshua Tay](#) - Registrar

[Jasmine Chee](#) - HR, Finance Mgr

Faculty Profile

By Ben Thompson, OT Lecturer

As I write this, I've just completed my first week of teaching Old Testament at ETCAsia (online because we are not yet in Singapore!) for the new academic year of 2021/22.

If you had suggested to me this time last year that this was God's plan for me then I think I would have struggled to have believed you. Following the retirement of our senior minister I had just taken on the interim leadership of the group of churches in the Cotswolds (U.K.) that I had been serving for the previous eight years. I had come as an assistant minister (or curate in the terminology of the Anglican Church) and, as a family, we had enjoyed a wonderful time. In the Lord's grace we have seen people come to faith, some fairly dramatically, we have walked alongside brothers and sisters as they have wrestled with how to live in faithfulness to the Lord through the various challenges of life, and for the last three years I had led a congregation that I planted and seen it grow as the Lord has added to our number those who are being saved.

Twelve months ago, I was also coming to the point of submitting my PhD. I'd taken some persuading to attempt a PhD, fearing that it could be a big distraction from the frontline gospel work to which I believed I'd been called. However, in the Lord's kindness I'd been able to do this part-time alongside my church ministry. I wanted to be available, should the Lord will it, to teach and train pastors to rightly handle the Old Testament as the Word of God, and so be equipped to proclaim Christ from all the Scriptures.

However, a year ago I had no sense that the Lord might intend for this to happen so soon, nor that his plan for us might involve relocating halfway round the world. We didn't even have passports as a family! But through a variety of different means, he has excited us about the thrilling vision of ETCAsia.

As I write we are still waiting for the Singapore government to give a date for us to fly. But our bags are packed, and our hearts are full of thankfulness that the Lord would bring us into the tremendous work of ETCAsia!

[Editor's note: We are waiting for the border to open between UK and Singapore at press time. We reckon that Ben and his family should be here in Singapore around end of August 2021.]



Student Profiles

New Students and their churches

For the Semester 1 Academic Year 2021/22, we have a total intake of 13 students, consisting of four MDiv Students (Full Time), one GDM (Part time) and one BTh (Part time) with the remaining doing Short Courses. The new students are from the following churches, namely:

- The Crossing Church
- Bethesda Church Bukit Arang
- New Creation Church
- First Evangelical Reformed Church
- Pasir Panjang Hill Brethren Church
- Bethany Trinity Presbyterian Church
- Redemption Hill Church
- Payer Lebar Methodist Church



The photo on the top right shows the students doing Greek intensive under the tutorship of John Chua during the pre-semester period.

MDiv and GDM Students

We are pleased to feature some of new students at ETCAsia this semester. We sent them a couple of questions such as who they are, what they hope to gain from ETCAsia, and what they hope to do in their future ministry. We begin with **Sebastian Kwan** starting his MDiv.

Sebastian Kwan - MDiv

Hi, my name is Seb, and I'm married to Sarah. I'm a first year MDiv student at ETCA. I'm part of **The Crossing Church**, where I did a 2-year ministry apprenticeship prior to ETCA. I'm older than I look, and younger than I sound. I hope to grow in my convictions about God and the gospel, and therefore my love for him, in such a way that it would prepare me for a lifetime of ministry. Well, COVID has shown us that a lot can happen in a very short span of time, hasn't it? So, I'm not sure exactly what's ahead. That said, we'd love to be part of a church plant after I graduate, teaching the Bible and training others to the same.



Continued on next page.



Li YingYi - MDiv

My name is **Li Yingyi** and I have 2 cats and 3 sisters. I also attend and serve the church at **Bethesda Church Bukit Arang**, primarily with the youth.



I hope to be equipped for word ministry by gaining a deeper understanding of God's Word which will give me a deeper love for Him and His people. I also hope to gain friendship out of my classmates and lecturers as they are such valuable gospel partners!

Upon graduation, I hope to continue reading the Bible with youths and support the women's ministry in my church.

Edwin Zhang - GDM

I am **Edwin**. I am currently working as an IT professional in the renewable energy sector. I am currently attending **Redemption Hill Church**. I am a lover of nature and craft beers! I became a Christian at 16, the Lord was gracious and saved me through a near death accident!



I am currently taking Graduate Diploma of Ministry in ECTA. I see theological learning as an important part of growing in my faith. I hope that my time in ECTA will help me in the following three areas. A deepening of my relationship with God especially in the aspects of faith and holiness. Reading the Bible with a more refined theological framework. To be able to serve the Body of Christ in a more excellent manner.

In the next 3-5 years, I would like to see how I can form new relationships with missionary partners and support them in ways that I can as well as planting a cell group.

Student Enrolment @ ETCAsia

For semester 1, AY 2021-22, we have a total of 41 students with the following distribution.

- Master of Divinity: 16 students
- Graduate Diploma in Ministry: 8 students
- Bachelor in Theology: 8 students
- Short Courses: 9 students



Alumni Profile

Interview with Wally Chin

Pastor Wallace Chin is from the first cohort of six ETCAsia MDiv graduates in 2020 (see photo on right). We interviewed him earlier this year.



What have you been doing since completing your study at ETCAsia?

Since completing my MDiv studies in June 2020, I've been serving back at The Crossing Church as the pastor of the 4pm congregation.

In what ways did your time at ETCAsia prepare you for gospel ministry? How did ETCAsia's distinctives shape your training?

My responsibilities as a congregational pastor are numerous and varied. They include, preaching and teaching God's Word, pastoral care of the congregation, training of bible study leaders, watching for potential new leaders, as well as leading the congregation theologically. Studying at ETCAsia has contributed to my learning and equipping all these areas. However, the biggest contribution that ETCASIA has made to my ministry has been in training me and equipping me to think theologically, and most importantly, to think theologically, rightly.

ETCAsia has been instrumental in equipping and training me in this area because of its commitment to robust and informed biblical theology, as well as precise, accurate, and faithful reformed evangelical theology.

I've only been back in ministry for 9 months, but already I've noticed the difference that my training in ETCAsia has had. In these 9 months, I've had to teach on, and address, theological issues like baptism, the infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture, and ethical issues like divorce. Prior to my training at ETCAsia I did not feel sufficiently equipped to handle such issues. Now, however, not only do I feel well-equipped to engage with these, but I also have the confidence that I am teaching and representing accurately and faithfully what the Bible says on these matters.

I was already familiar with expository preaching prior to college. But my training in it at ETCAsia was immensely fortifying. I was encouraged to keep persevering at it as the key way of preaching and teaching the Bible. Some of my classmates had not really encountered expository preaching before college. And seeing them being convicted, shaped, and transformed by expository preaching, was also encouraging for me.

In summary, ETCAsia has greatly helped my ministry because of its unique distinctives: robust and informed biblical theology; precise, accurate and faithful reformed evangelical theology; and commitment to expository preaching.

Continued on next page.

What prompted you to choose ETCAsia as the seminary of choice? What were your initial thoughts compared to your thoughts when you completed the studies?

When I received news that there was a new confessionally reformed evangelical college starting up in Singapore, I was happy to enrol. Furthermore, the founding principal Andrew Reid, is well known and respected in trusted reformed evangelical circles. So the prospect of studying in a college guided by such a leader was attractive.

My immediate thoughts when I completed my studies were that of immense relief. But that's only because ETCAsia's syllabus and training is rigorous. Personally, I feel that it was God's grace, and my loving classmates, that sustained me through college. Without this, I most definitely would not have graduated. That is not an exaggeration. The journey was tough but when I recognise how ETCAsia has equipped me to serve my Lord Jesus and His people, I can say that it was worth it.

Can you share with us the single most memorable occasion in your study at ETCAsia?

There are honestly quite a number of very memorably occasions: studying Greek and Hebrew, NT and OT exegesis classes, theology classes, church history, chapel, socializing with the faculty and classmates, all had their memorable and precious moments. But I'll pick one that has stuck keenly in my mind and heart.

Having worked hard at the Gospel of John over an entire semester, I finally had a breakthrough one morning about the precise purpose of the book. It was a sudden revelation, a moment of immense clarity, excitement, and joy. I credit it all to God's grace and mercy, the faithful and rigorous teaching of my NT lecturer Rohintan Mody, and my awesome classmates. Ironically and humorously though, this breakthrough occurred the morning after I submitted my essay on John.

What would be your advice for prospective students coming to ETCAsia?

1. Enrol.
2. Get ready to work hard.
3. Come in with the right mind-set: be ready to learn and have your thinking greatly changed and transformed. Don't cling on to presuppositions and assumptions, instead, let all of it go, and let faithful teaching of the Bible re-educate you. No matter how much you think you know, the reality is, not all of it is right, and there's so much more to learn.
4. Rely on God and His grace and lean on your classmates. Proverbs 27:17, "Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another." There really is no place for selfish ambition in God's kingdom.

5. Most importantly, keep preaching to yourself every day, that its not about you, its about the people you will go on to serve. Self-interest will show itself in an obsession with grades, while a selfless desire to serve will instead show itself in a desire to be faithful to God's Word with real, meaningful, life-changing application.

How can the college support you in your current ministry? How can we pray for you?

Keep faithfully training men and women as you have trained me! The gospel needs of Singapore and the SEA region are beyond immense. The Crossing Church and its pastors are committed to advancing the gospel and Jesus' kingdom by church planting and evangelism for the salvation of souls. So, by faithfully training and raising up men and women according to ETCAsia's distinctives, as you have done for me, you are directly supporting the ministry and work that I'm doing.

Thank you for praying for me. Please do pray for God to continue showering me with His grace and mercy, without which my ministry will be non-existent. Pray that God will help me to be faithful, both in preaching and teaching His Word, and also in setting an example for my congregation "in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12). Pray that my marriage and family will be a good reflection of Christ and His church. And finally pray that God would be pleased to use my meagre efforts to advance His kingdom, to grow His church, and to ultimately bring glory to Himself and His Son.



Wally, Tristan, Kieran, and Liz Chin

ETCAsia Supporters' Evening

On **Thursday evening 7th October 2021**, we will be hosting a face-to-face [event](#) for ETCAsia Supporters at [Bethesda Church Bukit Arang](#). It was originally planned to take place earlier but given faculty transition and the return of stage 2 restrictions, we thought it good to move the event back to October. By this time the faculty transition would have been completed. More details will be provided in the coming weeks. Stay tuned.

See the College [Event](#) web page for more details.

ETCAsia Advancement

We are thankful to our heavenly father that donations to ETCAsia in the last fiscal year (FYE 2021) have exceeded the previous year by 11% totalling \$507K. This is made up of contributions from Churches (\$369K), as well as those who support faculty (\$119K) and staff (\$18K). For the last FYE (2021) 80% of our total expenses had to be supported by donations. Without your prayers and financial support ETCAsia would not exist. To-date, there are a total of 69 donors with 62 coming from board members' churches. Of the 69 donors, 18 are monthly partners, 11 yearly partners, while 40 donors made a one time gift.

From the perspective of tuition fees, this means we are subsidising each student by about 80% for FYE 2021. For the current fiscal year, the subsidy has risen to 83% largely due to the cost of faculty transition without a corresponding increase in student Intake.

The ETCAsia board, in its May bi-monthly meeting, approved a budgeted income of \$972K over anticipated yearly expenses of \$800K. The budgeted income of \$972K would come from the following components, DV: tuition Fees (\$132K), faculty donor fund (\$208K), staff donor fund (\$22K), board members' churches fund (\$519K), and other churches (\$80K).

Towards this end, we covet your prayers and your support. We are working on a couple of initiatives such as broadening the support base in the board members' churches, reaching out to the larger reformed evangelical churches, students' churches, and overseas churches in UK and Australia. Last but not least we seek to build relationships with the more than 320 churches in Singapore. At the same time, we will be working on key events such as an annual conference cum graduation, an annual ETCAsia supporters' evening, an annual giving day. We pray that through the aforementioned initiatives that God may grant us growth in the number of students coming to ETCAsia as well as an enlarged base of individual supporters from both board members' churches and outside it.

As for corporate supporters, the Board has also approved the **Church Partnership Program** where a non-board member church can contribute as a corporate donor to support their own students or students at large by contributing a percentage of the full tuition cost.

We remain committed to Vision 2024 launched in December 2020. Its aim is to raise \$1.8M by 2021. The hope is to have the resources for a full faculty of five to six members with 60 full time students by 2024.

Partner with ETCAsia Today

- [One Time Gift to Vision 2024](#)
- [Monthly Partner to Vision 2024](#)
- [Yearly Partner to Vision 2024](#)

Important College Dates

6th to 10th September

Study Break

4th to 8th October

Study Break

7th October 2021

ETCAsia Supporters' Evening

1st to 5th November

Study Break

8th to 12 November

Examination Week

17th December 2021

ETCAsia Annual Giving Day

Tuesday 4 January 2022

Semester 2 of 2021/2022 academic year begins

ETCAsia Financial Update

Previous Financial Year (2019/20)

Total Expenses	\$622K	SGD
Total Donations	\$457K	SGD
Total Donation / Total Expenses	73%	

Last Financial Year for 2020/21

Expenses for FYE 2021	\$730K	SGD
Donations for FYE 2021	\$507K	SGD
Total Donation vs Expected Donation	11% \$50K	Expected Donation is based on Last FY Donation of \$457K

Net Cash position @ June 2021	\$503K	SGD
Viability Period @ June 2021	~ 10.5	Calendar Months
Based on average burn rate of \$50K per month		

ETCAsia Banking Details

PayNow UEN: 201610151M

Name: Evangelical Theological College of Asia
Bank Code 7339 (OCBC Current Account)
Branch Code 695 (OCBC North Branch)
Account Number 6956-7606-4001
Swift Code OCBCSGSG

Write a cheque payable to "Evangelical Theological College of Asia"

Please also use the [website](#) for offline gifts

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