



ETCAsia

EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF ASIA

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See our [monthly prayer points here](#).



Principal's Message

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We hope this newsletter finds you well. Here at ETCAsia we are nearing the end of our sixth academic year! Our lectures have finished, the students have had a lecture free study week, and over the next two weeks they will be sitting their end of semester exams. We've been reminding the students, especially those who are stressed, that high marks are not the goal. Rather, our hope is that their studies will equip them to serve effectively in gospel ministry. And even more, we hope their studies assist them to grow in knowing Christ himself, which is the chief goal of the Christian life. How miniscule exam marks are in comparison to knowing Christ. As Paul says:

... I consider everything a loss because of the **surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord**, for whose sake I have lost all things ... (Philippians 3:8, NIV).

This semester has brought changes and challenges, as well as encouragements! Unsurprisingly, many in our college community - faculty, staff and students came down with COVID. So students who were affected would tune into the lectures that were held at college via the internet. But teaching students who are both in person and online is not ideal. Thankfully, hybrid teaching eventually ceased, and by the end of semester, we had all the students back with us in person in most lectures.

The easing of COVID restrictions in recent weeks has made a great difference to college life. After more than two years, we can now all fit back into one room for weekly chapel, and for the first time we are allowed to sing again! And how joyful the singing was! Chapel has been such a key time each week, especially during COVID, to reorient us as at ETCAsia as a community, including our staff. This semester, each faculty member preached through an OT prophet (Ezekiel, Habakkuk, and Haggai), showing how the OT is so very relevant for us now, particularly as it sheds light on Christ and his return.

We are excited to have 11 new students enrolled in the MDiv for next semester. Eight are full time and three are part time. Please pray for them as they prepare to make big changes in their lives. Again, we thank you so much for your prayers and support without which ETCAsia could not continue.

Every blessing,

Marty Foord.



Settling in Singapore

By Ben Thompson



As April 2022 draws to a close it offers me a good opportunity for reflection. It is 12 months to the day since I left what I often described as “the best job in the world”: pastoring and teaching a church family in the truth, grace and mission of Christ. It was a huge wrench to say goodbye and get on a plane from the UK to Singapore; not a few tears were shed. But we were persuaded that it was right to step back from the coalface of gospel ministry in the local church for the sake of training the next generation of pastor-teachers (albeit on the other side of the world). One year later, we still feel the cost of leaving, but do not begrudge that because of the increasing sense we have of the importance of the work at ETCAsia and the privilege it is to be involved serving in this part of the Lord’s harvest field.

The complexities of entering Singapore under Covid meant that I began my role teaching online in the UK, including preaching in chapel. I preached a number of sermons from Colossians 3, exploring the radical and relational transformation that comes from our new identity in Christ. There was something very odd about asserting that we are one body, called to love each other, when I was speaking to people eight thousand miles and seven time zones away. However, since entering Singapore I have been consistently struck by the warmth, love and generosity that infuses the college. A danger for a training college is that it can very easily become self-focused, as “I” strive to become the best gospel worker that “I” can be by getting the best grades “I” can achieve. And yet, the staff, faculty and student body have consistently shown me and my family the love and joy of Christ. For that we are immensely thankful to God who is so clearly at work within the college.

Combined with the love that is evident in the college I’ve been struck by the spiritual vitality of the students. It is humbling to join them wrestling in prayer, whether for each other’s ministries at church, for non-Christian family and friends, for the growth of the gospel in the surrounding nations, or for each other as we face the trials, temptations and trauma of living this side of the Lord’s return. Bible College training is rightly “information” heavy, but it must flow out to “formation” and “transformation” of the students. What we learn in our heads must infuse our hearts (and then energise our hands). Without that, our theological education would not just be pointless but harmful.

My final reflection, as I come to the end of my first year of teaching, is of the phenomenal gift that the Scriptures are. If the Living God had been pleased to just speak one single sentence to us then we would have cause to be eternally grateful to him. But he has given us a Word that is unsearchable in its wisdom, profound in its truth, and transforming in the person whom we meet in its pages. It has been an immense privilege to be able to teach through the whole of the Old Testament in one year. There have been moments when as a class we’ve gasped to see something of the glory of our suffering Messiah revealed in the Psalms. If pressed, I would still say that working at the coalface of gospel ministry in the local church is the best job in the world; but preparing a generation of workers (who are more zealous, more godly and more gifted than me) so that through them the gospel can multiply ... well that would give it a very good run for its money.

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
[Pr Denesh Divyanathan](#) - 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

The Forgotten Ministry?

Jenny Foord, Dean of Women



Twenty-five years ago, when I came to know Christ my life was transformed beyond recognition. I could barely believe how good it was to be loved by Jesus and desperately wanted others to know him and his life-giving word. So I started praying that God would use my life in his service for his glory.

Five years later, I left my job as a medical practitioner to study theology, hoping that I could eventually serve in women's ministry, perhaps in a local church. At the time, it seemed like a pipedream because there were no other women's ministers in the city where I lived. They only seemed to exist in other parts of the world!

In God's mercy, after I graduated from theological college, I was offered a position on the ministry team at my church. At first some people found it strange. They couldn't understand why the church would need to have a woman on staff just to serve the other women in the church. And this was very interesting because I never heard anyone question the need for a children's worker or a youth worker. People were very used to them, but they'd never seen or even heard of a women's worker. So in the early days, people would often ask me "WHY?" Why do we need a women's worker? Are men and women really that different? Why not just have a general adult ministry? And these are excellent questions! Because we must have solid reasons for every kind of ministry we do.

So what does the Bible say about the role of women? In the New Testament, women such as Priscilla, Eudoda and Syntyche served alongside the apostle Paul in his ministry. In Paul's epistles, almost a third of those he names in his greetings are women. Also, in an era when women were not valued, Paul very counter-culturally states that men and women are equal in value before God (e.g. Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11). Quite clearly, he is no misogynist. Yet interestingly, in chapter 2 of his letter to Titus, he makes a clear distinction between men and women. He's not scared to say that the two genders have their differences. Although we are equal in value, God has given men and women different roles at home and in the church. And not only that, each gender will have its own particular temptations and struggles. So men and women need to develop certain qualities that fit their gender. Which is why there's a need for gender specific ministry. Mature, godly women are uniquely positioned to teach and model Biblical womanhood to other women.

Titus may be a godly and gifted man, but this is one job that he cannot do! A church that ignores the ministry of women to other women will miss out on a valuable component of Christian discipleship. But if we want women to grow into strong disciples of Christ, then the ministry of women to other women is essential.

This can take the form of ministries such as Bible teaching (Bible study leading, one on one Bible reading, giving Bible talks), Bible-based pastoral care, evangelism or even training other women in all these areas. However, it's important to note, that the ministry of women to other women is not independent of the church leadership. The women in Titus' church will still sit under the authority and the wider teaching of Titus and the elders he has appointed (Titus 1:5-9), all of whom sit under the authority of the word of God.

At ETCAsia, we give thanks that one of our graduates and another of our soon-to-be graduates have been appointed as women's ministers by their respective churches here in Singapore. A couple more of our female graduates are working with young women in student ministries. We've also spoken with several other women who praying for opportunities to serve in women's ministry the future. And so we join them in this prayer that God will open doors for many more godly women to serve him in this almost "forgotten", but vital ministry.

Alumni Profile

Interview with Dorothy Chong

GDM Graduate, Class of AY 2018/2019

What were you doing before you commenced your studies at ETCAsia?

I was a paediatric medical officer at National University Hospital.

What prompted you to choose ETCAsia?

When I arrived in Singapore from the UK in 2017 as a young Christian, I was gripped by the idea that Christians can hear God's voice through his words in the Bible, and wanted to learn as much as I could from it in whatever way possible so to share it with others. New friends from the Crossing Church mentioned ETCAsia evening classes as a possible option, alongside serving at church. As I met Andrew for the interview, I was particularly interested in the fact that this is a Bible college where students continue to serve in their home churches, and where we are actively encouraged to take what we are learning in expositing the Bible text back to the congregation to know Christ and make Christ known together, whatever role we have at church.

Continued on next page ...

Interview with Dorothy Chong

What is your plan after you complete your studies at ETCAsia?

After a semester of evening classes, I quit my day job and moved to the full time programme in 2018, wanting to learn and therefore teach the Bible in a more focused manner. I was considering various options of full time paid ministry versus self-funded ministry through part time job in medicine, but the more I recognised the privilege of knowing God through his word that is more precious than gold, the more I wanted to share it with others full time whilst continuing to be trained myself. Having grown up in Hong Kong and moved around to the US/China/UK, I wanted to use this experience God has given, either to certain people groups, or in specific languages. In the end I joined St Helen's Bishopsgate as an associate in 2019, primarily serving the international students' ministry, where I am still serving full time today, with a view of training women (of the Hong Kong diaspora in the UK? Or Cantonese/Mandarin-speaking area in the world?) in their ministry in the future.

In what way did studying at ETCAsia prepare you for Gospel Ministry in your current ministry?

Three main areas: (1) language studies especially a full year in Greek was a great start to studying the Bible in its original language, given my ongoing training via Cornhill does not offer Biblical languages to first year students. (2) The academic environment in my batch, genuinely wanting to sharpen each other's understanding of whatever text we are studying, was a great example that I continue to treasure today. (3) The lecturers' genuine example in both academics and sharing life with such humility, not just as our teachers but also fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, is an example I try to emulate.

Can you share with us the most memorable part of studying at ETCAsia?

When Andrew fell sick, the students genuinely together cared for the Reids by praying and practical service, and by continuing to study hard! It is amazing to being able to both be academically challenged as classmates and genuinely care for one another as a family in Christ. That and also the many food trips we went for around Singapore.

Check out the ETCAsia Youtube Channel



Why is there so much violence in OT? – B. Thompson
Why studying theology matters? – Marty Foord

And More !

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

For those, like me, who joined ETCAsia as someone quite new to ministry: the more effort you put into knowing God through studying his word (essay writing included!) with other classmates, who often have so much more knowledge and experience, the more you will come to love God and desire to share him with others! Take the time not just to tick the essay or exam off your to-do list, but praise God for what you are learning about him, and share it with others!

What can we pray for you?

Pray that I would continue to grow in my desire to know Christ better in personal studies and at Cornhill, so to encourage students to know Him and make Him known better together. Thanks for praying, and do say hi if you come to London!



Launch of New Certificate

CERTIFICATE OF EXPOSITORY GOSPEL MINISTRY



SCAN THE QR CODE TO APPLY (DEADLINE: 15 MAY 2022)

Taught on-site over 12 months by ETCAsia's Faculty and experienced local full time Ministry Workers, the CEGM program seeks to equip lay leaders with the knowledge and skills they need to minister effectively to those under their care.

Each module is 4 weeks long, with a 2-hour session each week on Thursday evening.

SEMESTER SUBJECTS

	Semester 1 (July - Dec 2022)	Semester 2 (Jan - Jun 2023)
Core Subjects	BT1: Bible Overview BT2: Theology Overview TB1: Teaching NT (Mark)	GM1: Expository Word Ministry TB2: Teaching NT (2 Peter) TB3: Teaching OT - Narrative
Elective (Choose 1)	GM2a: Leading Small Groups GM2b: Children's Ministry GM2c: Youth Ministry GM2d: Women's ministry	GM2e: Preaching GM2f: One to One Ministry GM2g: Pastoral Care GM2h: Evangelism and Mission

PLEASE REFER TO THE NEXT PAGE FOR LECTURERS' BIOGRAPHIES

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[Click here to find out more](#)

College Open Days 2022

The Annual College Open Days were held on the [9th February](#) and [30th March 2022](#). In total we had 27 visitors over both days, and we were delighted that they came from a wide variety of churches. Our Principal Marty Foord opened with an explanation of ETCAsia's purpose, ethos, and training philosophy. We then heard from two of our current students about their experience of ETCAsia. And finally, our visitors got to sit in on a class lecture to give them a further taste of the college life and teaching.



ETCAsia Advancement

One of the key goals of ETCAsia advancement is to expand the support base of the college by reaching out to churches as mission partners both in Singapore and overseas. One way churches can support us is via the [Church Partnership Program](#).

At present, the income for the college comes from two sources (1) gifts from supporters and (2) tuition fees. For FY 2021/22, tuition fees only cover about 17% of the total annual expenses. The rest comes from gifts. Gifts are separated into three buckets, namely, (1) the General Fund by individuals and churches, (2) the Faculty Fund by supporters of faculty members and (3) the Staff Fund by supporters of staff members. This is shown on the table on the right column of this page. Contribution by Mission Partners goes to the general fund. Currently, the mission partners who support us financially are churches in Singapore, Australia, and the UK.

In recent months, we have also sought to expand our mission partners in the UK through our Lecturers' contacts. To-date we have reached out to a total of 155 churches and will report on the outcome in due time. Please do pray that God will provide the funding we need to train gospel workers for our needy world.

As we come to the end of financial year in June 2022, we are projecting a short fall of about \$150K with respect to the budgeted income. We are thankful for God's keeping hand and your financial support throughout this year. Do pray for us as we endeavour to reach out to individuals to close the gap in laying the foundation for the future.

Important Dates

2nd to 6th May 2022

AY 2021/23 Sem 2 Examinations Week

21st to 7th July 2022

AY 2022/23 Pre-Semester

18th July 2022

AY 2022/23 Sem1 starts

5th to 9th September 2022

Study Break 1

17th to 21st October 2022

Study Break 2

7th to 11th November 2022

Study Break 3

TBC

Examination Week

ETCAsia Financial Update

General Fund (Total)	\$533K	SGD
Viability Period Based on average burn rate of \$63K per month	~ 8.4	Months
YTD Total Income ~ 68% of total	\$669K	SGD
Budgeted Total Income	\$972K	SGD
YTD Expenses ~ 69% of total	\$555K	SGD

Current Financial Year (2021/22) @ Mar 2021

YTD General fund	\$328K	SGD
YTD Faculty Fund	\$155K	SGD
YTD Staff Fund	\$21K	SGD
YTD Published Tuition Fees	\$135K	SGD
YTD Evening Courses	\$0	SGD

ETCAsia Banking Details

PayNow UEN: **201610151M**

Name: Evangelical Theological College of Asia

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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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- [Yearly Partner to Vision 2024](#)