



SIX INSTITUTIONS FROM SRI LANKA BEGIN YEAR 1 OF THE GATE WORKSHOP

Over the past few years, the Asia Theological Association has organized 4-year GATE workshops in various places; and, just recently, have seen its culmination in those places. Yes, we have seen bittersweet endings, but we are now seeing bright new beginnings and new possibilities in a new place: Sri Lanka.

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PRESS RELEASE: Exploring the New Testament in Asia

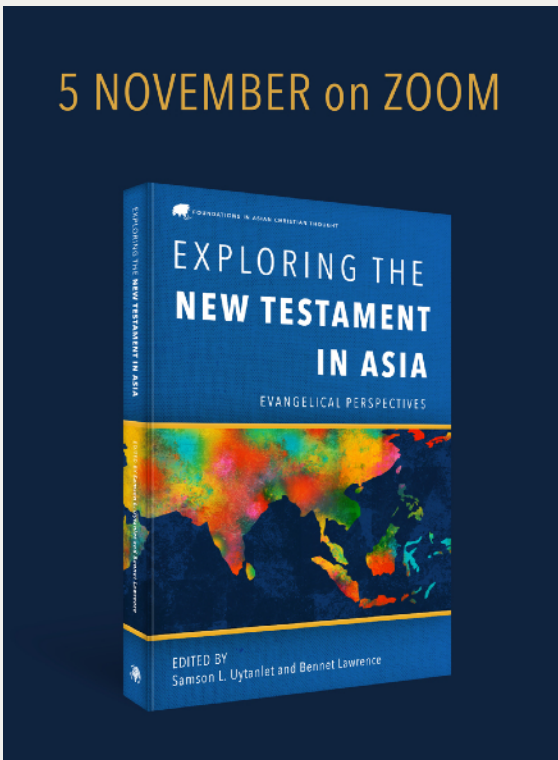
Last September 16 to 18, six schools from various parts of Sri Lanka sent members of their faculty to participate in the first of a series of Gate Workshops entitled "Theological and Philosophical Foundations for Transformational Education," giving us a total of 56 participants. These schools are as follows: (1) Assemblies of God Bible College; (2) Colombo Theological Seminary; (3) Lanka Bible College; (4) LIFE Bible Institute; (5) The Salvation Army Officer Training College; and (6) Theological College of Lanka. This year's training was held in the Tangerine Beach Hotel in Waskaduwa, Sri Lanka.

The facilitators of Sri Lanka's year 1 GATE workshop were Drs. Gary Griffith (GATE International Coordinator, USA), Theresa Lua (GATE Associate and ATA General Secretary), and Bennet Lawrence (GATE Trainee and Regional Secretary for ATA India). Apart from the sessions, the participants were drawn into

worship and devotion each morning, each led by a participant from a different school.

At the end of the three day training for GATE year 1, the participants gave very positive feedback, stating that the topics discussed were very relevant, challenging, and mind opening. It helped them consider their context and future realities in designing the curriculum and to be more focused on the learners and their learning. But more striking was how all the participants really appreciated and benefited from how the workshop brought the different schools in Sri Lanka together- which they said was a rare occurrence. The participants are already eagerly anticipating year 2's training next year!

As we rejoice over the successful and sweet beginning of the GATE workshops in Sri Lanka, we would like to thank **Coworkers** for the generosity that made this workshop possible. ◆



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Building Institutional Capacity for Quality Online Education

Author and eLearning researcher Donna J. Abernathy once said, “Online learning is not the next big thing; it is the now big thing.” Indeed, as much of life has moved and continues to move to online and digital spaces at record speed, such a statement should not come as a surprise. This leaves even theological institutions with no choice but to adapt and more importantly build capacity in order for them to carry out their mission to equip theological leaders effectively. For this reason, the Asia Theological Association, in partnership with Local Leaders International, organized the 2024 Academic Leadership seminar with theme “Building Institutional Capacity for Quality Online Education”.

Building Institutional Capacity for Quality Online Education was held from October 17 to 19 at the City View Hotel, Hong Kong. 63 participants, all in positions of academic leadership, came to learn, sharpen and fellowship with one another. Facilitating the discussions were Drs. Dianne Hockridge, Educational Consultant, Local Leaders International and Online Educational Designer, Ridley College, Melbourne; and Joanna Feliciano- Soberano, Educational Consultant for Southeast and East Asia, Mesa Global and Professor and Former Academic



Dr. Theresa Lua with facilitators, Drs. Diane Hockridge and Joanna Feliciano-Soberano

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Dean of the Asian Theological Seminary, Philippines.

The three-day seminar began with a lot examining: participants examining their own contexts and identifying the unique opportunities and constraints present within it; participants examining the role they play in developing institutional capacity for online learning. Apart from that they examined online learning more closely- from the term itself along with the requirements to make it happen to the trends in online learning.

The second day allowed the participants to shift from examining to building: from building an online environment through the appropriate technologies to building community within that environment to building spiritual and wholistic formation into online learning.

The third day allowed the participants to develop: develop pedagogical competency for online learning along with assessment strategies. The participants likewise looked into strategies for developing sustainable online programs, which they had shared to the larger group.

As the educational landscape continues to change because of fast and constant technological updates and upgrades, it's easy for leaders and educators to just be overwhelmed. But over the course of the three days, the participants saw that they were not alone in navigating this fast-changing landscape. They were reminded of the importance of having leaders and institutions working together, sharing resources and best practices, as they did in this gathering, not just to make quality online education accessible to more but also to enhance what is already there.

The growing availability of technology that makes online education possible is a blessing in many ways-



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and we hope that our member schools will grasp how to best use it and do so effectively. As educators John C. Palfrey and Urs Gasser have said, "The most important thing that schools can do is not to use technology in the curriculum more, but to use it more effectively." We hope that our recent seminar aided Academic leaders to do just that. ◆

Conversations on Equipping for Integral Mission Year 2: Addressing Key Themes

The Lausanne Movement has defined integral mission as *the task of bringing the whole of life under the lordship of Jesus Christ and includes the affirmation that there is no Biblical dichotomy between evangelistic and social responsibility in bringing Christ's peace to the poor and oppressed-* and we, at ATA, hope to see that planted firmly in the way we train and equip leaders of the Church for holistic ministry. For that to happen, we have partnered with Tearfund East and Southeast Asia and gathered representatives from various theological schools across East and Southeast Asia for conversations on equipping for integral mission. These conversations began last year, November 20 to 22, 2023, in Bangkok, Thailand with 41 participants from 37 theological schools and training organizations contributing to it.

The conversations resumed this year and was a follow up to the key themes that surfaced in last year's conversations. These themes are as follows: curriculum development; theology, publications, and research; and building up the family. 30 select participants were invited to take up the conversations and tackle the key themes mentioned earlier.

Over the course of the 3 days, there were conversations on various topics related to the key themes and they were led by various resource persons. The session on training paradigms, along with the workshop on curriculum development, was led by Drs. Theresa Lua, General Secretary, Asia Theological Association; Joanna Soberano, Educational Consultant for Southeast and East Asia, Mesa Global, and Education Professor, Asian Theological Seminary; Perry Shaw, Researcher in Residence at Morling College, Sydney, Australia and author of *Transforming Theological Education*, who



joined via video. Leading the session on sample Curriculum designs in Integral Mission was Dr. Raymond Kwong, Director of Tearfund East and Southeast Asia; while the session on Theological frameworks was led by Dr. Timoteo Gener, Co-editor, *Asian Christian Theology: Evangelical Perspectives* and President of FEBIAS College of Bible and Pastor Rei Lemuel Crizaldo, Theological Education Network Coordinator, Tearfund East and Southeast Asia and Theological Commission Coordinator of the World Evangelical Alliance. Conversations on Family well-being was led by Mr. Anton Wan, CEO Family Value Foundation, Hong Kong while Drs. Joy Pring-Faraz, Langham Publishing, Beatrice Ang, Center for Theological Inquiry in Asia (CTIA) and Francis Samdao, *Evangelical Review of Theology*, the Journal of the World Evangelical Alliance shared on publishing resources. Finally, Biblical reflections were given by Drs. Dwi Maria Handayani, Head of the M.Th. Study program, Bandung Theological Seminary and Director for Asia & South Pacific, Langham Preaching, Ronald Dina, Principal, Myanmar Evangelical Graduate School of Theology; while a case story on the curriculum revision of China Graduate School of

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Theology towards building reflective collaborators was shared by Dr. Simon Cheung, the Dean of CGST. These topics comprised the six sessions over the three days the participants were together.

The 30 participants found the sessions generally very helpful and were challenged to incorporate integral mission not just into the curriculum but also into the very culture of the school. They saw that integral mission has many points that require collaboration amongst themselves and other leaders. Certainly, one cannot engage in a wholistic and balanced ministry alone. We need each other.

The past two years have allowed for leaders in our member schools in East and Southeast Asia to think about and converse on the ways by which Integral Mission can be a deeply embedded into our curricula and training programs. Moving forward, we hope to narrow down and focus on publications and resources.

We praise God for the opportunity to gather for conversations on equipping for integral mission over the past couple of years. While the challenges of embedding integral mission into curricula and programs will always be there, the conversations with likeminded educators have been an encouragement; and we hope that the gleanings from it will trickle down not just to each one's respective institutions but also to many others across the region as well.

Quotes from the conversations on equipping for integral mission:

In Jesus, we see that Integral Mission is a ministry of touching the untouchables, giving honor to people without honor, voice to the voiceless, and restoring face to those who have lost it. – Dr. Dwi Maria Handayani on Mark 5: 21- 43

God never ends relationships. He renews again and again. Our task is to restore broken and unjust relationships. - Dr. Ronald Lal Suah on Judges

[The] Good News [is] not a moral principle or a program of action but a Scriptural saving event/ news which any culture could receive.- Dr. Timoteo Gener and Pastor Rei Crizaldo

Key Characteristics of Effective Curricula in the 21st Century:

- *Contextualized. Context to text rather than text to context.*
- *Integrated. Less the delivery of a body of content and more training in a way of thinking, feeling, and acting- the development of theological leadership.*
- *Flexible. Able to address new issues and new understandings. - Dr. Perry Shaw*

Do we see God in our curricula? – Dr. Raymond Kwong ◆

The graphic features a night view of the Taipei skyline with the Taipei 101 building prominently lit. In the top left corner is the Asia Theological Association (ATA) logo, which consists of a stylized 'T' inside a circle with the text 'ASIA THEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION' around it. The text 'Save the date' is written in a green, cursive font. Below this, the event details are presented in three stacked boxes: a blue box with '2025 ATA General Assembly', a dark grey box with '11-15 AUGUST 2025', and a red box with 'Novotel Hotels & Resorts Taipei, Taiwan'.

The Afghan Bible College: Hope In Spite it All

Afghanistan is one of the countries with the highest levels of Christian persecution. While the Taliban, who took over in 2021, said that they would grant religious freedom, that remains to be something yet to materialize. The threat of torture and death always loom over Afghan Christians (Open Doors, 2024). But apart from having religious rights curtailed, Afghans continue to live with the reality of political and economic instability. These circumstances have led to the displacement of millions of Afghans, many of whom have made neighboring countries a sanctuary amid the chaos (Ocha, 2024). Yet amid the chaos and seeming desperation, God continues to move and even raise up workers for the harvest- and He has been using one institution that has made it its mission to equip Afghan believers scattered at home and abroad: the Afghan Bible College.

A first of its kind, the Afghan Bible College (ABC) is one of the ministries of the Afghan Hope Church whose vision is to “accelerate the fulfillment of God’s purpose of bringing all Afghans worldwide to Christ”. The programs of the ABC are specifically designed for Afghan people and uses Dari, the Afghan mother tongue, as its medium of instruction. Given the situation of their students and target students, the programs of the Afghan Bible College are purely online. The combination of the use of mother tongue language and the online platform has been very effective as evidenced not just by the growing number of students but also by its fruit as new Afghan churches are being planted.

Despite having purely online programs, the Afghan Bible College does have several study centres and libraries scattered in the region, all established over the past 5 years. These centres are located in Ankara, Afyon, and Cappadocia, Turkey. They likewise have a house based resource centre in Pakistan.

The Afghan Bible College was evaluated by Drs. Jonathan Ro, ATA Accreditation secretary, Theresa Lua, ATA General Secretary, Rick Weymouth Associate



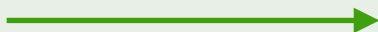
The ABC is one of the ministries of the Afghan Hope Church.

secretary for Accreditation. Apart from conducting an evaluation, Dr Theresa Lua likewise preached to an online church reaching Afghans. This online church is attended by Afghans still based in Afghanistan, all of whom do so with great risk to their life. Indeed, the grave threat of persecution is always there, even among the students of the Afghan Bible College. Family members of students who continue in the Islamic faith take great offense when they find out that that student is undertaking Theological studies. Worse yet, should the Taliban find out, even family members could possibly be subject to attack and harm. Please remember to pray for the safety of the students of Afghan Bible College.

Despite the dire situation caused by political and social instability, hope remains among Afghans believers scattered across the globe because God is moving and still in the business of doing great things! ◆

Get ready for the 2024 ATA Theological Consultation: Sights, Sounds, and Stories!

In just a few weeks, we will be gathering for this year's theological consultation! We know you are excited- and we are too. So, here is a glimpse of what's in store:



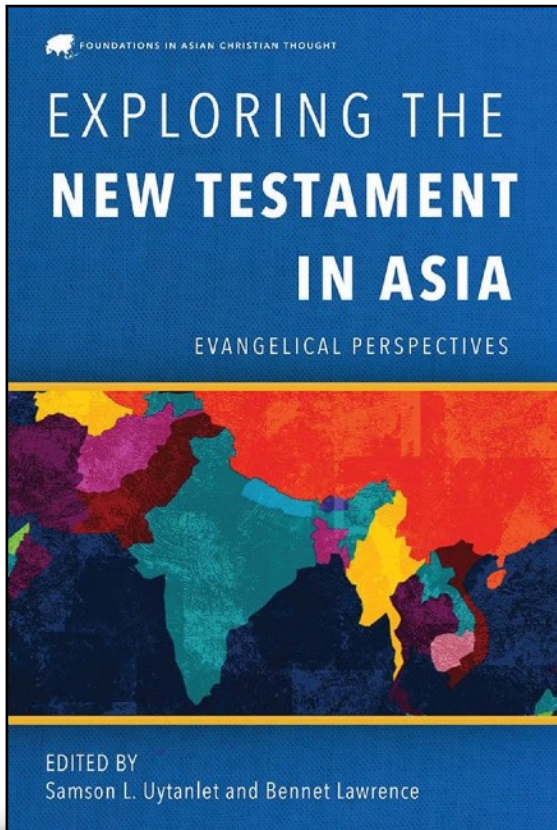
We indeed have so much in store for you in this year's consultation and you can get more glimpses into that by clicking on this link [Sights, Sounds, and Stories – Asia Theological Association](#). We not only have paper presentations, but also workshops, and even art presentations! It will be very exciting!

By the way, don't rush off after the consultation! There are two big festivals going on in Chiang Mai in the weekend after the consultation: the Yee Peng and the Loy Krathong. Find out more about them in the following link: [Chiang Mai Yi Peng Lantern Festival 2024: All Things You Want to Know](#)

So, get ready for an exciting week of sights, sounds, and stories in Chiang Mail this coming November 12 to 15! See you! ♦

ATA Theological Consultation 2024: Sights, Sounds, Stories SCHEDULE (updated 21.10.2024)			
Tuesday November 12 2024			
9.00am-12pm Registration (Free coffee, tea, light refreshments will be available in the lobby)			
12.00-1.30pm Lunch			
2.00-2.30pm Welcome (Theresa Lua), Opening Remarks (Michael Ortiz) Introduction (Tan Sook Ling)			
2.30-4.30pm Plenary 1 Layers of Contextual Art (Thailand) 1) 2.30-2.50pm Sawai Chinnawong 2) 2.50-3.10pm Thanit Lokeswaree 3) 3.10-3.30pm Anan Moontrakorn 4) 3.30-4.30. Discussion, Q and A for all three artists			
6.00-7.30pm Dinner			
7.30-8.45 An Evening of Story and Music Esther Shin Chuang: <i>Beauty out of Brokenness</i>			
Time	Wednesday November 13 2024	Thursday November 14 2024	Friday November 15 2024
8.30-9.00am	Worship Devotion Havilah Dhamraraj Gen 29:13-30	Worship Devotion Havilah Dhamraraj Luke 11:5-8	Worship Devotion Havilah Dhamraraj Gen 32:22-32
9.00-10.00am	Plenary 2: Joel Navarro Homeward Bound: Returning Ancient Hymn-Texts and Sacred Choral Music to Congregational Worship Q and A	Plenary 4: Havilah Dhamraraj Elements of Biblical Storytelling Q and A	Plenary 6: Erwin Cabalang "Pixels and Parables: The Intersection of Digital Art and Theology Today" Q and A
10.00-10.20am	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break
10.20-10.40 am	Coffee and Creative art presentations live	Coffee and Creative art presentations live	10.20-11.00 Plenary 7 Wageeh Mikhail Arabic Calligraphy and Arab Christianity
10.40-11.20 am	Plenary 3 SBC School of Church Music Faculty (Chang, Palaruan) Beyond Music, Transcending Borders: Rethinking Theology of Worship and Church Music Education for Asian Pastor-Musicians.	Plenary 5: Marie Joy Pring Faraz Magnificat from the Margins: Utilizing Art in Research Among The Poor.	11.00-12.15 Plenary 8 Theology and the Arts: The Way Forward 11.00-11.20: Michael Ortiz 11.20-12.15: Michael Ortiz in conversation with a panel:
11.20am - 12.20pm	Discussion, Feedback, Q and A	Discussion, Feedback, Q and A.	----- 12.15-12.30 Concluding Summary Rei Crizaldo and CLOSE.
12.30-2.00pm	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
2.00-2.40pm	Paper/Project Presentations	Paper/Project Presentations	(Tour of Chiangmai)
2.45-3.25pm	Paper/Project Presentations	Paper/Project Presentations	
3.30-4.00pm	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	
4.00-5.00pm	Workshops	Workshops	
6.00-7.00pm	DINNER	DINNER ON YOUR OWN	
7.30-8.30pm	Tony Chuang: Dramatic preaching with the arts performance. and others	FREE	

SIGHTS, SOUNDS, and STORIES



Exploring the New Testament in Asia: Reflecting on Scripture From Asian Perspectives

Langham Publishing has released [Exploring the New Testament in Asia](#) (Langham Global Library, 2024). This is the fourth volume in the *Foundations In Asian Christian Thought* series, a series published in partnership with the [Asia Theological Association](#). Edited by Samson L. Uytanlet and Bennet Lawrence, this collection of essays offers theological reflections on New Testament themes from Asian perspectives.

Contributing scholars from across the region touch on topics such as salvation, holiness, poverty, ethnic tensions, reconciliation, honoring elders, persecution, and hospitality. Biblically faithful and contextually relevant, *Exploring the New Testament in Asia* is a critical resource for students and scholars to help the church hear and see the good news of Jesus anew.

ABOUT THE EDITORS

Samson Liao Uytanlet has a PhD in New Testament from London School of Theology, UK and he is an associate professor of New Testament and chair of the biblical studies department at the Asian Theological Seminary, Philippines. He is the author of the commentaries on Matthew and 2 Peter & Jude for the Asia Bible Commentary Series by Langham Publishing, in partnership with the ATA.

Bennet Lawrence has a PhD from Asia Graduate School of Theology, Philippines, and serves as the regional secretary of Asia Theology Association India. He is the author of a number of books, including *Comparative Characterization in the Sermon on the Mount* (Wipf & Stock, 2017) and *Approaches to the New Testament* (SAIACS Press, 2018).

ABOUT LANGHAM PUBLISHING

Langham Publishing is a ministry of Langham Partnership whose vision is to strengthen the global church. Through Langham Publishing, we publish books for Christian leaders, preachers, and scholars that represent a diverse church around the world, furthering our understanding of scripture, our mission as God's people, and our love in Christ.

Find out more about [Exploring the New Testament in Asia](#).
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Michael F. Bird (PhD), Deputy Principal, Ridley College, writes:

These essays are an informative attempt to listen to the New Testament with Asian ears, hear what stands out, explain its relevance to the many Asian contexts, and show others, especially those of us in the West, how we can learn from and with our brothers and sisters spread across Asia in terms of how to read Scripture faithfully.

Ashish Chrispal (PhD), Senior Advisor, Overseas Council, commends:

Biblically sound, contextually relevant, and comprehensive in scope for facilitators and students of theological education. Articles by eminent scholars provide exceptional insights as they speak from their excellent learning, teaching experience, and down-to-earth approach in their contexts of Asian realities with global expressions of the New Testament. I highly recommend this compilation of essays for teaching and as an introduction to scholarly research undertaking.

For press related questions and information on [Exploring the New Testament in Asia](#), please contact sophia.soloviy@langham.org

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The Press and the Journal, seek to address issues that impact Asian churches with the conviction that the end goal of academic reflection is to serve the Body of Christ.



Dr. Dave Johnson, D.Miss.
Director, APTS Press and
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ATA News is a bi-monthly publication of the
Asia Theological Association

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Address all correspondence to the editor:
Angelica De Vera
ataasia.research@gmail.com