

Dear Friends,

There is much to encourage us as HTC develops and grows. In particular we have been encouraged by recent contacts with the Church of Scotland and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

The Church of Scotland Academic Questions Committee has indicated that potential Church of Scotland ministers will now be able to study at HTC for all or part of their theological education. This is a remarkable breakthrough, which should lead to an increase in student numbers. Further discussions on this subject were held with the Right Rev Professor Iain Torrance when he made a Moderatorial visit to the College recently.

A student of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) has also applied to be able to complete his theological studies at HTC (he is currently an Open Learning student with us) and, if this is accepted by the PCI, then precedent will have been set and others can follow.

The Church of Scotland Readership Committee also announced at a recent conference that potential Readers could train at HTC. Previously all such training was carried out at the Scottish Churches Open College, which is closing. These students are required to complete level one of the BA degree.

Pray that God will help and guide us in all of these discussions and developments.

Regards,

*Professor A.T.B. McGowan*



*Some of HTC's graduates with Ric Cannada at the Awards Ceremony*

### **Annual meeting**

On the 24 October HTC held its Annual Public Meeting and Graduation Ceremony. It was a special evening with a good turn out from Christians in the area, as well as those who had travelled to celebrate the achievements of their friends and loved ones. In total there were 19 graduating from various courses. Amongst these were four Doctor of Ministry graduates, which included our own Noel Due; so we were delighted to have Dr. Ric Cannada with us. He is the President of Reformed Theological Seminary, the partner organisation with whom we run the Doctor of Ministry course.

Following the presentation of the awards, Ric addressed those present on Psalm 133 and its relevance for Christian unity. A recording of the message will be available soon on our website.

### **Newsletter distribution**

If you know of anyone who might be interested in the work of HTC and would like to receive a Newsletter, please pass their name and address to us and we will gladly send them their own copy.

### **Calls to new pastures**

As mentioned in the last newsletter, Noel Due spent part of summer 2003 in Australia visiting family and teaching at a church camp. After his return to college at the beginning of the new academic session, Coromandel Baptist Church in Adelaide, South Australia held a meeting at which there was a unanimous decision to call Noel to be their senior pastor. Noel served as a pastor at Coromandel immediately prior to his move to Scotland in 1993, so it is clear that we were meant to have him on loan only. Coromandel Baptist Church has graciously agreed to let Noel visit us regularly and continue to be involved in the work of HTC.

Our Church History Lecturer, Nick Needham, has also received a call, though much closer to home. His own church in Inverness has asked him to be their Pastor. HTC however will not be losing Nick, as he will remain our Church History Lecturer on a part-time basis.

Both these men have played a huge part in developing the courses and academic credentials of HTC, for which we are tremendously grateful. We recognise, however, that this has all happened in the Lord's timing, and we pray that he will continue to bless their ministries in the new situations in which they find themselves.



### A helping hand

Staff and students were recruited to lift the new sign into place. Now HTC will be more prominent in the High Street, and easier to find for visitors.

### Postgraduate News

In November we enjoyed a visit from one of our American PhD students, Brad Mercer, and his wife Cindy. Brad is an Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Jackson. His primary purpose here was to have a meeting with his supervisors, but that did not stop him enjoying a tour to the west coast and us benefiting from his teaching during morning worship.

### Access to theology

There are changes afoot in the Access course with the transfer of ownership of the course from Moray College to HTC. This change means that non-Scottish students can now enrol on this popular course. There are already over 80 students studying on the Access course which offers great flexibility: people, without necessarily any educational qualifications and from diverse situations, can study Christian theology at their own pace. School leavers, mums, those in employment and those well into retirement, all benefit from and enjoy this modular course. Some have chosen to take only the modules on topics that appealed to them; others have completed the whole course and have gone on with studies, eventually to graduate with a BA degree. The changes have also allowed us to recruit more tutors from ministers, elders and teachers to help with all the work that flows in from our students.

### Alumni

Marc Ellis contacted HTC recently. He completed his BA this year and graduated *in absentia* as he is teaching English in Miskolc, Hungary at a *gimnazium* (a school teaching 12 to 18 year olds). It is clear that he found the academic level of study at HTC important not just for his personal development when he writes modestly, 'it was beyond my expectations to have achieved a degree award. However, I wouldn't be here now without it because my current school stipulated that I needed a degree'.

Richard Davies who graduated in 2000 with a first class honours degree has written to us from his work as a tent-making missionary in a Muslim country. His studies with us took place during a furlough, extended because of political unrest in his mission field. Richard and his family have now returned better equipped from his stay in Scotland. His letter mentions a regular meeting Richard is having with a number of young men interested in finding out more about what the Bible teaches, he also reports that the local Christians are working together and becoming more recognisable as a church.

### New intake of students

We started the semester with a total of eleven new BA students, some fulltime and others part-time and distance learning. Patrick Sentongo is one of our new fulltime students. Patrick, who is from Uganda, has been working as an electronics technician in the UK for 15 years. Since 1997 he has been acting as assistant pastor to his home church, but believes God is calling him, after study, to return to Uganda to serve as a minister and to provide teaching for others in the ministry there.

Joining some of our BA modules this year we have two students training as Readers in the Church of Scotland. While some HTC graduates have gone on to serve as Readers, these are the first two students specifically studying at HTC as a part of their Readership training.

### The New Testament in 24 hours

An impossible task? Well, HTC's Alistair Wilson (New Testament Lecturer) and Jamie Grant (Biblical Studies) were asked to lead the members of St George's Tron church, in Glasgow's city centre, through the whole of the New Testament in just that time! Alistair and Jamie were delighted to take up the challenge and led sessions on Friday, October 31st and Saturday, November 1st, looking at the New Testament narrative, genres and particular issues of biblical interpretation. On the Sunday, our two lecturers were preaching morning and evening at the Tron. The whole weekend was well received and cassettes are available from the Tron (follow the instructions on [www.thetron.org/wwg/cassettes.htm](http://www.thetron.org/wwg/cassettes.htm)).

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