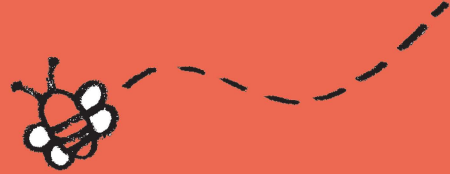


29th
COMMENCEMENT

2023





Good Company in A Journey
makes the Way seem Shorter.

(Izaak Walton, English writer, best known
as the author of *The Compleat Angler*)





Dear Beloved Friends,

Your respective journeys of faith at EAST have come to an end. The real test begins!

We have fulfilled our part at EAST in equipping you to be servant leaders and scholarly ministry practitioners for the Great Commission.

It has been most rewarding for us to witness the grace of God in you. You have grown in passion for the Lord and His Word, and enlarged your vision for the Great Commission.

As you leave, may you continue to walk in total dependence upon the Holy Spirit to empower your walk and ministry wherever He will lead. And may you embrace humbly all that you have learned of Christ.

" go Forth
in humility and
serve... "

So go forth in humility and serve in the
spirit of the Great Commandment and
passion for the Great Commission.

I am praying for you to be full of
the Spirit, and bear supernatural
fruit in your life as you trust Him for
spiritual multiplication to build spiritual
movements.

Glorify Christ through your life and
ministry!

Warmly in the love of Christ,
Chan Chong Hiok






HIS STORY MY STORY.



There is no one kind of road trip nor is there one type of traveller.

Some like to go solo while others find rest in company; some prefer quick getaways, others the long and winding road. But whether it be for business or pleasure, a return to familiar paths or on the road less travelled, every journey is a discovery.

Our graduands' time at EAST is like a road trip. What they saw, tasted, heard, felt, and gained are their stories.



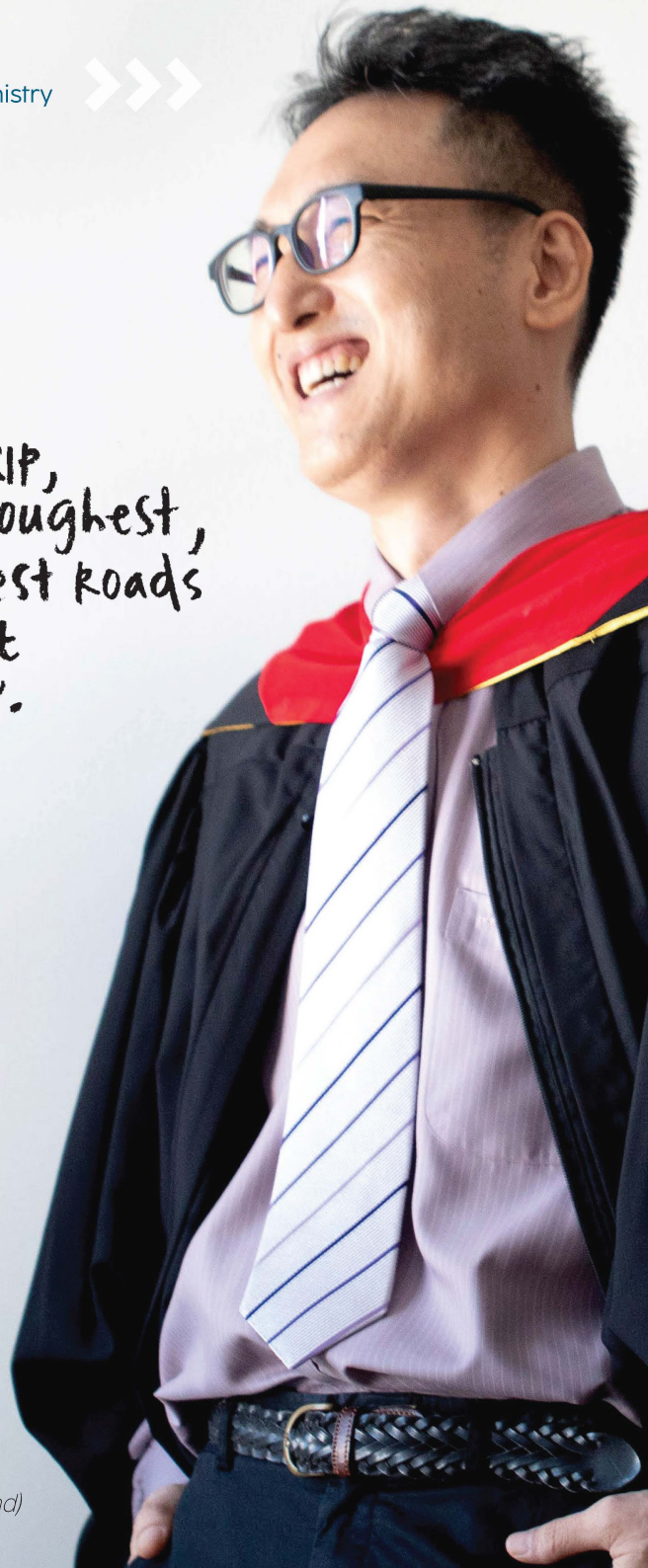


If life were a road trip,
I conclude that the roughest,
windiest and steepest roads
lead us to the most
breath-taking view.

(Allie Penner, *The Well Blog*)

In 2019, Kim Hak-Soo was invited to a chapel service at EAST. As the worship team played, he felt a deep connection with God which extended that short tour into a four-year road trip.

(cont'd behind)





a mission outreach with EAST faculty and students



One of the first things that impressed the associate pastor of Korean Church in Singapore was “Servant Leadership.” “I’d heard the term before,” says Hak-Soo, “but at EAST I experienced it.”

“Through the teaching of Leadership class professors like Dr Chan, through professors who invited us to their homes for meals, and the camaraderie of my mentoring group guys.”

“I saw servant-leadership – the willingness to serve like Jesus – in action.”

In early 2022, Hak-Soo’s journey stalled when his wife Ok-Hee was diagnosed with cancer. What followed was an abrupt turnaround home for surgery, chemotherapy and hospital stay that lasted eight months.

“As I watched my wife suffering in pain, I felt helpless; some days I couldn’t see or feel,” says Hak-Soo. “My only GPS was God and His Word; my only prayer, ‘Lord, I can’t, You can, and I will.’”

The chemotherapy side-effects that tear into one’s physical, mental and emotional states were things “I wouldn’t wish for anyone,” says Ok-Hee. “But I experienced God’s wonderful grace.”

“I could even pray for and comfort fellow patients who were lost without Christ,” continues the trained Korean language teacher.

Even when, she lost all muscular strength, she felt God’s manifest presence. “I wasn’t afraid to die,” says Ok-Hee, looking up at her husband of 28 years.

“I just didn’t feel ready to leave him behind.”





Park Ok-Hee (Korea), 51, [Partners in Ministry Certificate](#)



By the time Ok-Hee's cancer was diagnosed, she had completed her two-year PIM (Partners in Ministry) Certificate course.

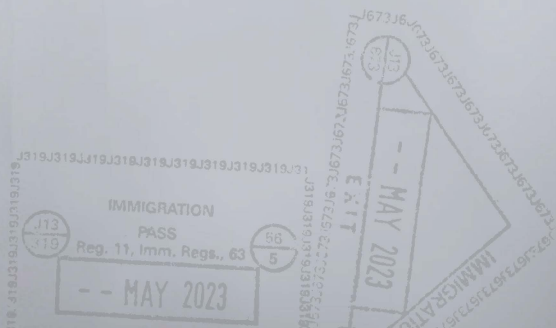
Though she had graduated from Bible school 25 years ago, there were fresh lessons she learned from the PIM classes and teachers.

"Margaret taught me patience, and how to apply God's truth to practical life," she continues. "Eng Meng met me regularly for prayer and reflection and ministered to my soul."

"And Leetzu helped me in English, and encouraged me with kindness."

Having walked through the valley of the shadow of death, the couple is making no assumptions about their future. "My dream is to obey God's call," says Hak-Soo, "and expand His kingdom as a faithful Bible teacher and preacher."

For Ok-Hee, she is taking it a day at a time. "I just want to count God's blessings every day; and for as long as God allows, be my husband's partner in life and ministry."





The Journey towards
self-discovery is
life's gREATest Adventure.

(Arianna Huffington, author, columnist and businesswoman)

Upon graduating from university in Korea, Kang Hye-Won moved to Sydney, Australia, and worked in the city's ubiquitous sandwich shops to support himself. Purpose? To become someone God could use.





The younger of twin boys grew up in Dangyang, a county of rice paddies, mountains and rivers. "I was talkative as a child but became an introvert when I grew up," says Hye-Won.

At 20, he moved to Seoul for university studies and felt God's call to serve Him. "I knew then I had to get out of my shell."

During that one year in Australia, Hye-Won's world changed. "The Aussie culture is very sociable," he says. "Shops shut around 7.30 pm and people would rush out to play or spend time with friends and family. This was something very new to me."

Back in Korea, while pursuing a Master of Divinity degree to prepare for ministry, he met Ji-Hyeon, his wife, "a bright and cheerful introvert."

They share a burden for youths in their home country whose lives are preoccupied with studies and worry about future employment. "They long for meaning in life but search for it through earthly pleasures," adds Hye-Won. "They need to know the abundant life that Christ gives."

Hye-Won found classes like Rev Kwok Wai's "Building Spiritual Movements" and Dr Raymond Song's "Contextualization" very helpful. "They opened my mind to how to connect with people effectively," he says.

The intercultural community also boosted his confidence. "I find it hard to open up," he adds, "but they would wait to hear what I had to say."

"I'm grateful to be part of a small group that prays and does ministry together, and for my mentoring group leaders; Rev Jacob is very empathetic and affirms me, and Dr Keith is very funny – his humour is infectious."





The journey not the destination matters.

(T. S. Eliot, poet, essayist, Nobel Prize Literature laureate in 1948)

“I’m here for the ride,” says Lee Poh Chin, principal-mentor of an international school ministry in Kampong Speu, Cambodia, before she came to EAST.





The PhD holder in Human Movement and Exercise Science from University of Western Australia wanted a school that prepares her to serve among Khmer people. “EAST has not disappointed me,” she says.

“Rev Kwok Wai’s teachings on ‘Spiritual Movements’ opened my eyes to the many ways of sharing Christ; Dr Raymond Song’s ‘Honour and Shame’ class taught me to plant love, not guilt; and lessons on ‘Soul Care’ restored restedness to my soul.”

In a world culture where people are preoccupied with life, Poh Chin finds EAST “refreshing.”

This lover of children’s classics and a good conversation appreciates how professors allowed her to “analyse issues for myself,” and administrative staff who were ever willing to stop to help.

“I learned a lot from absorbing goings-on around me,” says Poh Chin, “and the many random words of wisdom.” “Once Dr Raymond Song said in passing at

one of the chapels: ‘Doing assignments is also worship.’ I had just complained to God that morning about assignments!”

The 18-year primary school teacher in Singapore confides that she has also been inspired by her younger classmates.

“Brandon (Singapore) is a model of focus; Anj (Philippines) puts in 100% in what she does; and Mikeel (Philippines), he’s full of service. In my first semester when we didn’t even know one another well, he sent me links to files without my asking, and even wished me on my birthday,” says Poh Chin.

“The journey at EAST has given me head, heart, hands – and may I add, new habits – to carry me back to the mission field.”



Sometimes the most scenic roads in life Are the Detours You didn't mean to take.

(Angela N. Blount, award-winning author)

Many classes at EAST have blessed Anj.

“Amy Lau’s ‘Bible Study Methods’ taught me to study God’s Word contextually,” says Anj, “and Dr Jeannette’s ‘Teaching’ class showed me how to write lesson plans.”

“These and many other classes are important for my future ministry,” she says.

But to move forward, Anj discovered that she had to also take a few steps back to “unlearn and learn.”

“My parents separated before I was born,” says the former film-maker and event-planner. “Because Mama loved us well, I didn’t miss Dad’s absence.” But as she grew older, she grieved for a father’s affirmation and protection.

“To cope, I resorted to denials, and approval from the world – even after becoming a believer,” she continues. “Before I recommitted my life to Christ, I drank, smoked, and worked non-stop in the company I set up.”

“EAST is the field where I found healing and bloomed,” says Anj.

The renovation program kicked in as soon as she arrived in Singapore, when all visitors had to be in isolation for two weeks because of Covid-19.

“But I never felt lonely,” says Anj. “Dr Roland (then Dean of Students) sent someone to check on me daily, PIM faculty Josephine Lam decorated my dorm room, and Amy Lau welcomed me at the hotel when quarantine ended.”



Sarah Angela Ong Pantaleon (Philippines), 36, MDiv Christian Ministry



"Through them I saw God's fatherly love, and felt like a child again."

And so over the last three years, Anj grew within the context of building relationships in the EAST community.

She is grateful for her "home" at the dorm, "sharing chores and praying regularly with the gals." She loves that many teachers "are like fathers and mothers," and shared their families with her.

"I love watching Rev Jacob play with his son; or eating ice-cream with Dr Roland and Ying Kheng's daughter, son-in-law and granddaughter; or observing how Dr Ben and Jo relate to their children, with no hiding of imperfections."

"At EAST I felt the Father-heart of God; now I want to bring this powerful redeeming love to a lost and broken world."



dinner with Dr Roland's family and fellow students



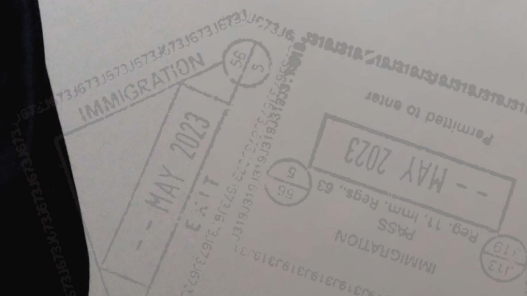


THE WORLD IS A book ,
and those who do not travel
read only one page.

(Saint Augustine)

Japheth Chew is no stranger
to road trips.

Before EAST, he had lived in
Brisbane (Australia), Kansas
City (USA), and Swansea
(Wales) for missions, worship
and prayer training.





“The first school chapels were a struggle to me,” he continues with a smile. “Let’s say I was used to more expressive worship and prayers.”

But God used the differences to build in him a deeper appreciation for diversity. "God wants to use diversity to fulfil the Great Commission."

Another disequilibrium was how he was taught to study the Bible. “I used to read the scriptures emotionally,” says Japheth, “but here I learned to study God’s Word in context.”

"Recently I attended Amy Lau's 'New Testament Epistles and Revelation' class – it was taught systematically and contextually. But God's Word came alive. It was inspiring!"

This early exposure has given him a hunger to “keep learning new things.”

"God has used the welcoming community at EAST to expand my Christian worldview," says Japheth.

"My first dorm-mate and navigator, Mikeel (Philippines), softened my landing. Professors who let me ask questions freely challenged my thinking. And classes like Dr Samuel's 'Leading Multicultural Teams' showed me how to question my ethnicity in partnerships."

The self-professed extrovert appreciates the school's outreach program that involves both faculty and students. "Like ministering in Sarawak, and distributing gospel goodies in the school's neighbourhood."



BLESSINGS ON YOUR JOURNEY AHEAD

FROM
FACULTY
MENTORS


Japheth, it has been such a blessing to mentor one so eager to learn and develop. The Lord will use you in great ways as you follow him in faith! Your brother in Christ,
Jarred Jung

Hak-Soo, It has been a joy to see how God has sustained you through difficult challenges that you have faced. But like gold, your faith has been purified. Not yet perfect, but being perfected by God. Keep shining for the glory of God. God bless you, Dr Raymond Go


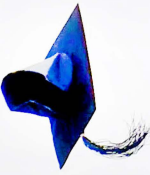


Ok-Hee, I wish you all the best in the journey ahead of you. May Abba Father grant you the wisdom, discernment, strength & provisions that you need to be and do the things He has in store for you,
Margaret Chan





Congratulations, dear Anj! You have demonstrated competency in communicating God's Word, teaching, and leadership. Your creativity, administrative skills, and compassion would be a blessing to those you serve with. Our MG will miss you dearly, especially your laughter, savoury dishes, and love! Josephine Lew



Hye-Won, although you come across as being the quiet one, I am often moved by the wonderful insights you share during our Mentoring Group time – insights from God's Word and from life. Your fun side has brought much joy and laughter to those around you. Keep serving the Lord, Hye-Won, by being who you are, Rev Jacob Li

Poh Chin, over the past three years I have appreciated your desire to be a lifelong learner, your desire to share the Good News with people you meet, your heart to bless ministry partners in Cambodia, and your humor that lightened the hearts of fellow Mentoring Group members,
Your friend, Dr Jeannette Shubert



PARTNER WITH EAST TO DEVELOP CHRISTLIKE SERVANT LEADERS

EAST has just celebrated its 30th Anniversary since its inception in 1992. As part of EAST Vision 2030, we are trusting God to 1) raise and equip 10,000 servant leaders for the Great Commission in Asia and beyond, and 2) establish 20 EAST Extension Centres (EEC) and partnerships across Asia.

As we embark on EAST Vision 2030, we invite you to partner with us to train God's servant leaders to expand His kingdom through our faculty, staff, alumni, students, and their ministries.

You can give to:



MOST NEEDED (MN)



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