

"...whatever you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others well."
2 Timothy 2:2 (NRSV)

THE *SOURCE* NEWSLETTER

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Equipping Christian
leadership for church
and society in
developing nations

New Opportunities Emerge in Vietnam

The church in Vietnam has grown over the past 30 years, even without formal theological education, and with the restrictions of a communist government. However, new policies have now made it possible for the registered church to start a Bible school, with up to one hundred students able to enroll each year. With a national population of 84 million and an Evangelical church of approximately 1 million, this is only a beginning, but it is a very encouraging one. The faculty are senior pastors, who fully acknowledge that they are not academically qualified to teach the program. Faculty development is therefore a great need!

What about the "non-registered" church? While in Vietnam recently, our president, Gordon T. Smith, met with leaders of the registered church, but also with numerous unregistered 'house' churches, and the mission leaders who serve them. They are all deeply committed to theological training. In their case, though, the programs are not accredited or registered; and they do not lead to a degree. Yet they fulfill a vital and critical need, a necessary complement to the formal program of theological education that is run by the registered Evangelical church.



Students at the Institute for Bible and Theology (IBT) in Ho Chi Minh City

How is *reSource*
Leadership involved
in all this?

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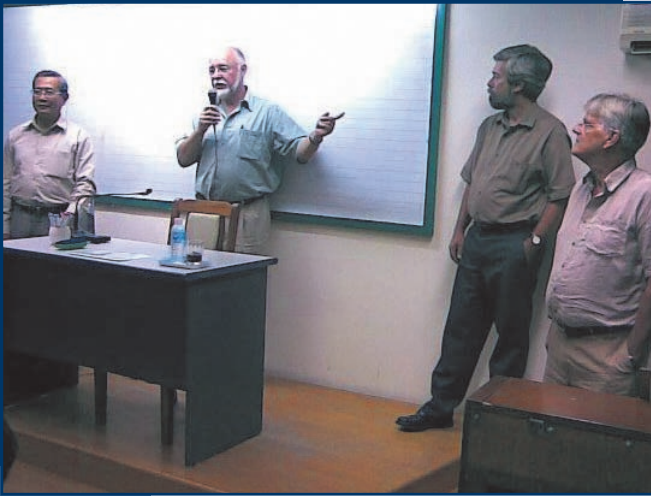
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Our involvement in the Vietnam Project

reSource Leadership have been asked by a group of church and mission leaders to facilitate a conversation about the future of theological education in Vietnam.

As this newsletter goes to press, Dr. Smith is in the midst of the final arrangements for a consultation that will be held in Bangkok October 15 – 19 on the future of theological education in this country. He will co-chair the discussion with Reg Reimer, veteran

missionary to Vietnam and special representative of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada to the persecuted church.



Reg Reimer introducing Dr. Smith to the students at IBT

each denomination or church group does not feel the need to have their own, independent program of theological training.

We value your prayers, and your financial support, that makes it possible for *reSource* to play this role in supporting the church in this needy country.

Reg and Gordon will facilitate a conversation that will seek to:

- Get an overview of what is happening in theological education in Vietnam.
- Affirm the need for both formal (accredited, degree granting) theological education and non-formal, unofficial education.
- Explore means by which more collaboration could happen between church groups – so that



VIETNAM FACTS

- Governed by the Communist Party
- The world's second largest exporter of rice
- Population ~ 84 million
- Main religion ~ Buddhism
- Main Christian denomination ~ Catholic
- Evangelical Christians ~ approx. 1 million

Sharing our wealth -- Library resources

Most of us don't have to go far to have a wealth of Christian literature at our fingertips. For most Christians - our brothers and sisters in the developing world - this is not the case. *reSource* is committed to developing good libraries, as they are essential to good theological education. They produce more discerning students, and in turn, a more discerning church.

Through *reSource* you have many opportunities to invest in libraries. This fall we seek to raise support for the following:



Baptist Theological Institute (BTI), Romania Library and Personnel Training: CDN \$ 67,800

A major investment is required to assist BTI in an upgrade to the operation of their seminary library. There are four components to the project:

- Library director training
- Library management software
- Collection development
- Facility renovation and upgrading

(To date we have raised \$ 21,850 for this project, and we are now seeking the remaining \$45,950.)



Macau Bible Institute (MBI) Library Faculty Development: CDN \$ 24,000

We have just completed a library renovation at MBI, and now we are seeking funding to help train their librarian, Shirley Ma. As a new librarian with little experience and no formal training in theological librarianship, she decided to enroll in the M.A. in Theological Librarianship program at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Hong Kong. Shirley will finish her degree within the next 3 years.

(We are seeking \$ 24,000 for this project.)



French Evangelical Electronic Library Project (FEEL): CDN \$ 68,000

While over 338 million dollars of religious books were sold in the US in 2003, French Evangelical publishers produce fewer than 10 Bible reference books a year. Christian publishers for the English language have been prolific, French Christian publishers have not been. The FEEL library will be a complete Bible study and ministry toolbox on CD-ROM for students, pastors, professors, missionaries and committed Christians in the French-speaking world. It will

include Bibles, Bible study notes, Bible dictionaries, commentaries, books on church history, theology and apologetics, devotionals, tools for evangelism and discipleship. Approximately 25% of the library will be French-authored, and FEEL will seek to include African authors too.

(We are seeking \$68,000 for this project.)



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Office Transitions

We have had some notable developments in our office staffing over the past few months. Bruce Hayhoe has concluded his service with us and now works for the Richmond Alliance Church. Evelyn Harrod, who has done an excellent job as our office manager for the last 3 years, has transitioned from full time to part time, and with this transition will now manage our financial accounts.



Some of you have already received an e-mail from, or been on the telephone with, our new office manager, Kjersti McElrea, who joined our *reSource* team in July.

Kjersti, who is Norwegian, comes to *reSource* after serving with Youth With a Mission for 17 years in England and Central Asia. She is married to David (who grew up in Richmond, BC) and they have 2 children. They moved to Vancouver a year ago, and David is now studying at Regent College. Kjersti and her family attend St. John's Richmond, a recent plant from St. John's Shaughnessy Anglican Church.

We are deeply grateful for the multiple and generous ways in which our staff support the work of *reSource Leadership International*.

Board Transitions



At the most recent board meeting, Mr. Richard Loeppky was elected to the board of *reSource*.

Richard has had a long career as an educator, but now runs his own distribution company. He is still passionate about education and coaching, and has a vision to mentor potential leaders to become successful in business. Richard is married to Mary, and they have four children and seven grandchildren. Richard and Mary live in Oliver, BC, and have been involved in many ministries in the church. They recently helped provide a pre-marital counseling program in a church in Calgary.

Check out the *reSource website*: www.resourceleadership.com, which contains a weekly blog posting from our president, Gordon T. Smith – notes and observations on critical issues in theological education and pastoral training for the church today.

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