Dear Colleagues in Theological Education,

May I take this opportunity to express from the bottom of my heart my deep gratitude to Presidents, officers, chairpersons and members of various committees in ATEM, along with principals, member schools and all the readers of this newsletter, for your constant partnership and your enormous contributions during the year 2014. I must confess that all the programs and activities, initiated by ATEM during this year have been possible only due to your full support and encouragement.

This newsletter also brings to you a word of “THANKS” for your continuous patronage for our newsletter. In addition to the ATEM family, many of our overseas partners, friends and organizations very much appreciate this venture which brings us closer to our common purpose - to enhance theological education by every possible means.

It would be interesting and worthwhile to be able to report more of the activities from member institutions. But it is a difficult task for us to collect all those materials. We are able to publish only a few of those activities here although many more are happening out there. We hope other members will use this opportunity to share their activities with the members of our fraternity.

I am so glad that ATEM has been moving forward steadily year after year amidst of various difficulties. Meanwhile, we regret mentioning that the Myanmar Ecumenical Research Centre (MERC) project, started by ATEM in 2002, has failed due to the sudden financial crisis that began in 2009. The land for the building donated by Myanmar Baptist Church Union (MBCU) was taken back in August 2013. ATEM owes its gratitude to MBCU for its generous gift as well as its long patience since ATEM is not in a position to continue the construction work.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our international partners, agencies and churches for their continuing support. At the same time, we also apologize sincerely for the irregularity of the newsletter because of limitations in the office. This present issue covers from January – December 2014.

I send you my warm wishes for a blessed and safe year 2015 and a good continuation of your ministry in your respective institutions and ATEM.

Rev. Dr. Lal Tin Hre
Executive Secretary
ATEM TRIENNIAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The 12th Triennial General Assembly of ATEM was held at Myanmar Ecumenical Sharing Centre (MCC) on 31 January 2014, attended by 48 representatives from member schools. There are 33 member schools in ATEM family in 2014, with one Free Gospel College leaving. The Outreach Bible (FGOBC) is no longer a part of the ATEM family since 2013. Here are some important decisions made by the 2014 Assembly.

- Adopted the revised and updated version of ATEM Constitutions, Rules and By-laws (in Myanmar) for free distributions.
- The Assembly appointed officers, chairpersons and committee members for the term 2014-2017 as follows.

**Office Bearers**

- President: Rev. Dr. Samuel Ngun Ling
- Vice President (1): Rev. Kyaw Tun Lin
- Vice President (2): Rev. Dr. San Myat Shwe
- Executive Secretary: Rev. Dr. Lal Tin Hre
- Secretary (1): Rev. Dr. L. B. Siama
- Secretary (2): Rev. Dr. Khin Swe Oo
- Treasurer: Sayama Sin Lar Pye

**Higher Theological Education Committee**

1. Rev. John Thet Lwin - Chairperson (HCTC)
2. Rev. Lal Nei Ham (BTS)
3. Saya Mar Bwe Gyi (MICT)
4. Dr. Eh Ta Gay (MIT)
5. Rev. Dr. Aye Aye Maw (MICT)

**Finance & Property Committee**

1. Rev. Dr. Pa Sang – Chairperson (BTS)
2. Sayama Sin Lar Pye, Treasurer (ACTS)
3. Dr. En Cin Pau (ANTS)
4. Rev. Van Ding Lian (LTC)
5. Rev. Dr. Tha Suh (PKTS)
6. Sayama Naing Naing Oo (MIT)
7. Sayama Hkawn Tawng (HCTC)

**Theological Literature Committee**

1. Saya Than Zaw Moe – Chairperson (PKTS)
2. Rev. Dr. Van Kung (MEI)
3. Sayama Lwan Thu (MIT)
4. Saya K. Zau Nan (MIT)
5. Rev. Tin Min Tun (MICT)
6. Saya John Nei Cuang (BTS)  7. Saw Gay Ka Baw (KBTS)

**National Accreditation Promotion Team**

1. Rev. Dr. Ngurliana – Chairperson (MTC)
2. Rev. Dr. Samuel Ngun (MIT)
3. Rev. Dr. Saw Than Win (KBTS)
4. Rev. Dr. Lal Tin Hre (ATEM)
5. Rev. Dr. San Myat Shwe (HCTC)
6. Rev. U Kyaw Moe (MICT)
7. Rev. Dr. Thein Shwe (KTBTS)
8. Saya Allan Poo (MIT)

❖ **The 35th ATEM Member:** The Assembly gladly welcomed and accepted Northern Shan State Union Christian College (NSSUCC), Lashio as the 35th member school in ATEM. Congratulations! NSSUCC was founded in 1995 by Northern Shan State Union Baptist Association, headquartered in Lashio. The college offers BTh dual program – in Chinese and in English. Rev. Kyaw Tun Lin, Vice President and ATEM Executive Secretary visited NSSUCC on 15-17 January 2014. Rev. Kam Sian Thang serves as principal of the college.

ACCREDITATION MATTERS

❖ **Chin Christian Institute of Theology (CCIT):** Upon an official request of CCIT (formerly known as ZTC) and the recommendation of ATESEA, three local accreditation members, Dr. Henry Siang Kung, Dr. Lalramzauva and Dr. Lal Tin Hre, paid a visit to CCIT for the re-accreditation of its MDiv program in January 21-23, 2014. The ATESEA visit (in 2010) re-accredited the BTh program and to hold in abeyance the accreditation of its MDiv program. The finding and recommendation submitted by the local team has approved by the Executive Committee meeting of ATESEA and re-accredited CCIT’s MDiv program. Congratulations!

❖ **ATESEA Accreditation Visit:** The following accreditation members from ATEM were invited by ATESEA to help accreditation visit to schools in the Philippines, from June 28 – 5 July 2014. Each participant had a chance to visit two schools.

1. Dr. Law Ha Ling (CCIT)  3. Dr. Saw Lincoln (KTBTS)
2. Dr. Eh Tar Gay (MIT)  4. Dr. Lal Tin Hre (ATEM)
The team renders its heartiest thanks to the ATESEA and Dr. Limuel Equina, Executive Director of ATESEA, for inviting those local accreditation members to be part of this important task.

**Local Accreditation Visit:** An official request, submitted by Dr. Nathan Perng, principal of Lahu Theological Seminary, Kyaing Tone, to visit LTS, was gladly welcomed by NAPT and appointed Dr. Ngurliana, Chairperson of NAPT, Dr. Samuel Ngun Ling, ATEM President and Dr. Lal Tin Hre, ES, to share the accreditation standard of ATESEA for BTh program.

The visit and sharing took place on 15 October 2014 in the library from 9:00am to 4:00pm. It was really good arrangement, a kind of orientation for the forthcoming ATESEA visit Myanmar. The team members want to thank the principal (the seminary) for their warm hospitality during the visit and appreciate for seminary’s rapid growth in various aspects during these few years. I personally believe that LTS sets good example for the rest schools, especially ATESEA member schools which have not yet accredited BTh program by ATESEA. (*LTS earned membership in ATESEA in early of 2014*).

**TRAINING/WORKSHOP PROGRAMMES**

With the financial support from our constant partner churches and organizations, the following training and workshop programs have been successfully conducted by ATEM in 2014. ATEM, sponsoring bodies and member schools regard these are part of faculty development.

**Research & Teaching Methodology Workshop:** With the aim of strengthening and empowering teaching faculty members in terms of teaching and research skills, *Research & Teaching Methodology Workshop* was successfully initiated by ATEM in March 10-12, 2014.

The workshop was opened with a meaningful meditations led by Rev. Kyaw Nyunt, Pastor of Judson Church, Yangon. 33 participants from member schools attended the workshop. Various topics have brought by three resource persons by the names, Dr. Ngurliana, principal of Myanmar Theological College, Mandalay (*Research Methodology I*), Dr. Wati Longchar, Dean of SCEPTR, Kolkata (*Teaching
Methodology) and Dr. Hay Ta Moe, professor of Kayin Baptist Theological Seminary, Yangon (Research Methodology II: Data Collections). Each lecture was followed by questions, answers and discussions.

All the participants expressed how they have benefitted by the lectures and discussions, and look for the second workshop.

❖ **Contextual Theological Conference:** Following the Research & Teaching Methodology Workshop, the first Contextual Theological Conference was held (March 13-14, 2014) at the same location, attended by 62 participants from non and ATEM member schools. The opening worship was led by Rev. Yaw Thet, Brethren Church. In fact, ATEM had organized a theological conference called *Myanmar Theologians’ Fellowship* in 2002 under the theme “Called to be a Community: Myanmar’s in search of New Pedagogies of Encounter”.

With the advice of international friends and sponsors, the name has been changed from *Myanmar Theologians’ Fellowship* to *Contextual Theological Conference*. The aims and objectives of the conference are:-

- Equipping theologians/theological educators and church leaders in a theological orientation for their various ministries
- Facilitating theological interactions and fellowship among theologians or faculty members in the country
- Recovering our own cultural and spiritual resources in our country and making these available for doing living theologies in the country
- Understanding the issues arising in the country and to respond those issues with theological grounds
- To produce theology handbook of Myanmar contextual theologies for faculty and students this is hoped to be a help for their theological inquiry.

Dr. Samuel Ngun Ling, Dr. Ngurliana, Dr. Paul Myint Thet Htin Yah, Dr. N. Tang Gun, Dr. Wati Longchar and Dr. Khawsiama presented their respective papers. It is worth to note that Dr. Aung Mang, former president of Myanmar Graduate School of Theology (MGST) and his wife wholeheartedly supported the conference.

ATEM records its deep thanks in this news letter to Ms Agnete G. Holm, Programme Consultant for Dialogue and Theological Education, and Danmission, Denmark for sponsoring these two worthwhile events.
The Second Writers’ Workshop for Women. This was a joint program of United Methodist Women (UMW), Indian Scripture Promoting Christian Knowledge (ISPCK) and ATEM, held from 10-12 March 2014. 35 participants (male and female) from member schools and churches in Myanmar attended the workshop.

Rev. Khoi Lam Thang, General Secretary of Myanmar Bible Society was invited to lead Inaugural Devotion. Mrs. Praveena Balsundaram from (UMW) and Mrs Ella Nini Sudeep Sunawane, Assistant General Secretary of ISPCK were the main resource persons. Mrs Ella offered a keynote address. The training will help the participants in widening their understanding and knowledge of writing and editing articles, books, newsletters, magazines etc. and understanding the role of an editor, writer/author and publisher.

The topics dealt during the workshop includes, Reading Scripture in context, How to cite references and avoid plagiarism, Writing in context, How to conduct an interview for an article? How to use social media correctly?, Writing articles & Editing & proofreading your work, Writing a book, What writers need to know about the production process, How to choose a topic and develop an outline, Writing as Women from our context, What is writing from your context?, Whom do we publish for? Identifying audiences and avenues, How many kinds of writing are there?

Special thanks are rendered to UMW and ISPCK for their financial support and to Mrs Praveena and Mrs Ella for facilitated the workshop.

Curriculum Development Workshop: was held in September 22-25, 2014 at Dr. Hla Bu Memorial Hall, Yangon. The workshop was opened with an insightful meditation led by Rev. Dr. L. B. Siama, Secretary of ATEM. Rev. Dr. Ngurliana, Chairperson of National Accreditation Promotion Team, offered a keynote address. (The paper will be included in the coming Myanmar Journal of Theology, Vol. 10). Dr. Greg Tabios Pawilen, member of Commission on Higher Education Technical Committee on Educational Leadership and Foundations, Philippines, the invited resource person was the main facilitator.

He brought four lectures on the topics - The ASEAN 2015 Framework for Education & its implications
to Theological education, Curriculum Development Process, Developing Curriculum Standards & Competencies in Theological Education, and Developing Program Standards.

In addition to the lectures, each participating school was given 15 minutes to highlight of their respective curriculum. The lectures, presentations and discussions have resulted suggestions for new curricula for BTh and MDiv programs. We want to record our thanks to Rev. Dr. Dietrich Werner who arranged the funding from the office of ETE, WCC.

❖ Basic Librarianship Training. Theological libraries are essential for theological education. Some theological educators say, “Faculties, students, curriculum and librarians are the cornerstones of a seminary”. However, among the seminaries in Asia, there are very few librarians who have been trained in the library science and theology. Such library science course is very expensive. With the help of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Hong Kong, a number of librarians have been trained and serving in the libraries in their respective seminaries in Myanmar. ATEM records its highest gratitude to LTS in this regard.

Knowing an urgent need of training for those who have no formal training on librarianship, ATEM hold Basic Librarianship Training, which took place in November 10-22, 2014 at Dr. Hla Bu Memorial Hall, Yangon. Rev. John Thet Lwin, Chairperson of HTE-ATEM led an opening devotion. 17 participants from both ATEM members and non-member schools attended the training and the following nine resource persons facilitated the training.

Rev. Alan Po  MIT (Subject Analysis, Information Resources, Reference Sources)
Saya Kloo Htoo      MIT (Theological Library: Nature and Service, Bibliographic Data Collection, Bibliographic Data Collection, Management)
Saya Maran Naw Awng Alin Ing Publishing House (Special Talk)
Saya John Thet Lwin HCTC (Preservation & Conservation)
Sayama Daw Ni Ni MIT (Classification)
Sayama Nwe Ni Hla MIT (Circulation & Promotion)
Sayama Ni Ni Naing University Central Library (Library & Information Technology)
Sayama Than Than Win MEI, MCC (Administration)
Thramu Wah Wah Chit MIT (Special Collection)
The resource persons followed different methodology which encouraged all the participants to take part actively in all sessions. A special visit (tour) to the Central Library of Yangon University was arranged for the trainees. It is good to hear from the participants, expressed their thanks for the training program initiated by ATEM and shared how they have been benefitted from the training. ATEM renders its heartfelt thanks to the resource persons for their absolute commitment for the success of the program and to Danmission for its sponsorship.

❖ **Reading the Bible With New Eyes**, held from 18-20 November 2014 at Bethany Theological Seminary, Bogone-Insein. It is worth to mention that BTS provided all the facilities for the workshop without any charges.

The workshop was sponsored by Common Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ (USA). Two well-known Biblical scholar and authors from India, Rev. Dr. Dhychand Carr and Rev. Johnson Ashok Kumar, participated in leading the conference. 18 participants (out of 25 candidates) from member schools and churches attended the training. It was really an insightful training in regards to our approach of the Bible, especially the emphasis on reading the Bible from the perspective of the poor and the oppressed. ATEM facilitated many seminars/workshops with Dr. Dhychand Carr as a resource person. We record our sincere thanks to the sponsor and the resource persons.

❖ **National Conference on Hermeneutics from Palestinian Perspective, Bangalore**: With the invitation and the decision made by First Excom Meeting of ATEM, the Executive Secretary attended National Conference on Hermeneutics from Palestinian Perspective in Bangalore, India from 14-16 August 2014. The conference was initiated by Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore (BTESS).
A good number of papers were presented by resource persons including three scholars from Palestine. The current issue in Palestine, a conflict between Israel and Palestine is explored from various perspectives. A statement “Justice and Justice Alone: A Call from the Indian Theological Fraternity” is issued by the conference. (See in MJT Vol. 10). During and after the conference, ES met three important persons for different purposes - Rt. Rev. Dr. Issac Mar Philoxenos, Serampore Senate President, Dr. David Selvaraj, the Director of Visthar Academy of Justice and Peace, Bangalore, and Sudipta Singh, Program Secretary: Empowerment and Training, Council for World Mission (CWM) at Dr. David’s resident.

The 9th Ministers’ Institute: Ministers’ Institute is one of the programs initiated jointly by Mekong Mission Forum (MMF) and ATEM since 2006 with the following aims and objectives:

1) to share new insights, new knowledge in the practical field of theological education with the ministers in the parish.
2) to strengthen the ministers in their office of ministry.
3) for mutual support between theological educators and ministers.

The 9th Ministers’ Institute was successfully held on 12-13 December 2014 at Bethel Theological Seminary Kalaymyo. 18 participants (pastors, ministers) from different denominations, Baptist, Presbyterian, Independent Presbyterian and Lutheran Church in Tahan, joined the seminar. The Institute was inaugurated by Rev. Dr. Bernard Luai Hre, former principal of BTS and translator of the Bible into Khualsim dialect.

The main theme the Institute, “Healthy Family” was explored by the resource persons, Rev. Dr. Wayne Leo Niaminen, professor of Pastoral Theology in Lutheran Theological Seminary, Hong Kong and his wife Rev. Christa von Zychlin, Co-ordinator of International Students in LTS, HK, focused on Christian Perspective of Sex. MMF and ATEM want to thank BTS for providing rooms and all facilities, and to. Dr. Van Ro Mawi, lecturer of BTS, for interpreting the lectures into Myanmar and Falam-Chin. Rev. Dr. Wayne had an opportunity to preach at El-Bethel Baptist Church, Tahan on Sunday
morning (14 December) and Presbyterian Church, Hmuntha Venglai on the same night on the theme “Comfort My People” (Isaiah 40: 1-4; 42: 8-9).

NEWS FROM MEMBER SCHOOLS (in brief)

• *All Nations Theological Seminary* (ANTS, Than Lyn): Wonderfully completed a three-story building and 24 packages of books have brought by the principal from Australia for its library. The seminary is seeking membership in ATESEA.

• *Chin Christian College*, Haka (CCC, Haka): Began to offer a four-year program of Bachelor of Business Administration.

• *Bethel Theological Seminary* (BTS, Kalaymyo): Celebrated its 25th anniversary on 6 November 2014.

• *Bethany Theological Seminary* (BTS, Insein-Yagon): Accredited its BTh program by Asian Theological Association (ATA).

• *Kachin Theological College* (KTC, Kutkai): Began to offer Bachelor of Music program in 2014-2015 academic year. The college is seeking membership in ATESEA.

• *Kotha Byu Theological Seminary* (KT BTS, Pathein): Began to offer MDiv program in 2014-2015 academic year.

• *Lahu Theological Seminary* (LTS, Kyaing Tone): Accepted as full member in ATESEA.

• *Lisu Theological Seminary* (Litsom, Pin Oo Lwin): Appointed Dr. Ah Li Yang to be a new principal with effect from 2015.

• *Myanmar Institute of Theology* (MIT): Began to launch PhD program since October 2014, and working for upgrading the Institute to Christian University.

• *Pow Kayin Theological Seminary* (PKTS): The former principal Rev. Ko Ko Lay has left the seminary for further studies, but replaced by Dr. Soe Thiha. PKTS offers two-year program of MATS from 2015-2016 academic year.

• *Shan State Baptist Theological Seminary* (SSBTS, Taungyi): Recently laid the foundation of Three Year Constructing Project for New Building.

• *St. Peter Theological Seminary* (Taungoo): Offers Basic Music Course and Basic Computer Course.

• *Yangon Kayin Baptist Theological Seminary* (KK BTS, Ygn): The former principal Rev. Ler Wah was replaced by Rev. Octavius Aye.

• *Tedim Christian College* (TTC, Yangon: Completed building construction of TBCY and moved the college at TBCY, No. 56 (A), Baho Street, Sanchaung. Decided to offer Business management Course (Post-Graduate Diploma) with effect from 2015-16 academic year. The college seeking membership in ATESEA

• *Tahan Institute of Theology* (TIT, Tahan): Seeking membership in ATESEA
• **Tahan Theological College**, TTC, Tahan), completed building construction for faculty rooms, meeting hall, and dining hall with the financial assistance from individuals and Mizoram Presbyterian Synod.

❖ **Graduates in 2014:** ATEM family congratulates the following graduates for their brilliant success of their studies under ATEM channel in 2014.


• **Pau Lian Mang**, Tedim Christian College, Yangon (ThD, Theology, from Divinity School of Chung Chi College, HK). Dissertation topic: “Telic Eschatology: A Quest for Myanmar Theology of Hope”.

• **Ro Hngilh Lo**, Tahan Theological College, Tahan (MA in librarianship, LTS, HK).

• **Val Do Thang**, Bethel Theological Seminary, Taungphila (MA in librarianship, LTS, HK).

❖ **Current Doctoral Students**

• **Thomas Zatel**, Bethany Theological Seminary, Insein (ThD, Theology, LTS, HK -2015)

• **Seng Tawng/Ms**, Myanmar Institute of Theology, Insein (ThD, Old Testament, LTS, HK-2016)

• **Seng Ja/Ms**, Kachin Theological College, Nawng Nang (ThD, New Testament, LTS, HK-2016)

• **Zo Dong**, Lorrain Theological College, Phawkan-Insein (ThD, New Testament, LTS, HK -2016)

• **Lon Thang**, Chin Christian College, Falam (ThD, Theology, LTS, HK-2017)

• **Mar Lar Myint/Ms**, Tahan Theological College, Tahan (ThD, New Testament, LTS – HK -2017)

**ATEM PUBLICATIONS**

The following high-prized books have been published by ATEM with the financial help from ETE, WCC and EMW in Germany. The TLC committee decided and approved by Executive Meeting to sell those titles with subsidized prize to member schools and beyond.

- *The Role of Women in the Ministry of Chin Baptist Church in Myanmar: Towards Equality of Men and Women in Ministry*
- *A Theological Resource Book on Disability*
- *Rice Salad Table: Feminist Theology Resource Book*
- *A Handbook of Theological Education and World Christianity*
- *A Handbook of Theological Education and Ecumenism*
- *Putting Names With Faces: Women’s Impact in Mission History:*
- *Returning to Mother Earth. Theology, Christian Witness and Theological Education: An Indigenous Perspective*

Only few copies of *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms (in Myanmar)* are available in ATEM office.

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**OBITUARY**

**REV. DR. HAU ZA GIN**

(1963 - 2014)

Rev. Dr. Hau Za Gin was born in 1963 at Layshi, Tuikoul village, Lahe township, from U Pao Kho Thang and Daw Chin Nem. From 1968 he began his educational career from Zozang State Primary School. In 1984 he joined State Kachin State and passed his matriculation. During the years, from 1984 to 1990, he did his Bachelor of Theology program at Zomi Theological College (now Chin Christian Institute of Theology), and was ordained on 9 February 2001. From 199-95 he served at Kuki Theological School, Homalin as Vice Principal and at the same time he served as Youth Secretary in Kuki Christian Baptist Convention.

Rev. Hau joined Alliance Biblical Seminary, Manila in Philippines and completed his MDiv program in 2000. Since then he was appointed KCBA and TBA as principal of Christian Theological Seminary (CTS) which was jointly initiated by Kuki Chin Baptist Association (KCBA) and Thadou Baptist Association (TBA) until 2008. Rev. Hau did his MTh program under South East Asia Graduate School of Theology-Myanmar Area (SEAGST-M) and graduated in March 2009. While taking as principal of CTS from 2012 he did his doctoral (Doctor f Ministry) from Myanmar Institute of Theology (MIT) and graduated on 8 March 2014. Rev. Hau married with Mrs Neng Nei Hoi and blessed with two children Ms. Lhing Nei Theim (class 9) and Mr. Thang Go Len (class 3).
The family members in ATEM were shocked to hear the sudden demise of our beloved colleague Rev. Dr. Hau Za Gin on 5 July 2014 in Tamu. His untimely death was a great loss for theological education in Myanmar in general and for ATEM in particular. Let’s continue to pray for his family and the seminary he left behind, and seek God’s blessing upon his humble services in the church, association or convention; and also his contributions for enhancing theological education in Myanmar.

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