

Report of the United Board Christian Presence Task Force

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CHRISTIAN PRESENCE AND IDENTITY IN THE WORK OF THE UNITED BOARD FOR CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION IN ASIA:

Introduction to the Work of the Task Force

Remit:

To set out the meaning and relevance of the epithet 'Christian' in the work of the United Board for Christian Higher Education (the United Board), especially in terms of Christian identity and Christian presence, and its significance in relation to the Asianization process.

Process:

There had been an extensive and exhaustive (even 'exasperating', according to the chairperson of the time) discussion of what Christian presence would mean at the meeting of Trustees in November 1998. Hence, it was deemed unnecessary to repeat that process, especially since at the end of that discussion it was decided unanimously to accept both the vision and mission statements as they stood.

Given this fact, the Task Force decided to explore the various ways in which Christian presence was being manifested in the work of the United Board and how it was being received and interpreted on the ground.

With this approach in view:

- We canvassed the opinions of trustees, senior staff, and others who were either involved in or recipients of United Board sponsored programs. Judith Berling has garnered and interpreted these responses which are given in Appendix I as 'Survey of Responses on Christian Presence.' The paper of John Hesselink is a personal reflection on the opinions received.
- D. Preman Niles examined the minutes of previous trustee discussions to see how and when discussions on Christian presence took place and what we may learn from them. This is the third paper in Appendix I.
- Willi Toisuta, who was heavily involved in setting out the purpose and goals of Asianization, and D. Preman Niles have reflected on Christian presence in the Asianization process. This is the fourth paper in Appendix I.
- Angela Wong Wai Ching (China and Hong Kong), Paul Appasamy (India), Willi Toisuta (Indonesia) and Mary John Mananzan (Philippines) have reflected on Christian presence in the context of their own countries. These are given in Appendix II. These are meant to be beginnings of a country-by-country approach, and we hope that in the course of time other countries where the United Board works will be added. We recommend this approach not only because contexts vary but also because United Board programs are concerned to be knowledge-based and knowledge-driven.

The information provided in Appendices I and II was the raw material on which the task force reflected. These two appendices are the plinth for the recommendations that follow and are commended as a 'must read' to the trustees.

A Comment on Method:

In not taking a top-down approach to what Christian presence should mean in the work of the United Board, we have not attempted to define terms. Rather, the approach has been to describe them as they appear in the work of the United Board. In not imposing a predefined uniformity, but rather respecting pluriformity, we have been able to pay attention to the richness of responses that these terms evoke on the ground. These responses are in themselves a witness to the rich heritage and mission of the United Board.

Christians in Asia, by and large, are having a difficult time. Bad behavior, perhaps fuelled by bad theology, from the West is construed as Christian; and Christians in Asia are the targets. At this time, Christian institutions, including those engaged in higher education, are searching for answers to the question, "What does it mean to be Christian in Asia today?" It is with this question in mind and the critical situations in Asia as background that the task force on Christian presence has done its work. In brief, we have seen our task as setting out as best as possible the groundwork for the mission of the United Board at this critical time. Therefore, instead of imposing theological positions from above either from Europe or USA, we have tried to listen to those who have something to say as a response to the witness and work of the United Board.

In allowing voices to speak to us both in their togetherness and in their distinctness, we have the following points to make:

- It is a relief that what we hear from the ground and what the United Board has done in terms of enhancing or strengthening Christian presence in institutions of higher education are not at variance. We perceive the development of a tradition rather than a departure or deviation from the United Board's tradition.
- The United Board has become more ecumenical. We now have Catholics and secularists on the board of trustees. We are co-operating with Catholic institutions and working with secular or state institutions of higher education in Asia. Consequently, we are moving away from rigid confessional theological positions and exploring what Christian presence entails in as broad a way as possible. Such a stance is essential if the appeal of the United Board to donors, stake-holders, and recipients is to continue and succeed.
- Consequently, we see Christian identity in more practical terms. Despite political and social pressures, Christians in Asia by and large do not want to shed their Christian identity, but want to express it in their conversation and co-operation with others in Asia. On the one hand, this means taking a stand against Western imperial powers and stating firmly that these powers do not represent all Christians, especially Asian Christians, and on the other hand, affirming that Asian Christians are part and parcel of Asia. This is a tough and costly witness.
- In this situation, the search is not for what is distinctively Christian, even if that were at all possible without internal Christian controversy and argument, but rather for ways in which we may express common human values that are also deeply-held Christian values, which could provide a basis for conversation with people of other faiths and of no faith. We do not seek to impose, but rather to evoke a response that is humane. Reciprocity is

essential. We should be willing to learn from other traditions as we contribute from our own tradition.

- Finally, reflecting the tradition of the United Board, 'Christian presence' and 'Christian identity' are not so much concepts to be defined as positions to be explored.

A Change of Name?

Time and again, the task force kept stumbling on the rather long and ungainly title 'The United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia'. For the sake of brevity we have used either 'the United Board' or 'UB'. We urge this meeting of trustees to recommend that a small group – trustees, staff and lawyers – come up with a shorter and more felicitous title.

Members of Task Force:

Paul Appasamy
Judith Berling
John Hesselink
Willi Toisuta
Mary John Mananzan
Angela Wong Wai Ching
D. Preman Niles

Report submitted by D. Preman Niles, Convenor of the Task Force
September, 2007

CHRISTIAN PRESENCE IN ASIAN CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION: A Position Paper

Preamble:

The United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia (the United Board) is a Christian organization motivated by a commitment to Christian values, expressed through its venerable tradition of Christian higher education in Asia. Such expression takes place primarily, though not exclusively, through Christian institutions of higher education. The United Board refers to this expression of Christian values in higher education as Christian presence.

Christian Presence:

The work of the United Board embraces a rich variety of situations across Asia, where Christians are a minority. Given this situation, the expression of Christian presence attempts to be sensitive to the wider social, religious, and cultural contexts. Therefore, instead of using narrow, exclusivist, and often misunderstood Christian theological language that often does not communicate, Christian values are articulated broadly as humane values that engage people of other faiths and of no religious faith, drawing a response from them that reflects their rich religious and cultural traditions. We have as much to learn from them as we have to contribute from our religious tradition.

A welcoming and inclusive language communicates well with the broad range of the United Board's partners and external audiences. Moreover, our partners and recipients who are not Christians have noted that the work and language of the United Board effectively witnesses to Christian values.

Christian presence is developed and implemented through encouraging collaboration and research among Asian institutions on vital issues in Asia. Such collaborative research and action empowers Asian leadership in higher education to address structures of injustice, to promote human community, and to care for the environment.

Consequences for Christian Higher Education:

Christian higher education is the fostering of value-based leadership in administrators, faculty, and students, who will serve and contribute to understanding and justice in their societies. It is education that is also accessible to the less advantaged.

Christian higher education is not exclusively by and for Christians, but is committed to Christian values: liberal and humane education; education of the whole person; moral development of students and faculty. It is education for justice, equality, reconciliation, tolerance, international and inter-religious understanding, service, freedom, peace, and civil culture. In brief, it is education that addresses social, human, and environmental issues.

Christian higher education exemplifies the best practices of education and institutional life, and aspires to education that is not merely and narrowly market and vocationally driven, but educates human beings for fullness of life.

Christian higher education nurtures not only the formation of Christian students, but also the formation of students of other religious and cultural backgrounds, to understand their own religious tradition as well as the religious traditions of others.

The United Board encourages the use of Asian terms, concepts, and traditions to enrich the understanding of Christian presence in higher education, and it supports such development through Asian religious/Christian studies and theology.

The United Board supports educational programs that nurture the above-mentioned values in Christian institutions where they exist, and in educational institutions that aspire to similar educational goals where Christian institutions do not exist.

Recommendation:

Having surveyed the vast array of opinions expressed on Christian Presence in Asian Christian Higher Education, the task force recommends the acceptance of the summary statement given above as a position paper to guide United Board staff and trustees in initiating and planning programs and projects.

(Revised)

CHRISTIAN PRESENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN ASIA: A Theological Basis

Preamble:

Based on the various responses that the task force on Christian presence has received, it has put together the statement that follows as a theological explication of Christian presence as understood at the present time.

Statement:

The United Board is a Christian organization that works through institutions of higher education in Asia to manifest Christian values, which are also deeply held human values, such as justice, reconciliation and harmony between ethnic and religious communities, care for the environment, and civil society. The United Board commits itself to the practice of these values and roots them in the Christian faith. It calls this manifestation of deeply held human values through the Christian faith as promoting and supporting Christian presence in Asian higher education.

There are three inter-related aspects to Christian presence through which Christians identify themselves. First, it is a witness to God's rule (Kingdom of God) inaugurated in Jesus Christ as a realm of hope for the least. It is posed as an alternative to those whom the empires of the world consider expendable. Second, it is a witness to the Crucified and Risen One through whom is revealed God's sacrificial love and redeeming grace that calls for repentance and offers abundant life (eternal life) for all. Third, it attempts to be a reconciling presence (a ministry of reconciliation) that is set within and finds its inspiration in the larger ministry of God reconciling all things to Godself through Jesus Christ. Christian presence is a call to costly discipleship that is sustained by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The United Board understands Christian presence as critical engagement in the various contexts of Asia to question issues and analyze systems that deny justice, sow discord, and permit violence to and within all God's creation. This critical Christian presence finds expression through Christian institutions and committed individuals in programs of higher education in Asia. Christian presence seeks and presents alternatives that affirm life for all: to work for justice and peace over against injustice, violence, crass materialism, and lust for power. In so doing, it hopes to evoke a similar response from other religious traditions through inter-religious dialogue and multi-faith cooperation.

Recommendation:

The task force on Christian presence requests the trustees to accept this statement as a theological explication of Christian presence in Christian Higher Education in Asia as understood at this time.

CHRISTIAN PRESENCE: A Conversation-Starter

Preamble:

The statement that follows is not meant to pre-empt the United Board's already-agreed-upon vision and mission statement. Rather, the intention is to present, in as brief a manner as possible, the purpose of the United Board to outsiders. It is intended to be a conversation starter.

Statement:

The United Board is a Christian organization that works primarily, though not exclusively, through Christian institutions of higher education in Asia to express Christian values such as justice, reconciliation and harmony between ethnic and religious communities, care for the environment, and civil society.

Recommendation:

The task force on Christian presence requests the trustees to accept this brief statement of the purpose of the United Board to communicate its mission to others.

SURVEY OF RESPONSES ON CHRISTIAN PRESENCE

Judith Berling

As I reviewed the comments on Christian presence submitted by trustees, staff, and partners of the United Board, I was struck by their convergence. It is true that the term "Christian presence" has many layers and levels of meaning as interpreted by United Board's stakeholders, but these diverse understandings are not so much contradictory as rich and multi-perspectival, requiring some unpacking of the richness and dimensions of the term as seen from various angles.

This document reports what I learned and gleaned from the various comments, dividing them into three categories: trustees, partners, and staff. In turn, the "partners" category will be discussed in terms of the various countries represented, as the situations of Christianity and higher education differ from country to country.

United Board Trustees:

The comments from trustees exhibited a strong affirmation of and commitment to the centrality of Christian presence to the work of the United Board, and not a little concern about the "tin ear" exhibited by the John O'Donnell report on this topic.

A number of trustees invoked the origin and history of the United Board (the outreach of Christian churches to China) to explain the centrality of this commitment. They also invoked the "long tradition of Christian higher education world wide" and the excellent practices and contributions of Christian institutions in Asia. Several trustees argued that it was "Christian presence" that made the United Board distinctive, and not just yet another institution interested in global higher education.

Trustees commented that "Christian" first and foremost defined the nature and motivation of the trustees as a group: we are a group of Christians with a shared mission, motivated by Christian values and commitments. Those values and commitments shape our priorities and help define what we seek in projects and partners. Beyond that, they noted that there is a venerable tradition of Christian higher education, both in the West and in Asia. This tradition is characterized by deep commitments to the liberal arts, intellectual excellence, education of the whole person, moral development, and development of leadership for a just, humane, and civil society.

The Christian presence we support, trustees argued, is not a proselytizing form of religion, nor one that supports only Christians. It does, however, support Christian values. These values were invoked by virtually all respondents, and although the articulation of the lists differed very slightly, they expressed similar core Christian values: justice, equality, peace, reconciliation, tolerance, forgiveness, international and inter-religious understanding, gender equity, inclusivity, support for the least advantaged, access to education for all, service, development of wise and humane leadership, and positive social change.

Trustees affirmed that these values are inculcated across the curriculum of the university and in all aspects of university life; thus we support the full range of higher education. On the other hand, many noted that in cultures where Christianity is a tiny and struggling minority, not always well understood by the larger society, it is also important to support the formation of Christian character and faith through chaplaincy and other explicitly religious programs and to support the development of Christian studies and theology. The fields of Christian studies and theology are developing contextualized understandings of the legacy, meanings, and contributions of Christianity in its Asian contexts, and helping Christians to understand themselves as simultaneously Christian and Asian.

Finally, several trustees affirmed very strongly that in parts of Asia where Christianity is an often beleaguered minority, the affirmation of Christian presence as part of the United Board's mission is a crucial form of support for these communities. Moreover, our relatively liberal Christian presence gives witness that Christianity need not be absolutistic, rigid, or proselytizing. As one trustee pointed out, in some contexts, "Christianity" is misunderstood as a highly aggressive form of Westernization and Americanization imposed on others; the work of UB is an effective witness to a more inclusive and less "colonial" form of Christian presence.

Partners:

Interestingly, all of the responses of United Board partners came from countries where Christianity is very much a minority, and in some cases an extremely beleaguered one.

A partner from India stressed UB's Christian presence as a commitment to service-learning and gender sensitivity, so that "Christian colleges can permeate society." This person saw the UB's commitment to service and gender justice as a way of helping Christian colleges make a positive contribution to the betterment of Indian society.

Scholars from China stressed our support for Religious Studies (including Christian Studies), which has helped to recast the understanding of "religion" in Chinese culture. Another stressed our support for less advantaged and weaker institutions as a means of developing a more just and inclusive Chinese society. One Chinese Christian stressed the Christian motivation (love, service, hope) behind the specific programs supported by United Board.

Partners from Cambodia and Vietnam also invoked the sense of service, caring, and "friendship" that underlies UB programs; one partner spoke of "walking with" the people in Cambodia toward their dignity and betterment. These scholars noted that it was crucial that UB did not "force" grantees to be Christian or participate in Christian worship, that we gave grants to non-Christians as well as to Christians. In this way, UB was seen as "not narrow" in our Christianity, but a witness to humane values, to peace, goodness, and freedom. These non-Christians sensed a Christian witness that was inspiring, rather than threatening or coercive.

Clearly, non-Christian recipients from non-Christian cultures perceive and understand the presence of Christian or humane values in the mission and programs of the United Board. But in these contexts, it is imperative that the "Christianness" of

the values be witnessed through the character of our actions and not trumpeted in a proselytizing manner.

Staff:

Staff input stressed the notion of service as both a motivation and an outcome of the UB's mission in Asia.

One staff member traced the history of "Christian higher education" in the UB programs, noting that earlier programs more overtly stressed liberal arts education. As in current thinking, the motivation for the programs was a Christian commitment to values of equity, humane leadership, tolerance, and reconciliation. This person noted that non-Christian grant recipients sometimes ask why they are recipients of grants from a Christian organization. The very question demonstrates the quiet "witness" of "Christian" in our name, for it sparks recipients to think about the Christian motivations of the program and to consider a different sort of Christian presence or witness than they have seen from some other Christian organizations.

Summary: Understandings/Clarification of Christian Presence:

The United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia is a Christian organization motivated by a commitment to Christian values and the venerable tradition of Christian higher education.

Christian higher education, as we understand it, is not exclusively by and for Christians, but is committed to Christian values: liberal and humane education; education of the whole person; moral development of students and faculty; education for justice, equality, reconciliation, tolerance, international and inter-religious understanding, service, freedom, peace, and civil culture; education accessible to the less advantaged; education addressing social, human, and environmental issues.

Christian higher education, as we understand it, is not a form of evangelism, but rather the fostering of value-based leadership in administrators, faculty, and students, who will serve and contribute to understanding and justice in their societies.

Christian higher education nurtures the formation of its Christian students, but also the formation of students of other religious and cultural backgrounds, both to understand their own traditions well and to understand other religions.

Christian higher education exemplifies best practices of education and institutional life, and aspires to education that is not merely and narrowly market- and vocationally-driven, but educates human beings for a fullness of life.

The United Board supports the development of Asian understandings of Christian identity and Christian education through supporting Asian religious/Christian studies and theology.

The United Board supports educational programs that nurture the above-mentioned values in Christian institutions where they exist, and in educational institutions that aspire to similar educational goals where Christian institutions do not exist.

A REFLECTION ON CHRISTIAN IDENTITY:

Some Initial Reflections on Christian Identity in Relation to the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia

I. John Hesselink

Note the terminology. I have moved from "Christian Presence" to "Christian Identity." "Christian Presence" sounds nice and expresses a certain Christian value, but as some of our trustees have noted, it is vague and by itself tells little of what UBCHEA is about. An article in the *Christian Century* by Rowan Williams, archbishop of Canterbury, further prompted me to make this switch. It was titled "Identify Yourself." I will only quote his opening lines: "How do we as Christians identify ourselves? We carry the name of Christ."

Here we have a significant pointer. As some of our members have pointed out, in certain cultures—perhaps even in North America—the name Christian evokes negative, if not hostile reactions. In Japan several years ago a poll revealed that many Japanese had a poor image of the church, a better one of Christians, and a very positive one of Jesus Christ. There may be a lesson for us as we seek once more to define our mission. I am not suggesting that we drop the word Christian from our literature (as proposed by the O'Donnell group), but we might well focus on the person of Christ and his kingdom more than on the somewhat amorphous term 'Christian.'

There was considerable agreement on the part of our respondents concerning what were deemed Christian values to which we are dedicated, such as social justice, peace, concern for God's creation, gender issues, and inter-faith dialogue. But none of these concerns is distinctively Christian. Our promotion of service-learning may reflect a more explicitly Christian value, but even this salutary program is not necessarily unique.

In any case, we must not think in terms of Christian identity apart from our heritage, on the one hand, and our Asian context on the other. The promotion of Asian theologies is appropriate, but our main business is that of strengthening a Christian perspective in the institutions we serve, not in trying to develop an Asian theology as such. Although our interests are far-reaching, they should not be over-reaching. In this regard, we must learn to listen and not always assume that "father knows best." Although our board has a significant Asian mass, we must recognize that whether Asian or North American, we are an elite group. This means, among other things, that we must beware of favoring well-established elite institutions to the neglect of those smaller and less prestigious institutions which are not represented by our board members. Humility is a distinctive Christian attribute. The way in which we relate to our partners should reflect this Christian virtue.

We are not an evangelistic or proselytizing organization, but we should have clear convictions about the gospel, which etymologically signifies the good news that "in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself" and has "entrusted to us the message of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:19). That core conviction should work itself out in deeds of love and compassion. This means that to be Christian in our relations to schools in Asia, the way in which we dispense funds and follow-up the

efficacy of grants and scholarships should reflect these fundamental virtues of compassion and love. To cite scripture again, like our Lord, our mission is "not to be served but to serve" (Matthew 20:28). This also means that we must be effective and responsible in the way we carry out our business. In other words, we must be models of the virtues and values we espouse. There is no excuse for sloppy *agape*!

How we work out our mission will vary, depending on the nature of the school with which we are involved. In some cases, we can seek to strengthen theological departments, chaplaincies, biblical studies, etc., but in countries where schools are of necessity secular or pluralistic, we must be extremely sensitive in promoting and enhancing what we consider to be Christian values. In any case, if we are asked why we do what we do our response might well be "the love of Christ impels us" (NAB tr.).

This may be too theological for some tastes, but that is the price you pay for assigning this task to a theologian. However, as one of the allegedly non-theological members wrote, "Christian education is in the broadest sense theological" and he spelled this out in Trinitarian terms!

I have tried to listen to the various voices of our Board. This contribution is more suggestive than prescriptive, but earlier I did make some suggestions as to what might be opening statements.

SOME LESSONS AND INSIGHTS FROM PAST TRUSTEE DISCUSSIONS ON CHRISTIAN PRESENCE

D. Preman Niles

Reading through the minutes of past trustee discussions, it becomes apparent that the word "Christian" in the title and work of the United Board was tested at several crucial turning points in its history. It is therefore no surprise that at this time we should be testing "Christian presence" and "Christian identity" when several factors, not all of them new, indicating change of direction have come together.

First, the Asianization process has shifted the centre of gravity of programs to Asia so that decisions regarding programs may be knowledge-based and program operations may be knowledge driven, thereby reducing the geographical distance between New York and Asia and reducing unnecessary friction between program decisions and program operations. The desire to have as many from Asia as from the USA in the trustee body has reinforced the trend to viewing Asia not simply as the object of Christian mission from the USA.

Second, though for legal reasons the Hong Kong office is considered an outpost of the New York office, it is in effect the centre of program operations and often also generates new programs to give substance to the Asianization process. A good example is IASACT.

Third, UB has gradually shifted from being a purely grant-making foundation to becoming itself operational. Besides making grants to partner institutions and others on a case-by-case basis, it runs programs in partnership with Asian institutions of higher education, and even has its own programs. Consequently, "development", understood as fund-raising to produce needed financial resources for the work, has taken on greater importance.

Fourth, there has been an increasing growth in relationships with institutions of higher education in secular/socialist nations such as China, Vietnam, Cambodia and now North Korea.

The John O'Donnell group (JOD), which was asked to evaluate the fund-raising potential of the United Board, took into account these critical and important changes of direction. It applauded the work being done; and working on the premise that if small is good, more should be better, it has, among other things, pointed to the liability of continuing to carry the epithet "Christian" when the United Board's real intention is the strengthening of higher education in Asia.

Even independently of the JOD report, trustees began to sense a crucial turning point in the United Board's work and have sought tangible, testable evidence of Christian presence. The Spring 2005 meeting asked that at future meetings, staff presentations should highlight the ways in which each program exemplifies the United Board's mission to promote Christian presence. The Spring 2006 meeting revealed the sentiment that the United Board should clarify the character of "Christian presence", so that it becomes more concrete, attainable, and serves as a marker for success to

excite prospects and constituents. Otherwise, it is difficult for the United Board to measure when it has attained a Christian presence in Asian universities.

It is at this critical period in the work of the United Board that trustees decided to set up a task force to guide the United Board on what is meant by Christian presence and Christian identity. So we look to lessons and insights from past debates.

When several US mission boards working in China on Christian Higher Education merged in 1921, it was a matter of convenience. The basic ideology did not change, even when the United Board moved to founding or supporting institutions of Christian higher education in other parts of Asia after being barred from work in China.

In founding institutions of higher learning as well as schools in Asia, the assumption was that Western education was the handmaid of evangelization, so when students became conscious of the depths of the riches of Western civilization, they would almost automatically embrace the source of that civilization itself, namely, Christianity. In fact, while Asians did imbibe much from Western education and civilization, they did not automatically become converts. Some did, usually for other reasons, earning the sobriquet 'rice Christians'.

Even after the so-called missionary and colonial period ended, at least in the minds of those in Christian institutions of higher education in Asia, this ideology continued. For instance, at the Fall 1997 meeting, the board was asked to consider a request from its related institutions in East Asia to send Christian teachers from North America to teach various disciplines so that there would be a strong Christian presence in their faculties to maintain their Christian orientation. Though the board agreed to respond positively to this request, there is evidence of some unease with this easy identification of Christian presence with an outworn ideology.

Consequently, at its Fall 1998 meeting, trustees were presented with a mission and vision statement in response to requests from Asian partners for help with the nurturing of Christian presence. The trustees were asked to consider in particular the phrase 'Christian presence' as indicative of a shift in mission focus. There was a wide-ranging debate and discussion in three small groups, and then in the administrative committees, followed by several plenary sessions in which four alternative formulations were considered and found wanting. So the discussion ended where it began, affirming unanimously the given statement: 'The United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia works to support a Christian presence in colleges and universities in Asia.'

Several important perspectives emerged in that debate which are worth noting.

- 'Presence' conveys 'something incarnational'. In this sense it is more than just being present. It is about people being involved. It is also better than 'strengthen' which could convey a triumphalistic sentiment.
- 'Presence' gets us away from mere institution building and puts the emphasis on the presence of Christianity within institutions.
- To emphasize Christian presence is to move from simply responding to the needs of individual institutions to initiatives of the United Board that are

concerned with preparing people for leadership and working on networks of Christian institutions for mutual support and sharing of resources.

- When working with institutions and personnel in secular/socialist countries, it is not just words such as "Christian presence" that would communicate, but rather our history and reputation and our ways of dealing with institutions.

The Spring 1999 meeting of trustees tested the mission and vision statement in terms of actual work, recognizing that with the exception of the Philippines, Christians are a minority in Asian countries. The mission and vision statement could help Christian schools to regain their identity in a post-colonial situation through faculty and leadership development that would strengthen Christian presence. In non-Christian schools, UB has developed trust, so that UB can be up-front about its Christian values and, at the same time, also correct colonial mistakes. In both situations, Christian presence needs to be understood as a concern for human solidarity, refusing to be swayed by extremist religious or racial movements, and being concerned with the welfare of the environment. In doing so, Christians in Asia could be a creative minority and channels for better quality education.

The meeting of trustees in Spring 2000 highlighted a dimension implicit in "Christian presence". Reflecting on the role of Christian academics and students in the struggle for democracy in Asian countries that had been dictatorships, trustees noted that service also involves social and political activism. There is a linkage between service, scholarship, and Christian identity.

Another concern was the process of economic globalization, which was for some, a new name for colonialism, and what Christian presence would mean in Christian and non-Christian institutions of higher education in an era of globalization.

The Spring 2001 meeting of trustees wondered whether carrying the term 'Christian' in the title of "The Asian Christian Higher Education Institute" might limit its ability to function in non-Christian or pluralistic societies. All the Asian trustees were clear that the word 'Christian' did not represent a problem and that Christians need not be timid or apologetic about their role in strengthening Christian presence in Asia.

"The Statement for An Endowment Campaign" presented to trustees at the Spring 2003 meeting brings together most of these insights on Christian presence in a paragraph that is worth quoting in full:

The United Board's mission of supporting a Christian presence in Asian higher education is expressed on Christian campuses through encouraging an unapologetic but non-triumphalistic Christianity, one that is involved in the local culture and open to learning from other faiths. In a world in which many people identify religion with exclusivity and oppression, we bear witness to a welcoming, inclusive Christianity that believes that we Christians have much to learn from those of other faiths, and of no religious faith, as well as much to offer them.

Some concluding remarks:

1. In moving from a colonial to a post-colonial situation, the United Board chose the term "Christian presence" to indicate a shift in mission focus. However, it did not attempt to define the focus narrowly. At the trustee meeting in Fall

1998, it was argued that a narrow focus could exclude some of the important programs in which the United Board was already engaged and in the future, could hinder program growth.

2. The primary shift in focus was to be concerned less with building and maintaining Christian institutions of higher education and more with the building of personnel, both to provide competent leadership and to display a willingness to build up others. Faculty development and service-learning were some of the programmatic expressions of this shift in focus.
3. In secular/socialist countries such as China, Cambodia, Vietnam and North Korea, Christian presence was expressed as Christian service. Besides helping in the founding of strategic institutions of higher education, the United Board was also involved in encouraging and supporting courses on ethics, counselling and religious education, especially Christian studies, to balance purely market-driven courses geared toward business administration, science, and technology. "Actions speak louder than words" has been the motto.
4. Christian presence was also understood as incarnational. A later United Board discussion on curriculum planning expressed this perspective as critical engagement in the context of Asia. It is critical in the sense that Christian involvement would support movements for justice, peace, and care for the environment, and would exhibit a willingness to share with and learn from those of other faiths and no faith in working together for human solidarity and peace, especially in situations of religious extremism and terrorism. The planning of curricula and the building of personnel are to be geared to this end.
5. 'Christian presence' does not need so much definition or even description as exploration. How can Christian presence make a significant difference in academia by pointing to and manifesting signs of hope? UB has already accepted engagement with Asian theologies and cultures as a significant move in this direction.

CHRISTIAN PRESENCE IN THE ASIANIZATION PROCESS

Willi Toisuta and D. Preman Niles

Part of the remit given to the task force was to set out the connection between Christian presence and the process of Asianization.

"Enhancing Christian presence" and "Asianization" had different beginnings in the work of the United Board and had somewhat different concerns in mind. "Enhancing Christian presence" was a recognition of the fact that the era of Christian missions from the West to the East had come to an end and that it was now necessary to encourage and support Christian educators and the Christian institutions that the board had founded to express their Christian commitment. "Asianization" was a response to a post-missionary and post-colonial situation in Asia and was concerned with viewing the task of Christian higher education in Asia through Asian eyes. Both, in different ways, express a shift in perspective. The connection between the two lies not in any philosophical or theological argument or connection, but rather in the fact that at a critical time, Christians in higher education in Asia are not wanting to renounce their faith, but seeking to express their faith in Asian terms.

In this paper, we present some of the salient points at which Christian presence finds expression through the process of Asianizing the approach and work of the United Board.

Christian identity: a challenge factor

There is a complicated and perhaps even irrational response in many parts of Asia to the phenomenon of globalization. Economic globalization, which is part of the larger process of globalization, values human beings essentially in terms of what a person can produce for or consume in the global market. This reduction of humans to mere "economic animals" in economic globalization, as well as the insensitivity of globalization as a whole to Asian cultures and the needs of the less privileged, is triggering resistance in Asia to globalization. For quite a few in Asia, globalization is the return of colonialism in another guise. What is remembered is not only the exploitation of Asian countries by colonial powers, but also the process of modernization which was viewed as having its roots in Western Christian civilization. Those who want to develop a reactionary ideological or constitutional agenda, which includes the "new born" fundamentalists, are capitalizing on this perception. They hold that the problems in Asia are directly attributable to past failures in politics, economics, and the process of democratization which globalization, as a new form of colonialism, is again imposing on Asia. In brief, it is held that Westernization, hence Americanization, hence Christianization, are failures and in fact dangerous. The so-called "war on terror" in Afghanistan and Iraq, perceived as Christian responses, has strengthened anti-western and anti-Christian attitudes. This adverse reaction is visited on Asian Christians. Churches have been burned. In Indonesia a pastor was shot in church while she was preaching. An Australian doctor working in India with leprosy patients was burned to death in his car with his two children. Christians being harassed and harmed in many Asian countries has become a never-ending litany of atrocities.

Yet, for all that, Christians in Asia are expressing their Christian values through their participation in the struggles for justice and democracy. For instance, some Christians have participated in movements of resistance against oppressive governments, especially in Korea, Philippines, India (Indira Gandhi's Emergency government), Indonesia, and Sri Lanka. Some of these have been imprisoned and tortured. Others have been assassinated in extra-judicial killings. Surprisingly, we do not hear of Christians in these countries wanting to shed their Christian identity.

Instead, a small but significant number of Asian Christians want to lead the way in contextualizing their theologies so that they may speak in relevant ways in various Asian situations. On the one hand, they want to express their faith using Asian cultural terms. On the other, recognizing that there is a large silent majority that does not agree with extremists and fundamentalists, Christians are seeking to work with all people of good will to build a society that affirms life over death and brings hope in situations of despair. This double task is a hard grind. However, instead of seeing it as a problem or disability, expressing one's Christian identity in Asia is seen as a challenge. Through the Asian Christian Higher Education Institute the United Board is supporting this movement for expressing one's Christian identity in Asia through institutions of higher education.

Christian presence in the Asianization process: a strategic response

Intrinsic to Asianization is the bridging of both a geographical and a knowledge gap between New York and Asia. The response of the United Board expressed through Asianization is that programs are knowledge-based and their execution is knowledge-driven. In short, real needs, not assumed needs, now govern the work of the United Board. Consequently, we see emerging programs that are relevant, only a few of which we mention below, as strategic responses in expressing Christian presence.

1. The United Board is supporting the theological rethinking that is happening in institutions of higher education. The space and time provided for young Asian scholars to engage in research and writing in the Institute for the Advanced Study of Asian Cultures and Theologies (IASACT) is one expression of this support. Another is the support for programs of religious studies in both Christian and secular (state) colleges and universities. The main reason for this support is that these programs are not merely concerned with purely religious teachings, but rather address broadly human issues and seek ways in which religions, including Christianity, may make a contribution. A searching question in Asia, quite briefly, is as the theologian and ethicist, Paul Lehmann, put it, "What does it take to make and to keep human life human?"
2. Besides the support for religious studies, the United Board has supported the Marine Biology Project at Silliman University, Philippines; the articulation of medical ethics at Yonsei University, Korea; studies on the contributions and needs of women at Ewha Womans University, Korea; and the consultation at the Central University at Hyderabad, India, and its follow-up on a search for alternative economic models. These are a few of the many examples of the initiatives that the United Board has supported.
3. The building of linkages between Christian higher education institutions so that knowledge may be shared is another key facet of Asianization.

4. Instead of spreading thinly the financial resources of the United Board by supporting individual short-term projects submitted by institutions, the United Board is using its financial resources to support broad strategic responses to expressing "Christian presence" in Asia.

In brief, Christian presence in Asianization is about giving an effective witness to the hope that is in us in the wider search for what it takes to make and to keep human life human in the various situations of Asia.

Christian Presence in Asian Universities: Perspectives from China and Hong Kong

Angela Wong Wai Ching

I. The Context

China:

The Three Self Patriotic Movement in China set a new stage for the history of Christianity in China. Despite its political controversy, the movement started from the early 1920s to make a strong statement on what Chinese Christians think regarding the alliance of imperialism and Christian conversion. Because of the interruption of Communist rule in China, UB's original mission to China had to take a different turn and here we are now. While official views on Christianity fluctuates with political changes, relations between the churches and religious studies departments in China and their counterparts abroad have progressed steadily. Christian presence is still suspected when there are instances of aggressive proselytization. It generates tensions among the churches and between the academia and the two Committees (Three Self Patriotic Movement Committee and the Chinese Christian Council). In my view, it is a highly discordant situation with American evangelicals, official churches and government, new converts in the universities and liberal Christians from abroad all competing for influence. Christian presence in this sense is rather messy.

Nonetheless, Christianity has been acknowledged as a positive force in terms of education. Despite their bias in favor of Christian culture and western civilization, early missionaries have been pioneers introducing modern universities and women's education into China. During one of the major modern reforms in China in the twenties, Christian education attracted some of the best minds in the revolutionary years and helped to expand their horizon to the wider world. Women missionaries have been models for women students who grew to become some of the first overseas scholars, teachers, nurses and evangelists who traveled across villages to build contacts with other women. Christian presence in this case meant the opening up of a whole new world to many of the Chinese young people who were desperate for change.

Post-colonial Hong Kong

Hong Kong is still coming to terms with its hundred years of colonial history. Under the blessing of the British colonial government, Christianity built a solid foundation in the Chinese society through Christian schools and social services. Percentage of Christians is about 10%, one of the largest among Asian countries after the Philippines. The various Christian denominations together run over 40 percent of secondary and primary schools, over 60 percent of social services and offer 20% hospital beds in Hong Kong since the seventies. Not only that Christian education has occupied an important position in Hong Kong society but also is recognized as the best service provider. Despite its colonial association, Christian presence in Hong Kong education is positive, sound and, as said before, considered a very good brand.

Ambiguity is seen mostly in the higher education sector. With the lure of government subsidies, Christian colleges such as Chung Chi College and the former Baptist College, or college with a Christian heritage such as formerly Lingnan College, all took on a secular path. There are not many differences between them and a regular secular university in Hong Kong except that they may have more Christians on their Board of Trustees. Chung Chi and Baptist maintain religious studies faculties and all have chaplaincy work. In fact, with increased competition among the universities in Hong Kong for grants and recognition, Christian values can hardly get into any core discussion of the administration either in terms of the philosophy of running a Christian school or its actual operation. Christian presence hardly competes with neo-liberal economic rules.

Most problematic, following the examples of the Christian Right in the States, evangelical Christians are trying to assert their influence in the society by building platforms of conservative alliances against issues of homosexuality and sexuality expressed in the media. They have created much tension in the society among groups of different beliefs and moral practices. Potential conflict is created by aggressive proselytizers with a narrow interpretation of Christian faith and morality. If this development continues, Christian presence could instigate conflict and tension.

2. Christian and Chinese Meaning of Presence

Besides the contextual manifestation of the meaning of Christian presence,

insights could be drawn from revisiting the meaning of the word. The meaning of Presence is *shekinah* in the Hebrew Bible. That is God's encountering of humans face to face. God's encountering of humans may have two effects. It could be a divine presence as salt and light in the New Testament. That is, they are everywhere, not felt or tasted but immersed into their environment, strengthening the "feeling" and "taste" of what is already there. Then there is also the active dimension of the divine presence where Jesus is "present" to address the needs of the least of one's neighbors, the needy and the outcasts. Presence can be quiet but penetrating, confrontational, and critically engaging.

The word "presence" cannot be translated into Chinese. It has no equivalent. In Chinese classics the closest word to "presence" is *zai* (在), which literally means: being there. It could be a designation of location, or an analogy such as the meaning of: "As if fishes swimming in water." In an important Chinese classic *Chuangzi* (莊子), an essay titled "*zaiyou*" (在有) describes a presence that does not intrude. It is amazing to imagine a presence that does not exist! It is called a "generous" (宥) "presence" (在). In another instance, a double use of *zai*—*zaizai* (在在)—is used in *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* (大般涅槃經), an important Buddhist scripture, designating the state of the presence of Buddhist enlightenment by "*zaizai chuchu*" (在在處處), meaning again, everywhere. In both works, presence is free from a fixed location, a fixed usage, a fixed tradition or understanding.

In the Daoist tradition it may be compared to *qi* (breath or air), which simply surrounds us but with no face, no sound, no smell, no taste and no tactile feeling. But it is there for sure. And none, including all plants and animals, can live without it. That is probably the same "breath" that according to the Judeo-Christian tradition God blows into creation in the beginning. Bringing together these few thoughts on presence, we could probably free ourselves as Christians to witness in many unobtrusive and acceptable ways without engaging in aggressive proselytization.

3. The Matter of Christian Identity

The meaning of Christian presence hinges on what we mean by Christian. A former WCC staff from Hong Kong has described Christians as those who walk in response to the call of God. That practically includes all of

us, baptized or not, "believers" or not, journeying toward a divine cause, for the betterment of humanity and the whole inhabited earth. The tradition of "Christian Presence" has an ecumenical background of offering services that are neither conditional nor restricted to Christians but carrying a humanistic concern that takes at heart the well being of the whole inhabited earth. It is built on the prophetic aspect of Christian tradition.

In his proposal in *The Idea of a University* (1959), John Henry Newman defends the study of theology as a necessary component in university education not for the production of orthodox clergy or laity but for forming an educated group who would provide leadership in the whole society. It was the responsibility of the university, contended Newman, to immerse the educated in their cultural heritage, to study ancient classics, and to cultivate in them a liberal "habit of mind," which included the attributes of "freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation, and wisdom."¹

The discussion of Asian theology emerged at the historical juncture of discarding Western imperialism and respecting contextual culture and sociopolitical concerns of local communities. It emphasizes an action-oriented Christianity that cares not just for the expansion of the churches but more for building peace and justice on earth. It is a theological envisioning of a Christian presence that finds its resource and strength in local cultures and traditions and builds a Christian community with the courage, commitment and even sacrifice at times of violence to sustain lasting hope for people in despair. In other words, it seeks to recognize Christians who do not have the word "Christian" written on their forehead, but their works are admired and respected as such. This is a generous presence that may contribute to the transformation of peoples and communities and to convey the Good News everywhere.

4. Christian Presence in Higher Education

According to a UNESCO report in 2002, universities today are key agents of globalization.² The massive expansion in the number of students and

¹ John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University* (Garden City, N.Y.: Image Book, 1959), 111-113.

² Cf. Dirk van Damme, "Higher Education in the Age of Globalization," in *Globalization and the Market in Higher Education: Quality, Accreditation and Qualifications*, ed. Division of Higher Education in UNESCO; 21-34 (Paris: UNESCO, 2002).

universities demands all to function in a highly competitive academic world. This means that all of the elements of academic life, including research, the distribution of knowledge, the students, and the academic profession, are part of an internationally competitive marketplace.³ What makes Asian universities most vulnerable to market globalization is the lack of an indigenous model—all are based on European academic models and traditions. It is most unfortunate that no Asian country has kept, to any significant extent, its pre-modern academic institutional traditions.

Arguably the only visible defense of liberal education seems to have come from private universities and colleges that were mostly funded and some have continued to be funded by Christian missionary boards.⁴ These private universities and colleges provide the last but by no means insignificant venue for a constructive role of Christian presence, defending institutional autonomy, the commitment to building a better society, and the autonomous space to teach, question and learn.

In *Da Xue* (*The Book of Great Learning*, ca. 500 B.C.E.) Confucius says:

What the great learning teaches, is to illustrate illustrious virtue; to renovate the people; and to rest in the highest excellence. ... Things being investigated, knowledge became complete. Their knowledge being complete, their thoughts were sincere. Their thoughts being sincere, their hearts were then rectified. Their hearts being rectified, their persons were cultivated. Their persons being cultivated, their families were regulated. Their families being regulated, their states were rightly governed. Their states being rightly governed, the whole kingdom was made tranquil and happy.

While the order and the hierarchy of virtues may not be understood in the same way today, there are important insights. There is the emphasis on learning as concerned with a whole way of life: one realm closely related to another. "Great learning" is not only about information and data but also about the cultivation of special life qualities to be realized in daily practices. These are aspects that should not be lost. To bring in and allow a local tradition of great learning to impact on the present neo-liberal world of higher education in

³ Philip G. Altbach, "The Past and Future of Asian Universities: Twenty-First Century Challenges," in *Asian Universities: Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Challenges*, ed. Philip G. Altbach and Toru Umakoshi (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 14, 22-24.

⁴ Altbach, "The Past and Future of Asian Universities," 24-26.

Asia could be a wonderful Christian presence for the mission of an organization such as UB.

CHRISTIAN PRESENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION: AN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

Paul Appasamy

Christian higher education institutions in India have a distinguished past. Many of the Indian leaders of the last century were alumni of the liberal arts and science colleges set up by both Catholic and Protestant organizations and mission boards. Despite their links with colonial rule, these institutions were considered to be autonomous institutions of academic excellence. After independence in 1947, the Indian Government significantly expanded the number of institutions of higher education in an attempt to make university education more widely accessible. There have also been attempts to provide "reservation" for historically deprived groups in both government and aided colleges and universities. Quantitative expansion and reservation without much regard for quality have been contentious issues. The mushrooming growth of self-financing institutions – in professional fields like engineering, medicine, and management – has stimulated a new set of debates about the privatization of higher education. Christian colleges have also started self-financing courses, while some churches and religious organizations have started their own self-financing institutions. The notion of Christian Presence or Identity must be seen in this increasingly complex milieu.

Background

Christianity in India dates back to the first century, A.D. with the supposed arrival of St. Thomas the Apostle on the west coast and the subsequent setting-up of the Syrian Orthodox church in what is now the state of Kerala. However, the impact of the church on higher education was a result of British colonial rule of about 300 years ending in 1947 when India became independent. During the British period, there was an uneasy relationship between the colonial rulers (first the East India Company and later the British Crown) and missionaries – Catholic and Protestant. The colonial government did not object to the setting up of educational institutions, since the graduates of these institutions were needed to administer the country. But education also made Indians more conscious of their rights and the need for self-government. Christian higher education institutions faced a dilemma. Should they support or oppose these nationalist currents which were sweeping the country? Virtually all these institutions gradually shifted to having Indian administrators and Indian boards of management. They were able to do so with little impact on quality in the first two or three decades after independence. Christian higher education institutions continue to command the respect of the intelligentsia, and many are still considered to be elite institutions. However, government policies have significantly affected the functioning of many of these institutions.

Government Policies

Since the economic development of India was contingent on a highly skilled workforce, the Government substantially increased the number of colleges and universities. They also started elite institutions like the Indian Institutes of Technology, Indian Institutes of Management and Central Universities. The University Grants Commission (UGC) liberally financed many of the existing colleges and universities in the country. India is a federation of States, and education is a concurrent subject under the Indian constitution. Except for the central institutions, most of the colleges and universities come under the jurisdiction of the

respective State Governments. Universities in India are statutory bodies set up by the State legislatures. Consequently, University administration is strongly influenced by the political class and the bureaucracy at the State level. Financing of higher education is controlled by the State and Central Governments.

India still follows the affiliation system whereby colleges are affiliated to a University in their respective states. To provide greater flexibility, the UGC came up with a scheme of autonomous colleges which provides scope for innovative courses and syllabi, though the degree is granted by the University. Many of the Christian Colleges in Tamil Nadu have this status. The next step is for them to apply for "deemed to be" university status, when the institution can grant its own degrees as in the U.S.

More recently, the Indian Parliament passed the Private Universities Act, which permitted private institutions to become universities, outside the control of the State Governments. However, their programs would have to be accredited by the relevant regulatory bodies, such as the All India Council for Technical Education. Quality is assessed by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) on a voluntary basis. There are a few private Christian Universities in the country.

It is necessary to mention two important government policies that have affected the functioning of all higher education institutions – financing and reservations.

State Financing of Higher Education

Most, but not all, Christian colleges in India are "aided" institutions. They still have their own boards of management, but much of the budget is provided by the Government. The ostensible purpose is to keep fees low, to make higher education accessible to all sections of the population. Salaries and tenure of faculty are also fixed by the Government. In Indian jargon, this is known as "the UGC scale". Boards of Management have limited control over their faculty in many colleges. Boards in essence have become agencies of the Government with very limited power to manage their institutions.

Reservations

Many State Governments introduced reservation of seats based on caste, in order to assist the deprived sections of society to gain access to higher education. It is argued that admission based on merit will automatically privilege higher castes which had a virtual monopoly during colonial rule. Reservation is a form of "affirmative action" except that it is mandatory. More recently, the Government of India also tried to introduce reservation in the central elite institutions for "other backward castes" who make up a quarter of the population. These policies have been contentious in the North Indian States which have not had a history of reservation.

While these policies have indeed widened access to higher education, particularly for poorer groups that were previously marginalized, it is argued that quality has been a casualty. Christian colleges have also had to grapple with these issues. Reservation has been helpful for Christian students who belong to the lower rungs of the caste hierarchy. The deterioration of quality is a subjective judgment, but many experts feel that there has been a decline in standards in most institutions.

Minority Status

Christian higher education institutions enjoy "minority status", a legal protection offered by the Indian Constitution, so the Principal (President) and other key administrators are generally Christians. The percentage of Christians in the faculty and student body is high compared to the percentage in the general population. Christian institutions may practice the liturgical forms of Christianity, such as Chapel services and prayers, as long as there is no coercion of non-Christians to attend. There should be no overt or covert attempt to convert non-Christians, although the Constitution itself does not ban conversions. However, some states have passed anti-conversion legislation which needs to be kept in mind.

Self-Financing

Following liberalization of the economy in 1991 the Government began to withdraw from higher education, and asked colleges and universities to raise resources and finance a greater share of their budget through self-financing courses, distance education, consultancy, and so on. Self-financing and privatization have changed the earlier equations to some extent. Many Christian institutions have started self-financing courses, where they charge high fees. Salaries for faculty and other policies are fixed by the management. The main problem has been that these courses are market-driven and generally job-oriented. There are few takers for traditional liberal arts and sciences. However, the self-financing courses help the colleges to cross-subsidize their government-aided courses, particularly with regard to infrastructure. Running dual systems in the same institutions causes stresses and strains. For example, the faculty in the self-financing stream are often paid less than the government aided stream, even though they bring in much of the revenue to the college! The composition of students also changes because of affordability. However, banks have come forward to provide loans to meritorious students who are not able to afford the high fees.

What implications do all these policies and factors have on "Christian Presence" in higher education?

Christian Presence and Academic Excellence

The pursuit of academic excellence cannot simply follow the meritocratic model of Western and Asian educational institutions, because Christian institutions in India must cater to the needs of the poor. Felix Wilfred, Professor of Christian Studies at the University of Madras, argues, "An institution of Christian higher education will lose its Christian identity if it opts for excellence at the cost of the poor." Recently, an elite Christian institution, St. Stephen's College in New Delhi, made the headlines when the Principal announced that 40 per cent of the seats would be reserved for Christians and 25 per cent for Dalit Christians. (Dalit refers to castes at the very bottom of the hierarchy.) His predecessor wrote a long piece in a national daily protesting the decision. Most of the arguments were based on quality versus access for the poor; however, the debate is less acrimonious in the south, where most Christian institutions already have reservation. Self-financing courses have provided an option for the meritorious students who get excluded by reservation (sometimes called reverse discrimination). But, self-financing itself is objected to by some as commercialization of education. In economic terms: "Is higher education a private good or a public good?"

Christian Values

In a society which is becoming increasingly materialistic, violent, and corrupt, Christian institutions need to embody certain core values in their management, instruction, and residential life. The practice of Christian principles must distinguish them from other institutions. Values cannot just be preached; they must be practiced. A college principal described Christian Presence as the "invisible dimension" which is felt on campus by faculty and staff alike of all faiths. Transparency, non-exploitation, freedom, plurality – must be a way of life. Faculty must also be willing to serve unconditionally if they are to make Christian Presence a reality in their institutions.

Democratic Functioning

Despite various social and political problems, India remains a functioning democracy, except for a brief period in the seventies. It is important for institutions, particularly in higher education, to espouse democratic principles in their functioning. Given India's feudal past and caste hierarchy (in its social structure) there is often a tendency to accept autocracy in the management of educational institutions. The "strong leader" who gets things done is much admired. There is no room for such authoritarian structures which are antithetical to Christian Presence. Wilfred argues, "If Christian higher education institutions function on democratic lines and in the spirit of participation, this will have a transformative effect on the faculty and students".

Pluralism

Despite a large Hindu majority and pressures from sectarian groups, India is a secular society which permits freedom for all religions to practice and propagate their faith. While Christian institutions are protected by law, their managements have to be sensitive to the pluralistic nature of Indian society. (See Wilfred's essay in *Quest* for more details). There has to be a spirit of tolerance and willingness to accept people of other faiths. While the institution need not be apologetic about its belief system, there needs to be room for inter-faith dialogue. Students and faculty of all faiths need to build a community which can become a beacon of light to a society which is torn by religious strife.

Holistic Education

Education in a Christian institution must pay attention to the intellectual, moral, emotional, and spiritual needs of both students and faculty. Counseling, mentoring, and other institutional structures need to be put in place to deal with the diverse needs of students in a society which is rapidly changing and where traditional family and social institutions are disintegrating.

Ultimately, "Christian Presence" cannot be a static concept, but has to be constantly redefined and reinvented to fit the changing needs of society, while retaining the core values and principles derived from the life and teachings of Jesus. The notion of "critical engagement" implies that this is a dynamic process, which requires constant analysis and refinement. Indian higher education is at the cross roads – it is beset with serious problems, yet has immense potential. Christian higher education institutions have to demonstrate Christian Presence, and be the "city on the hill" and "the salt of the earth" for the rest of Indian society, since they still enjoy widespread support and respect throughout the country.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the Principals of Colleges from the Anglican Communion and to the participants of the India chapter of the Asian Christian Faculty Fellowship for their useful ideas and suggestions on "Christian Presence" at meetings in Chennai in May 2007 and at Alwaye in August 2007. I have also drawn from an essay by Felix Wilfred on "Asian Christianity in Pluralistic Societies: Implications for Higher Education" in *Quest*, Vol.5, No.2, pp 107-132 (July 2007).

CHRISTIAN PRESENCE IN INDONESIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

Willi Toisuta

Our mandate

The mission of the United Board is to encourage and support Christian presence in colleges and universities in Asia. Integral to supporting Christian presence is the professional training of faculty and administrators and the building of linkages and networks among Asian Christian institutions of higher education. Included in this process is cooperation with other educational institutions that share our goals, which is important especially in the case of Indonesia.

Indonesian context

There are about 2,600 public and private universities and colleges in Indonesia, of which about 20-25 are Christian institutions. There are more Christian students and faculty in the public and private higher education institutions, especially in cities in Eastern Indonesia (Papua), North Sulawesi (Manado), Ambon and Timor, and the Batak land in North Sumatra. The meaning of their presence is no doubt interconnected with the multi-faceted roles of the universities and colleges. The quality of their presence as demonstrated through their active engagement, (i.e., positive, creative, and critical involvement and participation in teaching and learning, research and service to the larger community) will be noted as indicators of success. There is always the need for continued self-improvement.

Lessons learned and future responsibilities

Immediately after the proclamation of independence on 17th August 1945, Christian students, youth and political leaders joined forces with nationalist and other non-Islamic political parties, especially those representing Eastern Indonesia and Bali, in the people's assembly to reject the inclusion of *shariah* law in Indonesia's new constitution. They were successful in making the principles of *pancasila* the only viable basis for building the future of Indonesia as a secular and unitary state. Since that important achievement, Christian and Moslem theologians and scholars have been able to work together to transform their people to meet Indonesia's obvious need for ongoing renewal to fully achieve unity, democracy and justice.

What has developed now is a strong school of thought in Islam anticipating the importance of an Islamic society. That is an Islamic culture that leaves out the aspirations of Islam as a political ideology. The aim of an Islamic society in Indonesia is to present an Indonesian Islam to the world as a religion of peace and solidarity. At the same time, there is an important appeal to the nation as a whole to collaborate to enhance multi-culturalism, pluralism, and, a multi-religious society. "Soft-Islam", as that new face of Islam is known, is facing strong resistance and opposition from the small but radical and fundamentalist section of Islam that is keeping alive the aspirations for an Islamic state with an Islamic political ideology. Realizing that they are facing the disagreement of a larger silent Islamic majority and the nationalists, who are not officially and directly related with the Moslem political organizations, Islamic radical groups within Indonesia are joining forces with international radical

groups so that their actions are more international and borderless. Recent terrorist attacks around the world have revealed this strong global network.

Using the Long Term Strategy for Development in Higher Education as a framework, Christian academics in Indonesia can collaborate with their Moslem counterparts to identify some priorities to work on.

The formation of leadership with common and universal humanitarian values needs to be initiated by those involved in higher education. The need to build up a multi-cultural, plural, and multi-religious society in Indonesia has become a critical and urgent matter. Only within such a framework for cooperation can tensions between people of different faiths and Moslems be avoided and a threatening national chaos be averted. Islamic extremists are already actively trying to prevent such a development.

Leadership formation

A required course in the national curriculum is the teaching of national philosophy and character building. This has been taught all over the country as a credit-earning course. It is now essential that this course be redesigned to take in the new situation of tension and conflict to enhance cultural understanding, religious tolerance, and human solidarity in Indonesia. An inter-religious group of theologians, philosophers, and social scientists should be encouraged to redesign this important course. Our Campus Ministry team should take an important role in providing new training programs for the faculty. Christian faculty should join forces with those of other faiths in shaping and constantly developing the content of this course and designing relevant approaches for teaching and learning.

Teaching and learning processes as an ethical imperative

Moving from a dictatorship to a democratic form of government has made equity a reality. There have been changes in universities. Instead of being elitist educational institutions for a few, universities have become massive with larger intakes of students from different social, cultural, and economic backgrounds. The learning capabilities of those who now enter universities also vary. These two factors challenge traditional teaching and learning methods. Universities face the need to search for new policies to cater to both academic and non-academic students who are more interested in what may be termed "technical training". There is also a need to train teaching faculty to respond to this new challenge. How this is to be done will be an important component of the Indonesian ACFF meeting in November 2007. Among other issues, we will be exploring ways of establishing peer-group circles to collaborate on developing mutually recognized courses and standards to be shared among them. Hopefully, there will be new research and scholarly publications. Sensitivity to the learning capacities of students, due to real needs mentioned earlier, will also be encouraged. This involves recognizing the cognitive patterns and learning styles of their students so that new curricula would not only be student-centered but would also be compatible with both market and knowledge demands.

The forthcoming workshop in India to discuss a curriculum for Coastal Area Management and Costs will be followed with great interest as it could provide a model that could be followed by peer-group circles in Indonesia.

The other model of high-quality academic work is the Silliman University-based research program leading to Ph.D. degrees in Marine Biology. Many Christian Universities in Indonesia do not have the capacity to carry their own Masters and Doctoral programs, as they do not have the required trained faculty members. The center at Silliman has already proven to be a solution to this real need. Many more centers can be encouraged and sponsored or initiated by the United Board, because this is how expertise can be developed. Indonesia needs many joint post-graduate programs, which could be initiated and administered by the Institute in Hong Kong. Joint programs would be of help all over Asia. This is one of the main reasons why the Asian Christian Higher Education Institute should have an academic orientation besides its programmatic functions.

University Management and Governance

In accordance with the new Indonesian law for education (including higher education) there are new changes for management and governance of higher education. The legal status of the Board of Trustees is one area that has been affected. Another is the new paradigm for management emerging from the Higher Education Vision of 2020 for Indonesia. As in many other countries, presidents and rectors of universities, as well as members of boards of trustees, have no specific training to prepare them for the onerous responsibilities involved in being academic presidents and administrators. AULP Indonesia needs to be designed to meet this problem. To do this, it needs first to consult present presidents and members of boards of trustees so that real problems and needs can be discussed and taken into consideration in the work of AULP Indonesia. It is a way for the United Board to manifest Christian presence in higher education in Indonesia.

Of paramount importance at this time is to recreate the image of Christian universities in Indonesia as high-quality Christian institutions of learning and research. The quality of these institutions needs to be evaluated, bringing in new perspectives on quality, relevance, and efficiency in management. This ties in with entrepreneurial and managerial styles of leadership on one side, and on the other, the balance to keep Christian universities as centers representing the critical and moral force of the society. While upholding Christian values and ideals in such undertakings, our institutions of higher learning and research should be open to collaboration with others to jointly think and act for the common good of all people in Indonesia.

The examples given above show the need for developing a Christian approach to serve the academic community in Indonesia, and through it, to serve the larger Indonesian community that is attempting to forge a plural yet unitary multi-cultural and multi-religious nation. To engage in this task is to demonstrate Christian presence as both substance and strategy.

WITNESSING TO CHRISTIAN PRESENCE IN THE PHILIPPINES

Sr. Mary John Mananzan, OSB

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1. The Pre-Colonial Society

The group of islands which would later be known as the Philippines did not constitute a nation before the coming of the West, but were rather separate principalities with their own local rulers, grouped in communities according to economic, political, and religious interests. They had a subsistence economy, with a communal property system characterized by communal productive activities and a flourishing trade with the Chinese. The people spoke 8 major languages in numerous dialects and possessed a system of writing; their literacy was attested to by Spanish writers.¹

The religion of the people consisted of spirit worship which pervaded all the aspects of their life. Different tribes had different beliefs, but common features included a general belief in a chief deity considered creator and in lesser divinities called *anitos*. They also believed in good and bad preternatural beings, in life after death where the good are rewarded and the bad are punished. Religious rites accompanied all the important personal or communal events performed chiefly by women priests called *babaylanes*. The *babaylan*, or priestess, was the spiritual leader of the community and was the main celebrant of the rituals which were of tremendous importance to the community. Women had an egalitarian status in society.

2. *Plantatio Ecclesiae* – The Coming of Christianity

The Church was born in the Philippines at sword's point. This Cesarean birth took place during the process of the Spanish conquest and colonization of the islands, which they named Philippines in honor of King Philip II of Spain.

It is important at this point to mention the missiological discussion at this time of whether to preach Christianity as a continuation of and in relation to indigenous beliefs and customs (de Nobili and Ricci) or to reject these completely to demonstrate the uniqueness and radical novelty of Christianity. It was unfortunate that the missionaries in the Philippines opted for the latter and set out to systematically destroy the indigenous belief system in the missionary strategy called *extirpacion de idolatria*.

The instruction of the King was for peaceful methods. But in actual practice the sword most often went with the cross.

These missionary methods were successful to a certain extent. There were genuine conversions both personal and communal. But there was likewise resistance or selective acceptance of Christian beliefs and practices. The people for a long time never quite left their ancient beliefs at the deepest level of their psyche, giving rise to what Fr. Bulatao would call "split level Christianity" in the Philippines. On the surface, there was conformity with Christian beliefs, but these were juxtaposed with

former beliefs and sometimes even given meaning that would fit with their world view and ancient rituals or customs. An appalling consequence of Spanish colonization was the domestication of the *mujer indigena*. Shocked by her freedom, Spanish friars resolved to remold her, using religion and education, to the image and likeness of the Spanish woman of the *Siglo de Oro*, who lived like a contemplative nun.

The fact that the preaching of the Gospel was done in the context of colonization would set the tone for future developments identifying the Church with power and force. The element of coercion could not be eradicated, in spite of the genuine zeal of the early missionaries to attract the people to the values of Christianity. Invoking preaching the Gospel as the legitimating of the continued Spanish dominance in the islands made the Church and Church people during this early period, whether they liked it or not, and in spite of their good intentions and personal integrity, ideological agents of the political power of their time. In subsequent periods, it would prove difficult for the Church to shake off this role, although again and again elements in it would make efforts to break through this pattern.

3. The Coming of Protestantism to the Philippines

In 1898, Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States after a mock battle at Manila Bay. With the American regime, Protestantism was introduced into the country. Once again, religion was used to justify the conquest of the islands when President McKinley proclaimed that he was taking possession of the Philippines because God revealed to him that it was the "manifest destiny" of the United States to Christianize its "little brown brothers". Both Protestants and Catholics connived with the American government's possession, pacification, and domination of the Philippines. The mainline Protestant denominations were the early prophets of "manifest destiny" and the advocates of the "white man's burden".¹¹ But it was with the Catholic hierarchy that the new colonial government established an alliance. The property confiscated by the Aglipayans was restored to the Catholic Church. The hierarchy helped not only in the pacification of the islands; the Manila Council of 1907 condemned all types of revolutionary resistance to American rule.

In the subsequent stages of Church history, these two forces, political legitimizers and prophetic resistance, would be present in the Church.

II. WITNESSING TO CHRISTIAN PRESENCE

With the foregoing historical background, what could witness to Christian presence mean? There are 96 % Christians in the Philippines, 86% of which are Roman Catholics. There are 4% Muslims. Unlike in other Asian countries, there is enough of the outward Christian presence in the Philippines. Christians are the majority, and therefore Christian Schools have a different role in this kind of setting than they have in countries where Christians are a minority.

There are other factors to consider. There are schools that are in Luzon and the Visayas where almost everyone is Christian. There are Christian schools in Mindanao in areas where there is a large Muslim population. The manifestation of Christian Presence would be different in these two settings.

Taking all these into consideration, the following are the elements of Christian commitment that are present in the mission-vision of schools that are partnered with UBCHEA in the Philippines:

1. Christian Presence means confession of faith in Jesus Christ

Christian schools explicitly confess their faith in Jesus Christ. This is manifested in the inclusion of Holy Scripture and other religious courses in the curriculum. For some, theology/religion constitutes the core curriculum. Christian ethics permeate the other subjects, and the academic community is provided opportunities for Christian worship and Christian praxis. In some schools classes start and end with prayer.

2. Christian Presence means adherence to and practice of Christian values

Christian values are human values. So when we say Christian values, we don't mean that they are exclusively Christian, but that they are claimed and owned by Christians to be their own, too. Among the values included in most Christian Schools in the Philippines are the following:

2.1 Justice

Poverty is still the major problem in the Philippines. Christians believe that Jesus had a preferential option for the materially poor, marginalized and the oppressed. Those who profess to be followers of Christ must have the same option. In the Philippines, Christians believe that poverty is due to the unequal distribution of resources locally and foreign control of the economy. Poverty, then, is inextricably linked with social injustice. And so Christian schools explicitly state in their mission-vision a commitment to justice and social transformation. This is concretized in various ways—in service learning, in participation in protest actions, in solidarity with the struggle of the poor and the oppressed.

2.2. Commitment to Peace

It is clear that peace is central to Christ's mission. Every time he healed someone or forgave sinners, he would send them away with the blessing: "Go in peace." After his resurrection, his apparitions were always prefaced with the greeting: Peace be to you.

In the Philippines, there is a great need to cultivate the culture of peace, because there is so much violence of all kinds—economic, political, military, ecological, domestic. Lately, there has been an unprecedented and continuous spate of extra-judicial killings and abductions, especially of the opposition—including activists, journalists, pastors, and church workers.

It is an unmistakable manifestation of Christian presence for schools to adopt a thrust towards an education for peace. Principles of peace must be taught at all levels from elementary school to the tertiary level. Conflict resolution and mediation principles permeated by Christian values of forgiveness and reconciliation should be learned in Christian schools.

More than a few Christian schools have taken the task of being venues for reconciliation and peace negotiations.

3. Christian Praxis

Besides advocating Christian values, Christian presence means actual praxis that concretizes these values. The following are examples of how Christian praxis works in schools in the Philippines:

3.1. Empowerment of Women

This is where the Church's integrity in the Philippines is most tested. If it preaches that women are made to the image and likeness of God as man is, why are there opportunities for men in the Church that are denied to women? In this regard, the Church must examine its history, its structure, its teachings, and its practice.

There are tertiary schools in the Philippines that have re-oriented their theology courses in a way that is empowering to women. This consists in the re-reading of the Scripture also from the perspective of women, questioning the teachings of the Church that justify the subordination of women: conditioning her to regard herself as secondary to the male and to think of her life as significant only in relation to him; conditioning her to feel guilty when she is battered or raped. It questions the teaching in religious instructions that the ideal woman is the passive, submissive, long-suffering person, who has developed in her a "victim consciousness" which makes her vulnerable to violence both inside and outside her homes; that she has the duty to keep the family together at all cost and stay in a marriage where she is personally humiliated and physically battered.

There are schools that denounce the different forms of oppression of women, the continuing inequality and subordination of women in the home, in the workplace and in society; the ever increasing violence against women in different forms: rape, incest, wife battering, the prevalent trafficking of women in prostitution, mail order brides, and in contract work abroad.

Christian schools should insist that women be given full participation in the ministry of the Church. They should put their human and material resources to the service of women's empowerment, to the rehabilitation of victims of violence, and to the development of their potential. They should support the women's movement and encourage their leadership in political and social life. It might sound trivial, but they should adopt inclusive language in all their academic activities.

3.2. Ecumenism / Interfaith Dialogue

Since Martial Law, there has been a great progress in ecumenism due to the coming together of Catholics and Protestants in resisting the dictatorship. There are consortia of Protestant and Catholic Schools (e.g., the South Manila Consortium long funded by UBCHEA) which gave witness to remarkable cooperation and coordination in all aspects of academic life.

What needs to be promoted is interfaith dialogue, especially in Christian schools located in Mindanao, which are in close contact with the Muslim population.

Muslims comprise 4% of the population of the Philippines. We have seen how, right from the beginning, they were considered by the Spanish missionaries as great obstacles to the Christianization of the Philippines. Subsequently, Christians from the North migrated to the south and occupied their lands. Government development plans do not usually put Muslim areas as priority. There is thus a deep-seated animosity that has pervaded throughout the ages. The rise of fundamentalism, both Christian and Muslim, is making the situation worse.

There are on-going efforts towards a Muslim-Christian dialogue by individual people like Bishop Tuftud, Fr. Mercado, and Fr. Sebastiano D'ambra and Sr. Esther Ramos, and by other groups which involve Christia/Catholic Schools in Mindanao, like the Southern Christian College and the Notre Dame Schools. In 1994, the bishops, clergy, religious, and laity of the Churches of Zamboanga, Basilan, Jolo, Tawi-Tawi, and Ipil renewed their commitment to inter-religious dialogue with the Muslim people alongside whom they live.ⁱⁱⁱ On February 11-12, 1995, a conference was held on Christian Fundamentalism and Militant Islam in Asia, in Cagayan de Oro, and the group called upon the Christians of Asia to join them in their following resolve:

- To refrain from condemning a whole group because of the reprehensible actions of a few;
- To promote a systematic and integrated study of other religions and the spirituality of dialogue in seminaries and formation houses for religious and laity;
- To denounce all forms of violence, such as kidnappings and bombings, and to work together with all those who strive for peace;
- To reject manipulative proselytizing tactics on the grounds that they violate the freedom and dignity of the human person;
- To work together with Muslims of good will to oppose all forms of oppression, injustice, no matter who the victims might be;
- To collaborate with Muslims to expose and oppose the caricature of religion so often found in media presentations;
- To strive not to allow fear to determine our actions, but to harness it for creative initiatives.^{iv}

3.3. Involvement with Cultural Minorities

The so-called tribal Filipinos have never been politically conquered by the foreign countries that occupied the Philippines. But the intrusion of the dominant ethnic majority is making them not only lose their ancestral domains and the ecological balance of their environment, but is also eroding their cultural traditions without benefiting from the development model for which the government has opted.

The Church expresses its concern thus: "Our concern here must be to actively support, promote, and accelerate the process of law on their behalf, and be on their side so that their ancestral domains, their cultures, rights, and the integrity of their environment be defended, preserved, and promoted." (PCP II, No. 378) I think the Christian Schools are the best venue to study their culture and their spirituality and to see how these could enrich the faith and make it really Filipino. For example, the reverence towards creation which our ancestors had and which the tribal Filipinos preserve could have prevented the rape of our forests and their being sold for profit to multi-national corporations. Missionaries who go to them should be careful not to

impose on them the dominant western culture which characterizes lowland Christianity.

3.4. Pastoral Care for Displaced Filipinos

At no time in our history has there been a displacement of our people as in the last two decades. Militarization and the anti-insurgency campaign have resulted in internal refugees who have come down or been forced down from their homes to live in unhealthy camps. Natural calamities such as eruptions of volcanoes and super-typhoons have rendered many people homeless who are still today living in temporary shelters. About 8 million Filipinos have left the country to work in many parts of the world, suffering all kinds of problems. Christian Schools must get involved in the care of these displaced Filipinos.

3.5. Preservation of the Environment

An urgent current issue, with which Christians in the Philippines have to continuously and seriously concern themselves, is the ecological crisis. In 1993, a flash food of 6 minutes killed 6,000 people in Leyte. The disappearance of our forests, the destruction of our coral reefs, and other environmental problems have reached an alarming state. Educational institutions have taken up the challenge, and creative actions have been initiated in different places. However, illegal logging is still occurring; economic development projects that endanger the environment are still being launched. Continued vigilance and a more systematic networking of efforts throughout the country must be coordinated.

Aside from assigning the causes of the ecological crisis outside of itself, the theology taught in Christian Schools should also reflect on how a certain mainline theological perspective has contributed to the problem. There is the anthropocentrism in Biblical interpretation which can be gleaned even in the most recent statement of the Holy See at the Rio Conference when it stated that the ultimate purpose of the environmental and developmental programs is to "place creation in the fullest possible way at the service of the human family." This dominance of humans over creation and their seeming separation from it which it interpreted from the verse: "Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all the living animals of in the earth," could, according to Keith Thomas, "be easily invoked to legitimize any human exploitation of the natural world."^v Also in this regard, we can reclaim the value of the cosmic religion of our ancestors who revered nature and apologized before cutting a tree for their needs.

Conclusion

These are what I would consider the concrete manifestations of Christian Presence in the Philippines which should characterize Christian Schools. Some schools have embarked in many of these endeavors, but there is still a long way to go. Another aspect of the problem is, of course, the fact that while students are in school, they may inculcate these Christian values and involve themselves in the Christian praxis initiated by their schools, but it is not automatic that when they have finished their studies and come into the "real world" they will continue practicing what they have learned. This is obvious when one sees the high government officials, including the Presidents that have mostly come from Christian Schools but have not actually made a fundamental change in Philippine society. The challenge to Christian Schools in the

Philippines is to educate the students to be agents of social transformation inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

End Notes

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- ⁱ Antonio Morga, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*, (Mexico: Geronimo Balli, 1609) in Blair and Robertson, vol. XVI, pp. 116-117.
- ⁱⁱ Mario Bolasco, "USA and Missionary Expansion", talk given at the meeting of EATWOT Working Commission on Church History, Bombay, August 25 – 28, 1985, p. 14.
- ⁱⁱⁱ "Commitment to Dialogue" in *World Mission*, April – May 1994, p. 10.
- ^{iv} Statement of Asian Journey '95, Cagayan de Oro, February 11 -12, 1995, pp. 65-66.
- ^v Keith Thomas, "Man and the Natural World", quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 38.



United Board
for Christian Higher Education in Asia

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APPENDIX 'D'

UNITED BOARD FOR CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION IN ASIA
Meeting of the Board of Trustees

December 2-3, 2007

SCHEDULE AND AGENDA

Sunday, December 2

- 8:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast will be available in the Easton Library / Easton Hall
Sunday's activities will take place in the large rooms on the first floor of Easton Hall.
- 9:30 a.m. Invocation and Devotions by Dr. James Donohue
- 10:00 a.m. Discussion of Task Force Reports
Development – W. Leshner
Christian Presence – D.P. Niles
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch
During lunch, attendees will split into small assigned groups to discuss the task force presentations.
See next page for group assignments.
- 2:00 p.m. Review of Small-Group Findings on Task Force Reports
- 5:15 p.m. Depart for Cocktails & Dinner
- 5:30 p.m. Cocktails
Cocktails and dinner will be served at Sea Salt (www.seasaltrestaurant.com),
2512 San Pablo Ave. in Berkeley (510-883-1720).
Transportation between restaurant and accommodations will be provided.
- 6:00 p.m. Dinner
The United Board welcomes back Anne Ofstedal, who will present and answer questions about
the current status of the Digital Alliance Project.
- 8:00 p.m. Return to Guest Accommodations