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ARTICLE

Seminaries and Discipleship: Exploring Future Directions

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Abstract

Theological colleges and seminaries across the Anglican Communion are at a crossroads and this essay proposes a reorientation of their life towards serving the intentional discipleship of the whole people of God. This kind of change would affect the culture as well as the content of what they do. For example, their pedagogy could become that of 'the flipped classroom', where ordinands engage in an apprenticeship style of learning, with their time in college falling within placement learning and providing constructive theological reflection upon that prior learning. This will bring great benefits to these institutions through their becoming re-connected and re-embedded in the life of the church at grass roots level, giving them a valued and indispensable role in the mission of the church in diverse contexts.

Keywords: academic disciplines, apprenticeship, discipleship, Emmaus, flipped classroom, seminary, TEE

The role of director for theological education at the Anglican Communion Office includes visiting theological colleges and seminaries across the world and so provides a privileged vantage point on current challenges and opportunities for these institutions. Since taking up the post in early 2018, I have been able to visit colleges and seminaries in Kenya, Uganda, the United States, Egypt, Sudan, South Sudan, South Africa, Australia, Ireland, Hong Kong and Malaysia, as well as a number of English colleges. Colleagues within the theological education department at the office also have extensive contacts with colleges and courses in South Asia and Latin America. While all this does not provide a comprehensive picture of what is going on across the Communion it does offer an indicative and revealing window onto what is happening in many places.[2]

From these visits and contacts it has become clear that in general, as one colleague in Malaysia put it, theological colleges and seminaries are at a crossroads. On the one hand their inherited pattern of working is becoming less and less

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[2]For information on TEAC (the department for Theological Education in the Anglican Communion) see https://www.anglicancommunion.org/theology/theological-education.aspx

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sustainable: churches, dioceses and districts are no longer sending ordinands in sufficient numbers to sustain the life of many of the institutions. This is partly because the cost of sending an ordinand and their dependents to full-time residential training is increasingly prohibitive, and also because students themselves in many parts of the world are unable or unwilling to relocate to a college for two or three years of study. So, instead, large churches and dioceses are often setting up their own non-residential and part-time training schemes to compensate, some of good quality and some of less-than-good quality. Colleges, on the other hand, are needing to diversify their business in order to remain solvent, sometimes setting up extension study programmes, or letting out their accommodation for rental income, or offering a range of non-theological programmes. While these are creative responses, many have the effect of distancing the college from its core constituency, the sending churches and dioceses, which makes the latter even less inclined to send them their ordinands for training.[3]

What is to be done? Are colleges and seminaries to continue to diversify their work away from their core business of ordination training, or are they to find new ways of reconnecting with the churches that produce and receive back their ordinands? This is the crossroads where they find themselves. This article explores one way of reconnecting colleges and churches, offered as a prompt to further discussion and reflection.[4] It proposes that theological institutions become re-anchored in the life of the local church and, in particular, in a contemporary movement found in many churches across the Anglican Communion concerned with the renewal of the discipleship of the whole people of God. It argues that theological colleges and seminaries can and should have a major role in encouraging and pastorally equipping the leaders and mentors of this movement and so, beyond that, have a key role in the renewal and growth of the church across the world.

Background: The Turn to Discipleship

An example of this movement is the 'Season of Intentional Discipleship', an initiative found in many provinces and dioceses of the Anglican Communion (and in other churches). A 2016 report on the movement commissioned by the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC), *Intentional Discipleship and Disciple-Making*,[5] describes a wide range of ways in which a deliberate promotion of discipleship is being expressed in different parts of the world and in different theological traditions within the Communion. The report presents a rich and engaging selection of case studies.

[3]The generic nature of financial pressures on colleges and seminaries across the Anglican Communion is also noted by Martyn Percy in 'The Shaping of Ordination Training', in Mark D. Chapman, Sathianathan Clarke and Martyn Percy (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Anglican Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 500–501.

[4]I am grateful to colleagues at a consultation on theological education at Seminari Theoloji Malaysia Seremban, Malaysia, and at Hui, a consultation on theological education for pioneering ministry at Ripon College, Cuddesdon, both in July 2019, for the opportunity to share and discuss this proposal.

[5]ACC, *Intentional Discipleship and Disciple-Making: An Anglican Guide for Christian Life and Formation* (ed. J. Kafwanka and M. Oxbrow; London: ACC, 2016), available at: https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/220191/intentional-discipleship-and-disciple-making.pdf (accessed 31 December 2019). Spanish, Portuguese and Chinese translations are also available.

It also describes how there 'is a growing consensus within the worldwide Church that discipleship is one of the key issues of our times'.[6] In the years since it was published this movement has continued to grow and strengthen in different provinces of the Anglican Communion.[7]

In many ways, from a Western perspective, this is puzzling. Has discipleship not always been part of the life of the church, following on from baptism and confirmation and membership of the church? Is not a disciple simply someone who turns up to worship week by week? Why is there an increasingly powerful movement of something which already exists? Why are the official meetings of the Anglican Communion, such as the Anglican Consultative Council of 2016 and 2019 and the Lambeth Conference of 2020, giving over a large part of their agendas to something that is apparently unexceptional?[8]

Some history can be helpful here. Anglicanism came to birth as a distinct ecclesial tradition within Western Christianity at the Reformation. In this pre-Enlightenment era there was no separation between sacred and secular, the religious and the civil domains, a separation common today in many parts of the world. Religion was part and parcel of everyday life and affected every aspect of human living, of mind, body and spirit in equal measure. This is why religious affiliation mattered so much and why rulers would go to war to ensure that their people remained within their own church structures. The issues that separated the churches were expressed in terms of doctrine, as reflected in the way each Reformation church developed written statements or 'confessions' which their members had to subscribe to. For the Church of England those being confirmed when they reached 'years of discretion' had to be able to recite the answers to the set questions of the Catechism, and those being ordained had to subscribe to the Thirty Nine Articles. The sign of full adult discipleship, then, became linked with cognitive understanding and assent to a set of written statements.

Problems with this approach arose during and after the Enlightenment, an era which saw a gradual separation of sacred from secular, of the religious realm from the rest of life. In many places faith was separated from the public sphere and somehow privatized. It became something that a person would choose for themselves but never seek to impose on others. This resulted in discipleship itself becoming more and more restricted to an internal and private dimension of life, often only within religious settings. The church's continued use of assent to doctrines as the mark of discipleship did not help with getting others to see that following Christ was about the whole of life, not just knowing and reciting a set of statements. This in turn led to a loss of interest and confidence in the Christian faith in secular-minded societies, with decline in church attendances being an inevitable result.

The inadequacy of the inherited approach to discipleship in a modern setting is shown when we remember that human beings are not only cognitive animals who

[6]ACC, *Intentional Discipleship*, p. 81.

[7]See https://www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/intentional-discipleship.aspx

[8]See, for example, Resolution 16.01 of the 16th Anglican Consultative Council meeting in Lusaka in 2016, which requested the Standing Committee to work with the Secretary General and Mission Department to effect a Season of Intentional Discipleship for a period covering ACCs 16, 17, 18 and 19, that is, until 2025: https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/234449/acc-16-resolutions-2016.pdf (accessed 31 December 2019).

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operate through their minds. They also have hearts, the affective realm, and bodies, the physical realm, and souls, the spiritual realm. Jesus' great commandments (e.g. Mk 12.30-31) is a reminder that discipleship is expressed through all four realms, for following means to loving God 'with all your heart', 'with all your soul', 'with all your strength' as well as 'with all your mind'. It is also all about loving your neighbour as yourself. Other key passages also indicate that discipleship is at heart all about following a way of sacrifice (e.g. Mk 8.34), and involves making disciples 'of all nations' through extending baptism and teaching (Matt. 28.16-20).

In other words, to use language from educational theory, these texts show that discipleship affects at least four domains of learning. It is all about a way of living, of following Christ and making disciples, which concerns the behavioural domain, their *doing*. It is also all about who they are, their loving of God and neighbour, which concerns the affective domain, their *being*. It is also all about how they think, their loving of God with their minds, which concerns the cognitive domain, their *knowing*. Finally, it is about how they connect with others, their loving of neighbours and going to all, which concerns the relational domain, their *relating*.

The season of intentional discipleship is, essentially, all about churches recovering this fourfold or holistic way of following Christ, and being caught up in its life-giving energy: that being a disciple is about more than being a student who learns certain doctrines with their mind, or a worker who learns to perform certain tasks with their body, or even a friend who learns to express affection with their heart. 'Christian discipleship', rather, 'is best understood as a form of apprenticeship undertaken in an intentional community: it is practical and corporate, and involves the whole of life. It is … not about what we know, but about who we are becoming.'[9]

The season is a movement because it is infectious, passing from person to person in a spontaneous kind of way: 'It is not a course, it is not a certificate, it is not something that we will just learn for a year or two … but it is a life line, it is a life time of learning.'[10] It is all about people being touched and formed in every aspect of their life, 'people growing in their sense of being loved by, and loving God as encountered in the person of Jesus Christ, and responding by offering themselves to God and God's world through coming to know Jesus more deeply, and ordering their lives around this relationship, in community with all of Jesus' disciples'.[11]

But there is an irony here, for ultimately the season is not about churches doing something new but returning to ancient ways. This is as true for Anglican churches as any other, as *Intentional Discipleship and Disciple-Making* eloquently argues:

> Discipleship is the very essence of Anglicanism. Anglicanism, from its roots in Celtic and Augustinian spirituality and shaped by the European Reformation, has always been a lived-out (not a purely intellectual or spiritualized) faith. It is about following and living the ways of Jesus… Discipleship reflects the Catholic-Protestant nature of the Anglican Communion. We discover the true

[9]ACC, *Intentional Discipleship*, p. 81.

[10]Archbishop Moon Hing, *Intentional Discipleship in a World of Difference* (Anglican Witness: Anglican Consultative Council, 2016), p. 6.

[11]ACC, *Intentional Discipleship*, p. 3.

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> meaning of the Catholic nature of the Church as we follow a Saviour who unites all people, all things, in himself, and we discover the true vocation of Protestantism as our discipleship leads us into a prophetic engagement with all that is not holy.[12]

The report also powerfully argues that the future of Anglicanism depends on its churches embracing discipleship:

> Discipleship is the future of the Anglican Communion. It is only as we call each generation anew to a daily walk with God, a living discipleship, that the Anglican Church can grow or even survive. Without new disciples our future is no longer than one generation. Discipleship is the hope of the Anglican Communion. It is only through calling all Anglicans, and those who will join as new Christians, to a daily following of Christ that we will avoid error, division, and distraction and know the constant renewal of the Spirit that gives hope for eternity… Discipleship is the lifeblood of the Anglican Communion.[13]

How Should Theological Institutions Respond?

The contemporary church has, broadly speaking, inherited two kinds of approach to ministerial training, sometimes found separately in different seminaries or colleges and sometimes found sitting alongside each other in the same institution. There is the seminary model of the Catholic tradition, which came into Anglicanism in the early to mid-nineteenth century,[14] in which ordinands live within their own formational community, eating, worshipping and praying together as well as undertaking a rigorous programme of learning over several years, in order to be formed inwardly and outwardly for ministry. Traditionally they were seen as being *set apart* from the ordinary life of the church in order to become different and special, even holy or godly, at the point of ordination, to become priests and ministers of a preaching and sacramentally focused ministry. As Mark D. Chapman puts it, colleges concerned themselves with 'the assimilation of an ethos, the ownership of a tradition, and the development of a way of life or pattern of being'.[15] This approach has sometimes been linked to the Greek concept of *paideia* associated with a holistic approach to education in ancient Athens.[16]

The other approach has its roots in university education, in which an emphasis is placed on academic learning as the preparation for ministry. This was seen in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century England before the arrival of seminaries: those seeking ordination generally attended Oxford or Cambridge universities and

[12]ACC, *Intentional Discipleship*, pp. 126-27.

[13]ACC, *Intentional Discipleship*, p. 127.

[14]While Codrington College, Barbados, is the oldest theological college in the Anglican Communion, arguably the first college to deliberately adopt the seminary model of training was General Theological Seminary in New York in 1817.

[15]Quoted in Chapman et al., *Oxford Handbook of Anglican Studies,* p. 493.

[16]See, for example, David H. Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011).

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studied the classical languages or sciences. At the start of the nineteenth century Friedrich Schleiermacher at the University of Berlin famously set up a theological faculty to stand alongside other academic faculties within the university, and within that separated out the different theological disciplines, namely biblical studies, historical and doctrinal studies, and pastoral and practical studies, to be taken in a sequential and systematic way. This approach has been highly influential in much of Protestant theological education ever since. Training is complete when certain academic standards have been met, normally assessed through written assignments or exams, and a degree awarded. In many provinces of the Anglican Communion this remains a dominant model of theological education. This approach has sometimes been labelled as *wissenshaft*, a German term for systematic study, making a clear link with Schleiermacher's scheme in Berlin.[17]

In the light of the spread of the movement of intentional discipleship and its need for new leaders and mentors the question now is this: to what extent are one or other of these models able to embody the apprenticeship approach to discipleship described above? Are either of them up to the task?

A clear strength of the seminary model is that it addresses not just the mind with its need for academic learning but the heart and body and spirit with its emphasis on formation. The seminary is fundamentally about forming the whole person over three or five or seven years. It moulds that person into someone who is fundamentally different in key ways from the person they were beforehand, someone who is now ready to be hallowed by ordination.

But the weakness of this approach, from a discipleship perspective, is that it separates the ordinand from everyone else in the church, setting them apart to become special and holy/godly. It removes them from the community of disciples as a whole and so from many of those mature disciples from whom they could learn their discipleship. In making this separation it also implies that the rest of the church is not needed for the formation of priests and ministers, reducing them to a passive or recipient role in ministry. In a widely used image, the ordinand is trained to become like a professional footballer, who performs in front of the remainder of God's people, who take to the stands, or rather pews, to watch and cheer on their ministry (and assist when specially asked to do so).

The strength of the university model, on the other hand, has always been the way it equips the priest or minister with the intellectual and academic resources to teach and promote the Christian faith from the pulpit and elsewhere. In churches operating within the culture of the Enlightenment, which especially values the place of reason, intellectual debate and learning in promoting a religion, this approach has provided a form of training that gives the minister the critical abilities and the academic standing to fulfil this role. In places where the intellectual credibility of Christianity has been under attack, such as early nineteenth-century Berlin and mid-twentieth-century Britain, this approach has provided the apologetic resources for the minister to rebut those attacks and allow the church to maintain its intellectual standing in that culture, and so to go about his or her ministry with some social status.

[17]See Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin*.

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However, a ministry that is expressed mainly through intellectual debate and teaching does not thereby interact with other dimensions of discipleship described above, the discipleship of the heart and the soul. This means that in post-Enlightenment cultures, where Christianity needs to engage with these other dimensions, it is not especially effective in helping new people come to faith and embrace discipleship. A good case for the reasonableness of Christianity can be made, only to be rebuffed with the question 'So what?' Furthermore, as in the seminary model, when training is primarily about somehow 'going away' to college to study it becomes separated from the very people who express and advocate the faith through their way of life, that is, the church community as a whole. And, in turn, the 'going away' implies that when the ordinand returns having completed their studies the church community is turned into being a kind of audience that needs to listen to and receive whatever it is their new minister has received. Pews become football stands once again.

A variation of the university model shifts the emphasis from intellectual debate and learning to training and equipping with professional skills, such as counselling skills within pastoral ministry, liturgical skills for leading worship or managerial skills for leading church institutions. The college becomes primarily a training institution or management school, with the imparting of practical competencies being the aim of the educational process. In technocratic cultures where great store is placed on professional accreditation this is valuable and necessary, but it does not address the fundamental need of the church to win disciples of Christ through their hearts and souls. Only the rough and tumble of human friendship, kindness and compassion, within a wider community life of love and acceptance, can do that, and the training element within theological education needs to be kept firmly in a subservient place if that priority is not to be lost.

How, then, can theological education be refashioned in order to serve the season of intentional discipleship? How, in other words, can the best elements of *paediea* and *wissenchaft* be incorporated into an approach that is about the whole people of God forming leaders and mentors for the making of disciples of all nations?

Learning on the Road to Emmaus

Returning to the sources of discipleship, we can look for some basic guidelines from the example of Jesus with his disciples. In particular, the story of Cleopas and his companion on the road to Emmaus, a key post-resurrection episode in the gospel narratives, embodies some formative learning principles for growth in holistic discipleship.

Cleopas and his companion are deeply changed over the course of the story in Lk. 24.13-35. By the end of the story it is clear that they have learnt about what has happened over the last few days, they have been inspired within ('Did not our hearts burn within us?'), they have been transformed in their relationships (seen in the way they rush back to the other disciples), and they have been energized to take action after the meal. These points together show that they have undergone a holistic transformation.

This suggests that genuine theological education will have the same four dimensions (as for growth in discipleship as a whole, with its four domains of learning, as

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seen above): it will be concerned with learning, from those with expert knowledge and experience, and so be about *knowing*; it will be concerned with who the student becomes, with changes within their own person, and so be all about their *being*; it will be concerned with how well they connect with strangers and friends, and so be all about their *relating*; finally it will be concerned with how they live, with what they do as a result of their learning, and so be all about their *doing*. In this way it will be four-dimensionally formational.

But what allows this holistic learning to take place? What are the learning principles at work within the encounter on the road to Emmaus? It is clear from the story that Cleopas and his companion learn not by being on their own as isolated students but through being in each other's company and engaging in conversation, forming a kind of community of learning. Secondly, they are not keeping their own company but are willing to engage with a stranger: they have an openness to the outsider. Thirdly, they do not avoid being challenged but are willing to answer difficult questions. All of these features help to create a rich learning environment.

They then actively learn through what seems to be a threefold interactive process. The first element is through looking back, recalling the journey they have taken to this point; it also includes taking in where they are, their context on the road as they approach their village and enter the home; and it includes sharing their hopes and disappointments with the stranger. This first element can be described as one of 'taking in': taking in where they are, taking in their context (in Roman Catholic social teaching this has often been labelled as 'seeing' within a threefold pedagogical process – see below).

A second element is seen in the way they are guided by someone who knows Scripture and tradition and who then helps them to interpret what has happened through that Scripture/tradition. This is a reflective element in which they also become aware of their own feelings in all this, as they admit to each other after their guest has gone. This can be summed up as 'taking stock' of the ways Scripture and tradition speak into those contextual realities (in Roman Catholic social teaching this has often been labelled as 'judging' within a threefold pedagogical process – see below).

A third element is seen in the way they extend hospitality to the stranger who is walking with them, through sharing a meal; also through acting immediately on what they have learnt, by returning to Jerusalem straight after the meal; and through telling others when they get there, a widening of the net of learning. This third element can be described as one of 'taking action', of working with God to bring about God's will in that place, "on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6.10). (In Roman Catholic social teaching this has often been labelled as 'acting': hence the threefold pedagogical process of 'See, Judge, Act'.[18])

So, to summarize, the story suggests that transformative theological education involves a threefold interactive process within a learning environment of journeying with other learners, engaging with strangers and facing difficult questions. The first element, of 'taking in', is all about where they are, recalling their journey to this point, taking in the context and sharing hopes and disappointments. The second

[18]See, for example, Eric M. Brigham, *See, Judge, Act: Catholic Social Teaching and Service Learning* (Winona: Anselm Academic, rev. edn, 2018).

element of 'taking stock' is all about interpreting all this through Scripture and tradition and becoming aware of their response and feelings to this; and the third element of 'taking action' is all about extending hospitality to the other, acting immediately on what has been learnt and telling others.[19]

An Example from Asia

How can all this be put into practice? One increasingly widespread example comes from churches in Asia, a holistic approach to theological education that can address the four dimensions of discipleship, one that is increasingly widespread across the globe – sometimes called Theological Education by Extension (TEE) but also known as 'Tools to Equip and Empower', that is, tools for local churches to equip and empower all their people for discipleship and mission. A recent book by Hanna-Ruth van Wingerden, Tim Green and Graham Aylett provides an informative, illuminating and encouraging overview of its methodology and of the varieties of its expression across a range of different church denominations. It will be drawn upon in a number of places in the rest of this article.[20]

At the start it is important to clarify that this kind of TEE is not distance learning for isolated learners (like other versions of TEE), nor is it evening classes at a theological institution, nor a series of seminars, nor even a typical Bible study in a group (though it shares some elements with this). It is an approach to training which equips disciples and leaders in the context of their daily lives, through local learning groups. It is a learning method which combines three steps in a structured, repeated pattern: namely personal study, a group meeting, and some form of practical application. It is meant for everyone: 'TEE is for all believers, men and women from every walk of life. From new believers to emerging leaders and influencers in church and society, TEE offers a connected pathway to keep people growing.'[21]

The first step of *personal study* is often expressed through a learner working through a carefully prepared worksheet, using active learning in a question and answer format, rather than just passive reading, in order to engage with Scripture, gain new knowledge and start connecting it with own life experience, which then becomes a springboard to the next learning step.

This is the g*roup meeting* in which members share what they learned in the first step, reflect on their own experience and learn from each other. They study Scripture together, which a group leader facilitates (the group leader does not give a lecture). Members also prepare for the third step by discussing how they will put the lesson into practice.

[19]The threefold pedagogical process of 'taking in, taking stock and taking action' is employed in *God's Justice: Just Relationships between Women and Men, Girls and Boys.* See especially Section 2 'Learning Strategies', at www.anglicancommunion.org/media/348551/TEAC-Just-relationships-women-men.pdf (accessed 31 December 2019).

[20]Hannah-Ruth van Wingerden, Tim Green and Graham Aylett (eds.), *TEE in Asia: Empowering Churches, Equipping Disciples* (Kuala Lumpur: Increase Association, 2018). Other examples are provided by SEAN (Study by Extension for All Nations), which are widely used across the world. While these come out of one ecclesial tradition their structure and methodology provides an example for other traditions to adopt and adapt. See www.seaninternational.com/courses.html (accessed 31 December 2019).

[21]Van Wingerden *et al.*, *TEE in Asia,* p. 15.

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The third step is *practical application* and is all about finding a way to practically express what was learnt in steps 1 and 2. This happens in the members' daily life at home, work, church or in the wider community. Practical application is the goal of TEE. In this kind of way the student undertakes a specific assignment whether for personal life or for ministry.

Here lie the connections with Luke 24 and the learning of Cleopas and his companion on the road to Emmaus. First, there is a connection in the kind of learning environment they inhabit: as the two disciples journeyed together, engaged with strangers and faced difficult questions, so the TEE group goes on a journey together, of shared learning engaging with difficult questions and with other people. Each week they go through three steps which broadly correspond with the three elements of learning for Cleopas and his companion: the personal study is a 'taking in' of where they are within their own context and within the narrative of Scripture and Christian tradition. Secondly, the group discussion is a 'taking stock' in which, guided by the group leader, they reflect on and interpret their situation through Scripture and tradition and become aware of their own response and feelings to this. Thirdly, the practical application is obviously a 'taking action', acting immediately in an intentional way on the basis of what has just been learnt.

The three steps are repeated week by week, so that the learning cycle becomes a habit integrated into the learners' routines. Typically, a course is completed in three months and the learner then proceeds to the next course; they spend 1–3 hours a week in personal study, and one evening at the group meeting, thus building a sustainable habit of learning. The local church or diocese often arranges for certificates to be given to learners who attend regularly, taking part in group discussion and completing their home study and tests. Records are kept and the learners may reach completion points such as certificate, diploma or degree; in some programmes these are accredited by official bodies.[22]

Clearly the course leader will be key to the success of each course. They are responsible for creating a conducive learning environment, which means they need to combine the skill of leading lively discussion, with the character of giving a good role model and the commitment of giving their time voluntarily every week to serve the group. This means TEE organizations and churches will need to work hard to find, train, encourage and support the local group leaders. Also, it means that every course needs a carefully designed leaders' guide as well as the student book of worksheets.

Implications for Colleges and Seminaries

At first sight it may seem as if there is little place for theological institutions within this form of theological education. As Wingerden *et al.* put it, 'Local TEE groups require neither buildings nor professors nor scholarships. The group leaders are facilitators not teachers. Nor do they have to create their own course content because other experts have already done it. This makes it easier to find new group leaders, though they should still be mature believers familiar with the course content

[22]Van Wingerden *et al.*, *TEE in Asia,* pp. 16-18.

and method.'[23] This form of training grows of its own accord: 'TEE groups can reproduce fairly rapidly. By taking part in a few courses, a TEE learner will grasp the method well. A short additional training equips that person to start a new group, which in time will spawn more groups.'[24]

However, before this can happen study materials need to be produced, group leaders need to be recruited and equipped and courses need to be arranged. None of this will happen without the existence of experienced mentors who will make it happen. There is, in other words, a need for mentors who will become embedded in the life of the local church and will gain the trust of its people so that TEE can be introduced and launched with enthusiasm and with a sense of ownership on all sides. This includes identifying, recruiting and training local group leaders. Mentors therefore need to be a kind of minister, that is, someone who will come to know and serve the people of those churches and their parishes and districts in a pastoral or diaconal kind of way.

They also need to produce course materials which are appropriate to the local context. This is not just a question of translating materials imported from elsewhere, but of writing materials that are appropriate to the culture and context of the local church. This is not just about adapting other people's texts but of genuinely listening to what God is doing in the local area and its churches and then reflecting this in freshly written course materials that allow others to join in with his mission. This can be described as a kind of priestly role: of representing God's mission to the people and showing how they can be caught up within it. This will probably require not one but several contributors, some of whom will be expert in the respective culture and context of the learners, others who will be expert in Scripture and tradition (the core content within the planned learning), and others who will be expert in educational approaches and who can design the educational method used in the course materials.

Finally, the TEE groups need to be kept in touch with their local church and connected to the regional and global church, in order to be guided, encouraged and accredited in their learning, and to receive advice about where to go next in their learning. This is an oversight or episcopal dimension of mentoring.

The question then arises as to how such pastorally minded mentors are themselves to be called, equipped and formed for this ministry. And here, it can be argued, lies a key role for theological colleges and seminaries: that they promote and support TEE and all that it represents through becoming centres that train, educate and form men and women to become such ministers in God's church – that is, that they equip them to become recruiters and equippers of trainers, authors of course materials and people who connect local groups with the wider church. But this training role will require a different orientation from that of colleges and seminaries of the past, which was broadly speaking to draw ordinands into their own collegiate life to equip and fill them with all that they needed before sending them out to dispense that content. Now, to coin a phrase, there is a need for 'flipping

[23]Van Wingerden *et al.*, *TEE in Asia,* p. 20.
[24]Van Wingerden *et al.*, *TEE in Asia,* p. 20.

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the seminary' (building on the educational pedagogy of 'the flipped classroom'[25]), where the learning is seen as taking place primarily in the local communities and local groups and churches of the diocese and district, with the college or seminary becoming the place where this learning is shared, critically reflected upon and enhanced, drawing on and then feeding back into what takes place outside. The college therefore shifts from being a 'centre of learning' to a 'support centre' for prior learning. In other words, it needs to become a kind of travellers' inn, a stopping off point on the way to somewhere else, rather than a destination in its own right. The college or seminary becomes more deliberately a staging post where prospective mentors are equipped and encouraged for their ongoing work in the local communities of their parishes, districts and regions.

This 'flipping' will be as much about the culture of the institution as the content of what goes on in the classroom. It will be focused not on its own life but on the growth of discipleship in the communities, churches and parishes of the areas it serves. For the larger and more established institutions this shift will be harder than for the newer and more flexible institutions because of long-held conventions and attitudes. But shifts should be possible when it is remembered that those institutions were themselves originally founded to serve and encourage the mission of distinct ecclesial movements in the wider church, not least those of Evangelicalism and Anglo-Catholicism.

This 'flipping' will need to see the prospective mentor placed at the centre of all that happens, as in student-centred learning: 'Transformation is the aim, not just information. One way to plan a course is to ask, ' "What *topics* should we teach?" But a better approach is to ask, "How will the *learners* be changed, and how can they bring change in their *contexts*?"'[26]

This takes us back to the holistic nature of discipleship and how growth occurs in at least four domains of learning. So, in the same way, transformation for prospective mentors will need to occur in the behavioural domain, in how they live, in the way they follow Christ and make disciples, that is, in their doing; secondly in the affective domain, in who they are, in their loving of God and neighbour, that is, in their being; thirdly in the cognitive domain, in how they think and know God in their minds, that is, in their knowing; and finally in the relational domain, in how they connect, their loving of neighbours and going to all, that is, in their relating.

From Students to Apprentices

One of the quotations near the start of this paper provides an apt model of how prospective mentors can learn their mentoring: 'Christian discipleship is best understood as a form of apprenticeship undertaken in an intentional community: it is practical and corporate, and involves the whole of life. It is ... not [just] about what we know, but about who we are becoming.'[27] This suggests a number of key

[25]See, for example, Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams, *Flip your Classroom* (Arlington, VA: International Society for Technology in Education, 2012).

[26]Van Wingerden *et al.*, *TEE in Asia,* p. 24.

[27]ACC, *Intentional Discipleship*, p. 81.

ingredients to what is needed: that the whole church community is involved, not just those in the college or seminary; that the learner undertakes a form of apprenticeship rather than just a traditional degree programme or a course in professional skills; and that every aspect of the person is affected – their heart, soul and body as well as their mind.

Recognizing that apprenticeships combine learning 'on the job' with times away from the workplace for classroom learning and reflection, a mentoring programme should be designed to be interactive, with different stages in different modes. A first stage, then, of 'taking in', could begin with placement learning 'on the job', in a setting where TEE already takes place, to learn all about it and be formed by it. This could be structured as a foundation year in a church community, learning about the context and the life of the community within that, undertaking different TEE courses and progressing to becoming a group leader. This formational stage would exhibit many of the features of *paideia.*

Such a foundation year would show the importance of beginning with the local context:

> Context should always come before content in developing a TEE course. What are the learners' situations? What challenges do they and their churches face? What are the dominant religions in their country? Are the churches old or young, growing or stagnating? How can TEE learners make a difference in these contexts? What would mission and transformation look like in church or society?[28]

This echoes the way that, in TEE, generally self-study comes before the group work, a 'flipped classroom' approach which 'enables learners to grasp the key teaching points beforehand, thus freeing up the group time for discussion, not lecture. This is especially relevant for adult learners who have a rich store of life experience to share in the discussion.'[29]

A second and central stage, of 'taking stock', will involve the apprentice in exploring and reflecting on how the Gospel, passed on through Scripture and tradition, finds embodiment and expression in their respective context. To adapt a well-known expression, they have had the experience (in the first stage) but now they need to find the meaning. How is God's mission at work in the church life of their context and how are people actually growing in their discipleship within that? Answering these questions is necessary if the apprentice is to become the kind of reflective mentor who can help fashion and write course materials in the years ahead. This kind of exploration and constructive reflection is best done with other apprentices, so that they can support each other and be supported collectively by those training them. And this is where the college or seminary makes its crucial contribution, providing the learning environment and expert support to allow this to happen in a structured and academically rigorous way. Residential settings, where it can happen intensively and in the context of daily prayer and worship, are ideal. These can be either long-term residence, as in traditional patterns of

[28]Van Wingerden *et al.*, *TEE in Asia,* pp. 25-26.
[29]Van Wingerden *et al.*, *TEE in Asia,* p. 27.

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residential training, or in a series of short intensive periods of residence, as in the weekend conference programmes provided by many courses across the Anglican Communion.

It is important to recognize the place of discipline-based learning within this stage, for the academic study of Scripture, Christian history, liturgy, doctrine, pastoral care and mission provide key ingredients in such reflection. They are the means by which the apprentice can begin to identify how the *weft* of Christian tradition has combined with the *warp* of the culture and faith of the people of their context and how, by God's grace, there has been a marrying of the two into a new and fresh example of the incarnational principle at the heart of Christianity. If he or she can learn to appreciate how this has taken place in one context then they will be able to encourage it in other contexts in the years ahead. In other words, discipline-based learning, which colleges and seminaries are already structured to provide, is crucial in helping the apprentice understand how God's mission has been at work through Christian history and how it may be at work in their own setting. So the disciplines will be taught not for their own sake but with the intention of helping learners appreciate how God's saving mission is at work now and in the future in different kinds of way and, therefore, what discipleship entails in this place at this time. Rigour and consistency will be needed or, rather, the systematic discipline of *wissenshaft*.

The third stage of apprenticeship will be an expression of the 'taking action' phase of TEE as a whole, except in this case it will be as a trainee mentor who comes to inhabit the diaconal, priestly and episcopal aspects of that ministry. As in apprenticeships generally, this will involve working alongside an experienced mentor who helps to form the trainee in the field in every aspect of the role. They will see, learn and grow into becoming an organizer and encourager of TEE groups, a recruiter and trainer of group leaders, a producer of appropriate study materials, and a connector of the local learning groups with wider church life at every level. In other words, they will become *ministers* of discipleship and, indeed, ministers of the the church as a whole.

Conclusion

For theological colleges and seminaries all of this represents something of a paradigm shift, away from the traditional seminary model of the Catholic tradition and the university-based model of the Protestant tradition. The 'flipping' of their orientation, away from a focus on their own communal and academic life and towards a defined role within the wider life of the church, and especially towards promoting and supporting the discipleship of the whole people of God, is a radical change which will affect the culture as much as the content of what they do. To see those who come to them as apprentices more than as students or trainees, engaged in a process of learning that primarily takes place beyond their four walls, will be unsettling for some. However, all this will bring great benefits to these institutions, because it will re-connect and re-embed them in the life of the church at grass roots level, giving them a valued and indispensable role in the mission of the church in diverse contexts. For some institutions this paradigm shift may involve a certain loss

of prestige and status, as they lose a sense of independence from the wider church, but the flip-side of this is an anchoring of their life back in the body that founded them in the first place. Such a shift will move them from being what some have perceived as self-serving institutions to becoming indispensable servants of the church, bodies intimately connected with the church at large, an entity Pope Francis has memorably described as the community of missionary disciples.

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