

UUC HISTORY

After the Vietnam War came to a close in 1975, thousands of Vietnamese fled Vietnam and took refuge in many countries around the world. Many of these refugees found their way to the United States, particularly in Southern California, where various churches became established to meet their spiritual needs.



In 1985, the Vietnamese School for Lay Leadership was established at West Anaheim United Methodist Church.



In 1987, VTC moved to 9447 Edinger Ave, Westminster, California. Rev. Bill Mocks joins the board.



On January 6, 1992, fire broke out at the building that housed VTC. All was destroyed. It was a devastating blow for the college. It seemed, at the time, the end of the college.

In September that very same year, VTC moved to a newly purchased building at 14032 Lake Street, Garden Grove, California. Training in Vietnam began with the collaboration of Rev. Pham Xuan Thieu, who graduated from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.



Students had to meet with the instructors one by one or in a very small group, take lessons, and complete assignments in their own homes to avoid persecution from the government. Because of the socio-political condition at the time, a certificate program would take up to ten years to complete. The demand for ministerial training in Vietnam was increasing as the number of house churches grew and the only Bible College of the Evangelical Church in Vietnam had been closed since 1976. VTC responded to the need and was able to contribute to the tremendous growth of the Vietnam church under severe persecution.



In 1999, classes were started in Sydney and Melbourne, Australia.



In 2003, UCC moved to a new location at First Baptist Church, 14200 Goldenwest Street, Westminster, CA. UCC intensified the training in Vietnam, Cambodia and the translating and publishing of theological resources. UCC also collaborated with San Francisco Theological Seminary in the Master of Divinity program, as well as with Payap University in Thailand, also for the Master of Divinity program.



In 2005, UCC began offering our programs online.



In 2010, UUC started undergraduate and graduate programs in the Indonesian language. Rev. Cuong Huu Nguyen retired from the presidency of UUC. Dr. Raymond Striler was invited to serve as Acting president and Rev. Son Xuan Nguyen as the Vice-president and Chief Executive Officer. Rev. Cuong was invited to serve as Chancellor of the Vietnamese School of the Theology and Rev. Samuel Sikitari as Chancellor of the Indonesian School of Theology.

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In the summer of 1978, a group of Vietnamese ministers restarted the Theological Education by Extension program, a program which had been originally established in Vietnam before the end of the war. Classes were held at Friends Church of Garden Grove in California on weekends, and correspondence lessons were sent to Vietnamese students who took refuge in other countries around the world.



In August 1986, the Theological Education by Extension program and the Vietnamese School for Lay Leadership joined together to form the Vietnamese Theological College (VTC), an exempted religious school, with Saint Anselm's Episcopal Church in Garden Grove, CA as our headquarters. Classes were held in Los Angeles, San Jose, Houston, Washington D.C. and several other cities. The



leaders of the school included Rev. Spencer Sutherland (Chairman/President), Rev. Phu Hoang Le, Rev. Son Xuan Nguyen, Rev. Hai Nam Nguyen, Dr. Minh Le Do and Jan Hendrick, J.D.

In 1991, Rev. Phu Hoang Le assumed the presidency of VTC, Rev. Cuong Huu Nguyen served as Academic Dean, and Rev. Son Xuan Nguyen as Administrator. Rev. Cuong Huu Nguyen had just been released from prison in Vietnam after serving almost seven years for preaching the Gospel. With the intervention from the U.S. State Department, he was released and forced to leave the country immediately.



Rev. C. H. Nguyen

In 1995, because of his health condition, Rev. Phu Hoang Le resigned. Rev. Cuong Huu Nguyen assumed UUC's presidency and Rev. Dung Thien Le assumed the deanship. Rev. Dung Thien Le had served as an assistant minister with Rev. Cuong Huu Nguyen and had been imprisoned for five years in Vietnam for preaching the Gospel.

Also in 1995, VTC became approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education (www.bppe.ca.gov) as a liberal arts degree granting institution, whereby "approved" means compliance with state standards as set forth in the Education Code.

In 1997, to evade scrutiny from the government of Vietnam, the school's name was changed to Union College of California (UCC). The following year, UCC moved to the newly purchased building at 13392 Taft Street, Garden Grove, California, and brought 32 students from Vietnam to study in undergraduate and graduate programs.



Realizing the situation in Thailand and Cambodia was politically and religiously more open than in Vietnam, UCC held classes in Bangkok, Thailand in 2002 and later in Sihanoukville, Cambodia.



Students would cross the border twice a year and stay for a month each time to study with teachers sent from the U.S. and Canada.

Classes were also started in Seoul, South Korea.

In 2007, UCC started a new Master of Divinity program. About 50 students registered for the first class. In 2009, UCC re-organized the school and changed our name to Union University of California (UUC). We expanded the mission of the university and developed the Doctor of Ministry program taught in English.



In 2011, Rev. Dale Sewall became the President of UUC. The university celebrated our 25th anniversary.