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Dear Friends of Trinity,

Greetings to you from Trinity College Bristol in Jesus' name! I am writing to each one of you as the Principal of Trinity College in Bristol. I am delighted that Dr David Ball has come to join the faculty as our **Director of Open Learning**. This is an act of faith and a step of obedience both on the part of David and his wife Angie and the college as we together think creatively and pray imaginatively about the future of the church in the UK and the preparation and training for missional leadership for such a church.

David brings so much to us, and I am writing to encourage you to support him financially, in prayer and in every other possible way. I see the call of God clearly on David and believe he will make a unique and distinctive contribution to the cause of Christ as he serves on our faculty. On my office wall I have the words of Hudson Taylor: 'Unless there is an element of risk in our exploits for God there is no need for faith.' I believe David is demonstrating this in his life of faith.

To explain something of what David will be doing for us, may I first say something about Trinity? Trinity College is a theological college that historically has focussed on training men and women for ministry in the Church of England. I came here as Principal four years ago, wanting to see the college grow and in particular to see it becoming **a place where people are effectively trained as 'missionary' leaders, not just for the Church of England, but for the whole church in Britain and indeed beyond**. I come from India myself, but have been in this country for 20 years now; my passionate and prayerful desire is to see Britain brought back to Christ. My ambition for Trinity is to see us contributing to that new evangelization of Britain – by giving our students a deep love for God, his Word and his world. I would love them to have a proper confidence in the Gospel of Jesus with a bold vision for mission and ministry. I believe in a genuine openness to the Holy Spirit and a willingness to live and minister in the power of the Spirit. We at Trinity are committed to a robust training that is relevant, adventurous and faithful.

It has been exciting to see some of this happening in the years since I came here: Trinity has been growing, we have an increasingly impressive staff team, and we are reaching out. We are learning to stick our neck out in faith.

One of the initiatives we are taking this year is to launch **Open Learning**, a form of extension studies, which involves students learning at home and meeting regularly in a tutorial discussion in their local context but spending the rest of their time in their jobs, families and local mission and ministry contexts! Theology is being learned not in the classroom context of college, but in real-life contexts; students are learning not just biblical and theological knowledge, but also to think about applying their learning in the day to day context of the mission of the local church. To begin with, we have entered into a partnership with Interactive Christian Extension Studies (ICES) to offer a programme that gets to grip with the Bible as well as some basic theological issues. It is a demanding form of training, but we have been excited by what the way that people's lives have been transformed through studying the Bible in this way.

We are hoping to see this form of training develop. It is also a top priority for us to train our students for leadership, evangelism and mission. Britain is very much a mission-field these days, and in Trinity we are not interested in training students who will be good at supervising declining churches, but in equipping students to go out in faith and reach out in bringing Christ to people

and places in new and pioneering ways. We believe this will be accomplished as we train ordinary women and men to know God better and to become more and more confident in their knowledge and application of the scriptures to daily life.

David is coming to help us in this important area of our college development. We have been conscious for some time of needing someone to make the resources of our faculty available for the local church by means of **Open Learning**, and David is the answer to that prayer. He has already been helping develop our partnership with ICES and also encouraging new study groups to start among churches that are led by Trinity alumni and friends.

He will help establish our **Open Learning** by working with existing ICES' students and by developing new groups. David's recent experience in India with the work of TAFTEE will then enable us to develop the Open Learning potential of courses that are presently only offered to residential students in the college. In the next few years, it is our vision to have study groups throughout the UK and to offer programmes at all different levels as a resource to equip the church in the UK for mission. This may be a resource that your church could use. We would love this to happen.

David will also have a key role in our New Testament faculty, where he joins some of the finest scholars and teachers as part of Trinity's heritage of biblical scholarship.

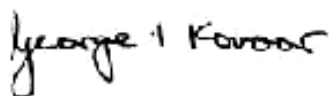
I could go on. I do not need to tell you who know David how much he and his wife Angie will bring to us – with experience of working in India in developing and revising programmes for pastors, lay people, missionaries and development workers as well as in writing courses and tutoring groups at various levels. Much more important than all of that is that he is someone who brings to us love for Christ and his word, knowledge of the Holy Spirit, passion for people and for mission. We are already valuing his presence among us greatly.

As you will probably know, as Crosslinks Mission Partners, David and Angie have been **living by faith**, trusting God to meet their needs through the prayer and support of those who have partnered with them in their calling. Many Christian workers in missions and similar Christian organizations are supported in that way. We have agreed that David will be continuing on that basis in his work at Trinity. From our point of view this is necessary, because the college does not have the funding for his post at present: we could wait for the funding, but this would mean that we could not move forward with such a strategic appointment for some time. We believe, however, that the Lord is calling his and us to move forward. And we are so glad to have some – two others in addition to David – who are willing to join in our work on a 'faith basis'; it is a fine model for our students, and indeed for all of us.

You will appreciate that we want to support David and Angie in their step of faith – in our step of faith together. And I hope you will support him, with your prayers, your encouragement and, if the Lord is calling you to do this, with your sacrificial giving. We see this as a strategic way of serving Christ's church and furthering his mission, and we hope you – and maybe your church – will see it similarly, and want to participate in this venture.

With my warmest greetings in our Lord,

Your brother in Christ's service,



Revd Canon George Iype Kovoov
Principal, Chaplain to The Queen