Wang Weifan

EASTER MESSAGE

On the Shores of the Sea of Galilee
(John 21:1-22)

On the shores of the Sea of Galilee, it was just as it had been in the beginning, so like the day when Jesus first called them! The disciples were still at their fishing, still laboring hard throughout the night but coming up empty-handed, still filling their nets at Jesus’ command. What the Risen Christ left to the disciples was a new pattern, a new exhortation, a new call.

Jesus had told the over self-confident Peter that he would fail. But he was also convinced that Peter would repent and urged him to strengthen his brothers and sisters. Only those who have fallen and risen again, only those who have been sorely tested but have turned back to follow Jesus again, only they can understand their brothers and sisters, support them and kindle the seeds of fire which remain in the hearts of their generation. A person who does not know that she or he is also encircled by weakness cannot show understanding and sympathy for those who are ignorant and lost, and thus cannot be a priest, or a good shepherd.

As we follow Christ throughout our lives, we are called many times. Each time something more is required of us, and each time the sense of the call is more profound. The Lord’s first call to Peter was simply “from now on you will be catching people.” But the final call was a call to glorify God through the cruellest of deaths, just like that of Christ himself.

Church Magazine Criticizes Local Religious Policy

In Henan

Zhejiang Provincial Christian Conference Meets

First Ordination After 1949 In Sichuan, More Ordinations In Other Provinces

Group Baptism In Yangzhou, Jiangsu

Bible Printing Tops Four Million

China Christian Council Publishes Simplified Christian Primer

Churches Rebuilt After Floods

Jiang Zemin Meets With Chinese Religious Leaders

Foreign Visitors Welcomed

ANS Documentation:
The Constitution Of The China Christian Council
Church Order For Trial Use In Chinese Churches

92.2.1
92.2.2
92.2.3
92.2.4
92.2.5
92.2.6
92.2.7
92.2.8
92.2.9
92.2.10
92.2.11
Church Magazine Criticizes Local Religious Policy in Henan

In its January issue, the national Christian magazine, Tian Feng, strongly criticizes the behavior of some Religious Affairs Bureau (RAB) cadres in Henan province in northern China. Under the headline "Atheism must not be propagated inside the church", the magazine quotes a letter from a leading evangelist in Henan who had been asked by RAB officials to distribute atheist propaganda in his church and organize Christians to study this material. The evangelist wrote that he would not comply, and raised the issue with the national office of the China Christian Council.

In a signed commentary, the magazine calls this incident "a clear violation of the policy of religious freedom", declaring that this RAB action had made things very difficult for local Christians. Quoting regulations from the Central Committee which state that "nobody is allowed to propagate atheism in places of religious activity," the commentary then calls on the RAB officials involved to "grasp the spirit of this (religious) policy," arguing that only then would believers not lose their enthusiasm for socialism. The commentary argues that it was not the responsibility of RAB officials to stress differences between faith and atheism, or to eradicate religious belief.

In recent years, Tian Feng has published several reports that criticized violations of religious policy. As the Work Report for the Fifth National Chinese Christian Conference indicates, more than 500 cases of such violations have been brought to the attention of the China Christian Council from 1986-91, some very serious.

Says Bishop Shen Yifan, General Secretary of the China Christian Council, "We are very concerned with all cases of violation of religious freedom. Defending the rights of the church, the China Christian Council will strongly request the authorities concerned to take appropriate action to correct the violations." [ANS]

Zhejiang Provincial Christian Conference Meets

The Fifth Zhejiang Christian Conference met last month in Hangzhou, the first provincial Christian gathering following the national Christian meeting in Beijing in January. 198 delegates, 36 of them women, came together from all around the province to discuss "running the church well according to the principles of self-government, self-support and self-propagation".

With almost one million Protestant communicants, the east coast province of Zhejiang has the highest percentage of Christians on the China mainland. According to the work report presented at the conference, Zhejiang now has more than 1,990 churches, half of which are newly built or restored, and 3,571 meeting points. To serve the Christian community, 273 seminarians and church workers have been trained over the last eight years. [OVER]
Zhejiang Provincial Christian Conference/2

It was also reported that the Zhejiang Christian Council has distributed more than two million Chinese hymnals all over the country in the last decade. The Zhejiang Christian Council also serves as a Bible distribution center, publishes the semi-annual Collected Sermons, and has produced a hymnal for Christians from the "Little Flock" tradition.

Similar to the Fifth National Christian Conference, the average age of delegates in Hangzhou was much lower than at previous meetings. More than 30% were under fifty. In the same spirit of encouraging a younger leadership, five young pastors were ordained during the conference. Another eight seminary graduates from the province had been ordained during the Fifth National Christian Conference. Of these 13 new pastors, six are women.

Delegates felt that one of the most important questions facing the church is the need to "raise the quality of faith" for new Christians. Pastoral care has not been able to keep up with the rapid growth of the church. According to one report, because many Christians lack a strong Biblical foundation, they "have difficulty in countering both heretical teachings and illegal and separatist activities which make use of religion." Greater attention to seminary education, the training of voluntary church workers and more short-term training classes were proposed as the best means to deal with this problem.

A second important question discussed at the Conference was the need to strengthen the church and church order. The delegates agreed that church order should be based on the principles of the Bible, church tradition, the sovereignty of the Chinese church and democracy. Because most churches in Zhejiang have no formal system of church order, the new "Church Order for Trial Use in Chinese Churches" (See ANS Documentation, this issue) was recommended for study, use and adaptation in local churches.

The conference also heard a report on the Fifth National Christian Conference, elected new leadership and discussed international ecumenical relations. Rev. Peter W.H. Cai was reelected head of the Zhejiang Christian Council and the Zhejiang Christian Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee.

The Conference concluded with a service of worship in Hangzhou's historic Si Cheng Church. [ANS]

ANS 92.2.3

First Ordination After 1949 In Sichuan: Ordinations In Other Provinces

More than 500 Christians, many of them moved to tears, witnessed the first ordination service held after 1949 in Sichuan province in central China. On this occasion, two new pastors, one of them a woman, were ordained into the ministry.

In an exhortation after the sermon, the congregation was told to listen to their new pastors, to worship only in their church, and not to be taken in by self-appointed evangelists. [OVER]
Six seminary graduates were ordained as pastors in a joint service in the Hebei provincial capital, Shijiazhuang, on January 12. Another five graduates were ordained in Hangzhou, Zhejiang, in mid-February. Both of these ordination services reflect the impetus given to local churches by the ordination of 45 new pastors during the Fifth National Christian Conference in Beijing in January. (See ANS 92.1.4)

The Chinese church has less than 1,000 ordained ministers, their average age being about 70 years. Between 1981 and 1991, less than 75 young seminary graduates were ordained into the ministry.

A report from Dushan in Guizhou province in the southwest relates that after a lay training class conducted in October, 1991, two pastors, seven elders, and seven evangelists were ordained in a joint service. The two new pastors, one woman and one man, are a retired teacher and a retired doctor. Guizhou province now has seven female ministers, six of whom come from national minorities.

In the coastal province of Shandong, two pastors and 13 elders from the Linyi area were ordained in November last year. [ANS]

**Group Baptism In Yangzhou, Jiangsu**

The largest baptism service ever held in Yangzhou city, located in the eastern province of Jiangsu, took place at the end of last year. 130 believers from the surrounding counties, where churches and family gathering points have no pastors, were baptized in one of the city churches. According to their own wishes, believers were baptized either by sprinkling or by immersion. [ANS]

**Bible Printing Tops Four Million**

More than four million Bibles have been produced by the Amity Printing Press in Nanjing since it commenced operation in December, 1987. This brings the number of Bibles printed since 1980 by the China Christian Council to more than six million. All of these Bibles are for the use of individuals, meeting points and churches in China. They are distributed and sold through national Bible distribution centers, as well as provincial and local church organizations.

Almost one million of the Bibles produced by the Amity press are in the traditional Chinese script, which many Christians still prefer, and which older people may find easier to read. The majority of Bibles, however, are now printed in the simplified script, making them attractive for younger people and new Christians.

The Amity Printing Press has also printed 200,000 Reference Bibles, 180,000 Bibles in different minority languages (Korean, Lisu, Jingpo, Miao and Yi) and, recently, 10,000 gospel parallels. [ANS]
China Christian Council Publishes Simplified Christian Primer

"God loves me. God loves you. God loves him. God loves us all." Thus begins a primer the China Christian Council published in 1991 for use in church-run literacy classes. As many older Christians, especially women, are illiterate, there is a burning need for such a book.

Written by pastor Zhang Xintian from Shanghai, the primer, which comes in three little booklets, aims at enabling Christians "to understand the basics of Christian faith as well as to raise their educational level so that they will be able to read the Bible and other literature." It retells stories from the New Testament and gives advice on how to be a good Christian, raising issues like love among neighbors, honesty, and involvement in church activities.

The 20,000 copies of the first edition sold out within weeks. A second edition is currently being printed. [ANS]

Churches Rebuilt After Floods

Zhangjicen Church in Jiashan county in the eastern province of Anhui was one of the many churches destroyed during the disastrous floods in the summer of 1991. Last October, local Christians started rebuilding the church with their own hands. Organizing themselves into daily work teams of about 20, they finished the new building within 10 weeks. The church, which seats 700, was opened with a thanksgiving service on December 15.

More than three hundred churches in Anhui and northern Jiangsu which were damaged by the flooding applied to the China Christian Council for aid in their rebuilding program, according to Associate General Secretary Rev. Shen Cheng'en. Shen visited damaged churches in the two provinces earlier this month. [ANS]

Jiang Zemin Meets With Chinese Religious Leaders

Jiang Zemin, General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, met with fourteen Chinese religious leaders on February 28 in Beijing. Included in the meeting were: Bishop K.H.Ting, President of the China Christian Council (CCC) and Chair of the National Committee of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement of the Protestant Churches in China(TSPM); Bishop Shen Yifan, General Secretary of the CCC; and Mr. Luo Guanzong, Secretary General of the TSPM.

In the three and a half hour meeting, Jiang listened to the opinions of religious leaders and then spoke on recent developments and government policy. According to a report received by ANS, he emphasized that "respect for and protection of religious freedom is the basic and long term policy of the Party and the government, which will not be changed....In those areas where religious work has gone well, we should do it even better. In those areas where religious work has been inadequate, we should conscientiously work to improve it." [ANS]
Foreign Visitors Welcomed

A delegation from the National Council of Churches of Christ (USA), led by its newly elected president, Dr. Syngman Rhee, visited China last month. They worshipped in churches in the countryside, met with staff and students at theological seminaries, and familiarized themselves with the work of the Amity Foundation. This visit was the first delegation from the NCCC-USA since 1981.

Gunnar Staalsett, General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, visited China in February and March this year. Staalsett participated in the Sunday service at Chongwenmen Church in Beijing, and greeted the congregation. Staalsett also met with Bishop K.H. Ting and gave a lecture at Nanjing Theological Seminary.

A delegation of United Methodist (USA) theological students visited the seminaries in Nanjing and Beijing at the beginning of this year. [ANS]

***************

China
Provinces mentioned in this volume.
Article I
This Council shall be known as the China Christian Council (CCC).

Article II
The CCC serves as the organization which deals with the affairs of the Chinese Church on a national level. Its aim is to unite all Chinese Christians who believe in the heavenly Father and who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, to uphold the national Constitution and the laws, regulations and policies of the land, and to effectively administer the sovereign and self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating Chinese church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in accordance with the Scriptures, with one heart and unity of purpose.

Article III
The CCC exalts Jesus Christ and his cross and unites all churches throughout China with Christ as our Head, in developing together our role in building up the Body of Christ, so as to bear excellent witness to the Gospel of Christ and offers its services to the churches in the performance of their ministry. It advocates mutual respect in matters of faith and worship, and the spirit of "bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" in relationships among the members.

Article IV
The CCC promotes theological education and the publication of the Bible, hymnbooks and other literature for the Chinese church, the exchange of information among local churches in evangelism, pastoral work and administration, and promotes the formulation of church orders for local churches and the development of friendly relations with churches overseas.

Article V
The CCC shall be accountable to the National Chinese Christian Conference. The relationship between the CCC and the National Committee of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement of the Protestant Churches in China is one of cooperation with differentiation of function, which involves joining with that Committee in convening the National Conference prescribed in Articles, and convening other joint meetings as the need arises.

Article VI
The CCC serves to strengthen ties with all provincial, autonomous region and municipality level Christian councils or church affairs committees, through setting up channels of communication, the exchange of experiences, study and work towards the resolution of common problems. It is the responsibility of provincial, autonomous region and municipality level Christian councils or church affairs committees to observe and carry out the resolutions of the CCC.

Article VII
The plenum of the CCC shall be elected at the National Chinese Conference, and its members shall serve until the following meeting of that Conference, with re-election leading to a further period of service.

Article VIII
The CCC shall have a President, several Vice-presidents, and a General Secretary, together with a number of Standing Committee members, all of whom shall be elected by the plenum. As the need arises, an honorary President may be elected to serve until the following National Christian Conference.

Article IX
The Standing Committee of the CCC shall consist of the President, Vice-presidents, General Secretary and members of the Standing Committee, who shall deal with business when the full committee is not in session. When necessary, names may be proposed for co-option or withdrawal and consultants may be invited who will serve until the next National Christian Conference.

Article X
This Council shall appoint several deputy General Secretaries, following nomination by the General Secretary and approval by the Standing Committee.

Article XI
The Standing Committee shall appoint working groups or other specialized committees to serve during the term of the Standing Committee which appoints them.

Article XII
The National Chinese Christian Conference shall meet every five years, but when need arises, it may be convened earlier or later. The nomination of delegates shall be decided by joint deliberation of the Standing Committee of this Council and that of the National Committee of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement of the Protestant Churches in China. The CCC plenum shall meet every two years, but when necessary, it may be convened earlier or later. The Standing Committee shall meet annually, but when necessary, it may meet more or less frequently.
Article XIII
The President of the CCC, with the assistance of the Vice-presidents and the General Secretary, shall direct the work of the Standing Committee. The President, Vice-presidents and General Secretary shall comprise the President's working group to deal with the daily business of the Standing Committee. It shall meet every six months. When necessary, the President's working group of the CCC shall hold joint meetings with the Chairperson's working group of the National Committee of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement of the Protestant Churches in China.

Article XIV
Funds for the CCC shall be raised by the Standing Committee.

Article XV
The CCC shall be based in Shanghai.

Article XVI
The CCC may not be dissolved except by decision of the National Chinese Christian Conference.

Article XVII
This Constitution takes effect upon approval by the National Chinese Christian Conference and may be subject to revision by that Conference.

ANS Documentation: Church Order For Trial Use In Chinese Churches (Translation)

Preface
Under the loving guidance of our heavenly Father, the vast majority of local churches in China have already embarked upon the path of church unity. In order to strengthen self-government so that "all things be done decently and in order," in Christ's Church, Christian councils and Three-Self autonomous regions in more than twenty provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities have, since 1984, drafted church orders of their own for trial use. In 1987, the Standing Committees of the China Christian Council (CCC) and the Chinese Christian Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee (TSPM) passed the "Resolution on the Advancement of Self-Government through the Drafting of a Church Order," and established a "Committee on Church Order" to promote and assist local Christian church affairs organizations in the drafting and perfecting of church orders, and to draft a model church order for use all over China as a standard for the reference of local churches. The basic content of this church order is drafted in accordance with the teachings of the Bible, the inheritance of church tradition and the life of the church ecumenical, and is integrated with the actual context of the church in China today; it has its own Chinese characteristics. According to present needs, there are special sections on the church, believers, the sacraments, ministry, churches and meeting points, and administration. Because there are differences in the history, denominational backgrounds and pattern of development of churches in different parts of China, church affairs organizations in different provinces, autonomous regions and munici-
Church Order/2

3. Local churches in China all have two characteristics: they are spiritual communities who worship Christ and who should build up the body of Christ according to the Bible; and they are Chinese social organizations which should observe the Chinese constitution, laws, regulations and government policies, and support social progress, national construction and world peace.

4. According to the principles of self-government, self-support and self-propagation, local churches (including meeting points, here and in what follows), guided by church affairs organizations and with the support of Three-Self patriotic organizations, should unite believers in the conscientious observance of church order, so that with one heart and mind, they can do all their work well.

5. All local churches should take into consideration the different spiritual experiences and needs of believers, and in matters of faith, tradition and liturgy there should be mutual respect and mutual acceptance, not attacks and forced unity. At the same time, efforts should be made to maintain a heart of unity according to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Believers

1. All those who, in their thirst for salvation, attend church to listen to the Word of God and take part in worship gatherings are termed "seekers". After a seeker has been baptized, and enrolled in a church, s/he formally becomes a "believer" and member of the church.

2. Believers should observe the teachings of the Bible, abide by church regulations, support the work of the church and take part in the running of its affairs.

3. Believers should be good citizens who carry out their responsibility to their country and society.

The Sacraments

1. There are two major sacraments of the church: baptism (by immersion or sprinkling) and Holy Communion (or the breaking of bread).

2. Seekers who have taken part in church services over a certain period of time, generally not less than one year, who are willing to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior, who have clearly repented or have been born again, and whose behavior is upright and law-abiding, can apply to the church for enrollment in a catechism class in order to study the Bible, the catechism and the duty of believers. Those who pass an examination on faith and morals administered by a pastor or church worker may be received for baptism.

3. There are two forms of baptism which local churches may use at the request of those about to be baptized: baptism by sprinkling (where water is poured on the top of the head) or baptism by immersion (where the whole body is submerged).

4. All baptized Christians may receive Holy Communion.

5. Holy Communion should be administered in a spirit of piety and solemnity. The liturgy may be decided upon by the local church, and each church may follow one or more forms.

6. The sacraments should be openly administered in churches or meeting points with a member of the clergy officiating. Elderly and infirm church members may, with the consent of the church, receive the sacraments in their homes.

Ministry

1. Ministerial designations:

The ministry refers to ordained church workers who can administer the sacraments. Churches in China at present use the following ministerial designations, which follow the Bible and church tradition:

- Bishop (two different Chinese terms are used, reflecting different church traditions) -- who conditions permit and there is need, provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions may consecrate bishops. A bishop has a wider area of pastoral responsibility, but does not have special administrative authority.

- Pastor (including specially ordained elders whose function is similar to that of pastors, here and in what follows)-- responsible for church work of all kinds, the management of churches and meeting points, the administration of sacraments, the nurture and teaching of believers.

- Teacher (or Assistant Pastor) -- assists the pastor in the nurture and teaching of believers, the management of churches and meeting points, and may also administer the sacraments.

- Elder -- assists pastors and teachers in the management of churches and meeting points, where his or her responsibility is limited to a specific church and related meeting points. If needed, elders may also take part in the nurture and teaching of believers, and the administration of the sacraments.

[OVER]
Church Order/3

In addition, there may be church workers who have not yet been ordained, and who do not administer sacraments, but who have been appointed or elected by the church and approved by the church affairs organization, and are designated as follows:

Preacher (Missionary) -- Preachers who have received theological education or special training may preach and nurture believers.
Deacon -- A believer responsible for church affairs.
Clergy and preachers (Missionaries) are commonly called pastoral workers.

The foregoing designations may be adopted by churches according to their original traditions and actual conditions.

2. Qualifications for ministry:

2.1 The Bible requires that all male and female ministers should have: (1) a pure Christian faith and a rich spiritual life; (2) an excellent character, behavior and witness; (3) a will to serve Christ and experience in church service; (4) the love and esteem of the majority of believers.

2.2 Clergy should be patriotic and law abiding, with a good reputation in church and society.

2.3 Clergy should uphold the Three-Self principle in running the church well, uniting believers on the road of love-country and love-church, glorifying God and serving humanity, and should practice mutual respect regarding the special characteristics of different Christian beliefs. These three qualifications also apply to preachers.

2.4 A bishop should have a solid theological background, should have been a pastor for at least ten years, and should have rich pastoral experience and held in high esteem by believers.

2.5 Pastors should have had formal theological education, and about three years of experience in church work. Teachers should also have some formal theological education, and about two years of experience in church work. Those who have studied the Bible and theology on their own should pass an examination to prove that they are up to standard.

2.6 Elders are not required to have theological education, but they should uphold orthodox teaching and have many years' experience of service to the church. Elders should have some training before they are eligible to preach.

3. Procedures for the ordination of ministry:

3.1 The consecration of bishops should be proposed by the provincial church affairs organization, after due consultation and discussion with the national church bodies. Candidates qualified to be pastors or teachers should first apply in writing for ordination, and, following approval by their local church, should be recommended by their local church affairs organization or two pastors to the provincial church affairs organization. The provincial church affairs organization shall select three or more pastors to form an ordination committee and examine the candidate(s). If the candidate is qualified, the service of ordination will be held within a fixed period of time.

3.3 Candidates qualified to be elders should apply with the recommendation of their local church organization. The local or city church affairs organization shall select three or more pastors and elders to form an ordination committee and examine the candidate(s). If the candidate is qualified, the ordination will take place within a fixed period of time, and it will be reported to the provincial church affairs organization for the record.

4. The liturgy for the ordination of ministry:

4.1 At least three bishops, and other respected pastors of high standing, all of whom take part in the laying on of hands, are required for the consecration of a bishop.

4.2 At least three pastors are required for the laying on of hands in the ordination of a pastor.

4.3 At least three pastors and elders, one of whom must be a pastor, are required for the ordination of an elder.

4.4 The liturgy of ordination should be solemn and conducted openly within the church. Clergy should not receive or give private favors for ordination.

[OVER]
1. Requirements for the establishment of a church or meeting point:

1.1 A church should have:
(1) A requisite number of believers;
(2) A specially appointed place for worship gatherings;
(3) A full time or voluntary ordained church worker responsible for the nurture of believers;
(4) A church organization or preparatory organization.

1.2 A meeting point should have:
(1) A fixed number of believers;
(2) A fixed meeting point;
(3) A specified preacher (not necessarily ordained);
(4) A church organization or preparatory organization.

1.3 City and county level church affairs organizations should conscientiously take into consideration the believers' worship needs, and should do their utmost to assist in the setting up of churches and meeting points in places which meet the above mentioned requirements.

2. Church and Meeting Point Organizations:
Church and meeting point organizations refer to the management structure of individual churches and meeting points.

A church establishes a church affairs organization (of at least seven persons), and a meeting point establishes a church affairs group (of at least three persons). Members of these organizations should be elected by the believers themselves or named through consultation, with fixed terms of no more than three years, and members eligible for re-election. Church workers should be members ex officio.

3. The Managerial Authority of Church and Meeting Point Organizations:
Church and meeting point organizations should broadly seek out the opinions of believers, and work co-operatively to administer the church with one heart and mind.

3.1 The management of church activities:
(1) All gatherings, worship services and liturgies should be appropriately arranged, and proceed in an orderly fashion, so that God is worshipped in spirit and truth, and disorder is avoided.
(2) Preaching should be done by a regular church worker, or one with a gift for preaching who has undergone church training and is an approved voluntary worker. This will prevent people who disseminate heretical teaching that can split the church, or who carry out illegal activities which harm believers.
(3) Church workers should receive guidance and be brought into reconciliation by the affairs organizations.

3.2 The management of church properties and finances:
(1) Church and meeting point organizations should handle church finances, draft rules for all management procedures and clearly designate the responsibilities to an individual or small group.
(2) Church finances should be taken care of by a finance committee established by the church or meeting point organization, which should act in strict accordance with the system of financial administration, and establish procedures for such things as the opening of the safe, bookkeeping, the issuing of receipts and making cash deposits in the bank. In principle, pastoral workers should not be responsible for bookkeeping and accounting.
(3) Believers should be encouraged to give freely to the work of the church, but they should not be forced to contribute.
Church and meeting point organizations should regularly report to the congregation on church finances, and when necessary, the church affairs organization has the authority to inspect the books.
(4) A strict system of financial examination and approval should be established. Major expenditures should be discussed by the church or meeting point organization.

3.3 Oversight of Believers and Church Workers:
(1) Believers who behave improperly (including those who commit criminal acts), and disobey church teachings should receive warning and instruction by a responsible person in the church. Repeaters and serious offenders should be reported to the church or meeting point organization, after which they may be denied Holy Communion or removed from the church roll.

[OVER]
Church Order/5

(2) Church workers whose behavior is seriously at fault, (including those who commit criminal acts), and disobey church teachings, or who disseminate heretical teachings against the faith, should be reported to the church affairs organization by believers. If, after investigation, the charges are found to be true, the offender should be punished, pastors and teachers by the provincial church affairs organization; elders by the local or municipal church affairs organization; and preachers and deacons by the local church affairs organization. Punishment may include a warning, temporary suspension of responsibilities, removal from office, defrocking or even removal from the church roll.

3.4 Self-government, self-support and self-propagation should be maintained in the church, and individuals or groups at home and abroad who interfere or try to undermine the Three-Self principle should be resisted.

This church order is issued for trial use, following discussion and approval by the Standing Committees of the China Christian Council and the Chinese Christian Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee, and may be revised by the same body. The right of interpretation of this document lies with the Committee on Church Order of the China Christian Council.

NOTE: ANS English translations from the official Chinese text. The Chinese text governs.

Amity News Service
ANS

Subscription Rates (January 1992 - July 1993)

Overseas Facsimile - US$ 75.00
Overseas Airmail - US$ 15.00
Hong Kong Facsimile - HK$125.00
Hong Kong Post - HK$ 75.00

Published bimonthly by Amity Foundation Overseas Coordination Office, 4 Jordan Road, Kowloon, Hongkong. (Phone: [852] 723-8011, Fax: [852] 366-2769)

Cheque payable to: The Amity Foundation, Hong Kong, Ltd.