Shanghai At The Forefront Of Implementing Religious Policy

(ANS) While the Chinese Constitution guarantees freedom of religious belief to all, believers in China are not all granted this right to the same extent at this present time. Local implementation of national religious laws remains woefully inadequate in some places (see ANS 2000.5/6.2). For example, churches in some areas are denied the right to register - a pre-requisite for legal recognition and protection - by lazy or over-anxious government cadres. Often, ignorance of rules and regulations on the part of cadres themselves is one of the reasons for such behavior. May's edition of Tian Feng, the magazine of the China Christian Council, reprints an article taken from the monthly periodical "Legal System Informer" (fazhi xuanchuan). The article, based on an interview with Sun Jinfu, head of the Shanghai Religious Affairs Bureau (RAB) and vice head of the Shanghai United Front Works Department, describes how the city of Shanghai has sought to make religious policy more widely understood at all levels within society.

According to Sun, recent initiatives on the part of the Shanghai Municipal RAB have come largely in response to the national government's attempts to push for the rule of law at every level of government. In order to move in this direction, the Shanghai RAB has so far taken several measures to further promote the correct implementation of religious policy according to the rule of law.

First of all, RAB officials had to study all newly-released religious policy documents diligently so as to gain a thorough grasp of their content. One of the main aspects of religious policy today is the adaptation of religion to socialist society, according to the rule of law. RAB officials are required to understand how the rule of law and the upholding of regulations are of benefit both to religious communities and to the Party. The Party benefits by having a clear and well-defined framework within which to relate to religious groups, while such groups themselves benefit by being compelled to structure and manage themselves in a more organized fashion. RAB officials were also expected to learn how the process of legalization affords all legal religious communities within China protection under the law.
A second measure undertaken by the Shanghai RAB was the dissemination of important policy documents among the general public and among religious believers in particular. The RAB hopes to raise awareness and understanding of religious policy and its implementation among those who are directly affected by it.

Sun states that Chinese religious policy at the moment can best be captured using the following four words: "Protection, Regulation, Education and Prevention (of problems)", with protection forming the cornerstone. The year 2000 has been declared the "Year Of Better Management" by the national State Council, with efforts being made at all levels of government to better regulate and standardize government procedures. This also applies to Religious Affairs Bureaus.

While the Chinese Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, religious communities must register in order to enjoy this legal protection. In other words, both government bodies and religious communities have certain obligations to fulfill in order to turn this constitutional guarantee into a reality. Religious Affairs Bureaus must pay attention not only to the drafting of laws and regulations but also to the enforcing of these laws. Furthermore, RAB officers must concern themselves with legalizing the procedures used to enforce religious policy. Clear measures to legally abolish all false religions is another task that Sun sees for Religious Affairs Bureaus. To accomplish all these tasks, RABs must promote democratic administrative structures within religious communities themselves. They must also work hard to codify regulations into laws and develop good working relationships with RABs at different levels.

Sun notes that Shanghai plans to hold regular activities dedicated to the promotion and wider understanding of religious laws. In order to commemorate the recent fourth anniversary of the "Shanghai Regulations On Religious Affairs", the bureau held a week-long promotion and public awareness campaign on religious policy.

2000.5/6.2

Lofty Ideals, Lousy Practice: Religious Policy At The Grassroots Level

(ANS) Religious Affairs Bureau (RAB) officials serve to implement national religious policy within China. One of their most important functions is the registration of congregations - the prerequisite for believers to enjoy protection under the law. Henan Province in central China is one area where the growth of Christianity has been most pronounced in recent years. However, many Christian groups in this Province are not registered. While some of them choose to remain unregistered, others cannot carry out their registration properly due to numerous bureaucratic hurdles. The following article was contributed to the April edition of Tian Feng, the magazine of the China Christian Council, by two RAB officials from Henan Province. It addresses the issue of church registration, made impossible by the attitude adopted by some cadres.

Xu Shengyi and Li Xinwu preface their article by remarking on the gap which exists between ideal and practice concerning religious policy. While central government officials in Beijing continue to stress the importance of correct implementation of religious policy, this ideal is a long way from materializing at China's grassroots level.
The authors go on to explain how many United Front and RAB officials at the grassroots level themselves only have a superficial understanding of the religious policies they are supposed to be implementing. Unable to respond to believers' queries, such officials refuse to give help, or else provide misleading information. In some instances, the registration of congregations is thus slowed down or even made completely impossible. In response to this situation, many church workers, intending to register their congregations, prepare comprehensive sets of all the relevant documents for the cadres involved. By providing officials with photocopies of religious policy documents and related material, these church workers hope to achieve their aim of registration in a smooth and expeditious manner. As Xu and Li point out, the fact that church workers commonly have to undertake such self-help measures indicates the widespread nature of the problem of implementing religious policy.

Li and Xu go on to explore the reasons for incorrect behavior among RAB officials. A poor working attitude often lies at the root of ignorance about religious policy. Many cadres do not like to study policy materials and only do so half-heartedly. Instead of incorporating into their thinking what they learn from such documents, many cadres merely pay lip-service to regulations. As a result, many cadres do not even know the rules and regulations they need to know, while others actually substitute their own personal opinions for government policy. Li and Xu argue that officials with such an attitude toward their work do harm to the public image of the government.

Another reason for the unsatisfactory working attitude of many RAB officials is their lack of confidence in believers' intellectual capacities. Many officials are of the opinion that believers are unable to follow government regulations anyway, so there is little point in trying to explain religious policy to such believers in the first place. As the authors remark, such an attitude resembles the behavior of officials in feudal times.

Finally, some officials fear that their jobs will become more difficult if believers become too aware of their rights under the law. In order to avoid such complications, some officials try to keep government policies on religion a secret from believers, a work style which in the long run only tends to exacerbate difficulties.

Hence, while party heads at the national level underline the importance of correctly implementing religious policy, their representatives at the grassroots level often fail to carry out their duties in this respect. Li and Xu propose some measures which could be taken to correct this problem: Firstly, they insist that religious policy be made public to all ordinary believers at the grassroots level. Local officials should treat believers as equals and not with an old-style, feudal, arrogant approach. Secondly, central government representatives need to formally remind local government to pay attention to the correct implementation of religious policy. Finally, government offices that are known to harm believers' rights should be thoroughly monitored in order to protect the believers whose rights are being violated.
The Ideal Woman Believer - Devout, Diligent, Dedicated...

(ANS) Around two-thirds of China's Protestant Christians are female, and most of them are elderly. This demographic distribution presents not only a challenge but also an opportunity to the church. In recent years, as the predominant social group within the church, women have been receiving more attention (see ANS 2000.3/4.3). In May's Tian Feng, the magazine of the China Christian Council, Yu Chao explores the Biblical role of women. Yu is an evangelist working in the northern part of northeastern Heilongjiang Province, and his article reveals typical attitudes towards women in the church at this present time.

Yu structures his article according to the different social roles women can play. He starts with women's roles within the home, deriving part of his inspiration from Proverbs 31. For Yu, the ideal Christian housewife is as "her husband's assistant." Such a wife's household is always well-organized, which spares the husband domestic worries and earns the respect of the husband and the children. A good housewife watches over the spiritual needs of the family, prays for her family members and encourages them to strive at work and in their devotional life. Yu is convinced that, to a large extent, a happy family life depends on the woman. As a mother, a Christian woman's duty is to bring up her children according to God's teachings and to prepare them for Christian life. Here, Yu cites the example of Timothy, whose progress in faith was inseparably linked to his grandmother's and mother's teachings.

A crucial factor for maintaining harmony within most Chinese households is the relationship between mother- and daughter-in-law. Yu remarks how many women depict their mother-in-laws as ill-treating them, which only highlights their own disobedience. Yu draws on the Biblical example of Ruth and Naomi as a fitting model for such a relationship. Ruth deeply respected her mother-in-law and declined to leave her alone. Yu sees Ruth as a model for contemporary Chinese. For him, Ruth's respect for the elderly is highly instructive in a society where more and more people face the problem of how to age with dignity. Sisters in the Lord must care for the elderly with a loving spirit and help to fulfill their physical and mental needs, Yu concludes.

The author then turns to the role of women in the church, a role that can vary according to the individual's involvement. Women can be regular believers, church workers or even form part of the church leadership. In order to fulfill their most basic role of being a good Christian, Yu writes, women ought to make guidance through the Holy Spirit their golden rule of life. As the Lord's servants within the church, women should not hold back in passive obedience but should develop an attitude of active participation. The ideal church worker, Yu explains, assists fellow believers in establishing a healthy faith, guides them to strive after the truth and, above all, offers help selflessly. As far as women in church leadership is concerned, Yu refers to the story of Deborah in the book of Judges as an illustration of the ideal.

Finally, Yu Chao reflects on the role of Christian women in society. He sees three functions: first of all, women can have a positive effect in their place of work. In particular, Yu mentions their management abilities as businesswomen. Secondly,
women ought to contribute to charitable causes within society. Here, Yu reminds readers that Jesus was financially supported by some of his female followers. Thirdly, women play an important role in giving testimony to their faith. The first visitors to Jesus’ grave, and thus the first messengers of his resurrection, were women, Yu points out. In a similar manner, modern-day Christian women must take up the task of evangelism, Yu concludes.

Old Ingredients, New Recipe: Youth Meeting Attracts Young And Old

(ANS) Weekly youth meetings form part of the congregational life of most Chinese churches. In many parishes, such "youth" meetings even attract believers well into their thirties and forties. In May’s edition of *Tian Feng*, the magazine of the China Christian Council, Long Zhengquan describes a new-style youth meeting created by his church in Linchuan, Jiangxi Province.

Young believers are the future of the church, states Long. While many believers pay lip service to this fact, congregations still fail to consider the special needs of their younger members. Young people think and feel differently from the middle-aged and the elderly, the author notes. This being the case, young people need different styles of worship if they are to feel at home in the church.

Long’s church in Linchuan has kept the main ingredients of traditional-style youth meetings, namely, hymn-singing, prayer, message and discussion. However, by adding some "spice" to the old ingredients, youth meetings in Linchuan have evolved rapidly in their liveliness and appeal for young believers. For example, hymn singing now includes the singing of more modern choruses with up-beat rhythms, which are rarely heard in regular worship. Going even one step further, participants in the youth group are even invited to dance along to the chorus tunes. In this way, as they sing, young believers experience their faith in a new and holistic way, involving body, mind and spirit.

Other innovations include the dramatization of Biblical stories, some study of musical theory and the memorizing of certain Bible verses. All such activities are intended to help young people in Linchuan experience the Biblical message in new and deeper ways. It is important, Long notes, that all these innovations are not an end in themselves but serve the overall aim of promoting the spiritual growth of young believers. His church’s youth group is not "just another" youth group, a chore for the church to deal with, but is a group which clearly takes seriously the spiritual well-being of its young members.

Since it is much easier for a young person to relate to other young people, the new-style youth meetings in Linchuan are led by a young person, Long reports. When talking about the average age of participants, Long admits that the new-style youth meetings are attractive to some of the older members of the congregation as well. In fact, this "experiment" has proven so successful that other churches are now observing and imitating it.
The Resurgence of Sectarian Movements - A Sociological Perspective

(ANS) In the past, articles on sects in the China Christian Council’s monthly periodical, Tian Feng, have concentrated on warning believers away from such group. Recently, however, the publication has included articles of a more analytical nature which seek to discuss the phenomenon of sects itself. In May’s edition of the magazine, Liu Zhongyu, Professor of Religious Studies at Shanghai’s Huadong Normal University discusses sects as a social phenomenon.

Liu begins by commenting that, at a global level, the rapid economic and political changes which took place in the 1990s have left many people emotionally unsettled. As a result, many young and good-hearted people easily fall prey to false religions. For example, in Uganda, a recent incident involving a pseudo-Christian sect led to the deaths of nearly 1,000 people. Clearly, many sects constitute a danger not only to the spiritual health of their adherents but also to their physical well-being. While many societies acknowledge the threats posed by such movements, few societies recognize the question underlying such phenomena: How do modern societies fulfill the spiritual needs of their members?

In many ways, societies don’t fulfill such needs, writes Professor Liu, and this is the root of the problem. He describes how, in numerous societies, there is a growing gap between a greater satisfying of material needs and a decreasing fulfillment of spiritual needs. This is also linked to the fact that mainstream religions are currently undergoing a process of secularization. Professor Liu explains that, while a certain adapting to modern life may be necessary for religions to maintain their credibility, they may also lose their appeal through excessive secularization. While mainstream religions develop secular tendencies, many sects are taking on mystical traits and are able to misuse these in order to attract followers increasingly starved of the mystical elsewhere. Liu employs the metaphor of a market to explain such a phenomenon: "In every society, people exist with certain religious needs. In a way, they form a 'market' of religious needs. If there is no 'high-quality' religion available to fulfill these needs, the people will 'buy' whatever low-quality product is available, that is, they will join a sect."

Clearly, the current situation is a challenge to established, mainstream religions. If they want to retain their relevance for believers, Liu comments, they must concern themselves with the issues and questions of most concern to believers. The various "millennial movements" of recent years have shown that mainstream religions are not properly addressing believers’ concerns with issues such as the end times. Also, many popular sects use classical Christian or Buddhist texts to support their ideas. Liu suggests that believers turn away from mainstream religions not because they reject the messages contained in sacred texts but because they perceive that sects interpret the texts in ways more relevant and more applicable to their own situations.

As Liu notes, the emphasis many believers place on evangelizing within the Protestant church in China leads to a real danger of striving for "quantity over quality" in new converts. However, Liu believes that, through such movements as building up
Chinese theology, there is hope for the Chinese Protestant church to regain its relevance in the lives of modern-day believers.

Fresh off the press:

LOVE NEVER ENDS

Papers by K. H. Ting

Edited by Janice Wickeri

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540 pages
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With the publication of *Love Never Ends*, readers have in one volume most of Bishop K. H. Ting's important articles since the resurgence of Christianity in China in the early 1980s. His focus on God as Cosmic Lover, rather than Cosmic Punisher, has been important for Christianity in China, and his writings on this theme have been an inspiration for Christians, not only in China, but throughout the world.

*Love Never Ends* is an English version of the original Chinese volume. This gives readers access to a book on Christianity primarily intended for a Chinese, and overwhelmingly non-Christian, audience. Ten thousand copies of the book in hard cover were printed in September 1998; by June 1999, these had early sold out and a second printing was undertaken. There is now a paperback edition (Chinese) as well. A Korean version, also titled *Love Never Ends*, was published in Seoul in October 1999.

The book was the subject of a major conference held in Shanghai in July 1999 and is being used as a basic text for theological education in Chinese seminaries. —Janice Wickeri—
Caring For Body, Mind And Spirit: Believers In Changsha

The Amity Foundation runs a number of development projects in Hunan province, many of them in cooperation with the Hunan Christian Council. During a recent exposure tour to Amity project sites in Hunan, ANS editor Katrin Fiedler had occasion to visit Christians in the provincial capital, Changsha, and discover more about their faith life. (For more information on Hunan Province, see ANS 98.6.7 and ANS 98.5.6)

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"Do you realize that many Norwegians are actually Hunanese?" asks Rev. Yao Zengyi, head of the Hunan Provincial Christian Council, with a mischievous smile as we make our way through Changsha, the provincial capital. She is referring to the children born to Norwegian Missionaries in pre-revolutionary times. And, as I later discover, even the current Norwegian Health Minister is the great-grandson of a former missionary to Hunan. The Norwegian Missionary Society came to Hunan in 1902 and was, at the time, one of several foreign missionary societies active in the province.

In the pre-revolutionary provincial capital, American Presbyterians played a rather prominent role. The huge complex of buildings they left behind still remains in use to this day. Unlike many other parts of China, all church property seized in Changsha during the Cultural Revolution has already been given back to local congregations. The former Presbyterian church is an unusually beautiful reminder of missionary times, a brick building and a unique blend of Chinese and Western architecture. Today it is one of two churches in the city and is called North Church. This parish is particularly active in social services and runs a home for the elderly and a kindergarten. "Jesus loved all humans," explains Luo Baoluo, Vice President of the Provincial Christian Council and pastor of North Church. "Through our social work for the very young and the very old, we care for people at the beginning and end of the cycle of life."

With a capacity for 188 residents, the retirement home is a major success story. It is the oldest church-run retirement home in China, having started way back in 1988. Originally intended as a home for unmarried evangelists, it only had 12 residents in the beginning. "At that time, services were virtually free of charge and provided by a large group of volunteers," Luo recalls. Today, a greatly expanded range of professional, as opposed to voluntary, services are offered at the home. Accommodation fees vary according to the services provided. The basic monthly fee starts at RMB 90 (=US$10 approx.), and can reach RMB 310 (=US$37 approx.) for those who are fully incapacitated. Apart from these regular payments, residents are expected to give an initial "donation" of RMB 1,500 (=US$180 approx.) when moving into the home. Many residents enter the home because they have no family to support them, but it is not necessarily the case that all residents are childless or neglected by their children. "Some of them just prefer to live here, where they can have regular contact with other elderly people," Luo explains. Others find the relationship between parent- and child-in-law too difficult and decide to move to the home for this reason.

While North Church excels in social services, South Church is unique in the wealth of spiritual activities it offers its parishioners. Rev. Xu, pastor of South Church, takes particular pride in her staff of church workers. They are not only numerous (about one hundred volunteers) but also exceptionally well-educated and committed. "Sometimes, their schedules are even heavier than mine," Xu laughs and admits that their dedication also serves as a big incentive for her.

Believers in South Church pay particular attention to the importance of prayer and Bible study at home. In order to meet the prayer demands of the congregation, some believers have set up an ingenious system of consecutive prayer: At the beginning of each week, special prayer requests are given to a network of "volunteer prayers." Each of them agrees to pray for these requests at a designated time: 8, 9, 10 or 11pm. In this way, a "wave" of prayer rolls through the congregation each day.
While North Church can trace its roots back to the Presbyterians, South Church was originally founded by the China Inland Mission. For these reasons, most of today’s believers in Changsha come from a mainstream Protestant background. Nevertheless, there are also former believers of other denominations in the two congregations, mostly Adventists, followers of "Watchman Nee" (Ni Tuosheng), and adherents of the True Jesus Church, another indigenous Chinese movement. Although formal denominations have ceased to exist, traces of different customs and beliefs can still be found in everyday church life. For example, former Seventh-Day-Adventists still prefer to hold their weekly services on Saturdays. How do parishioners from such different backgrounds manage to peacefully coexist? "The key to success is mutual respect," Rev. Yao explains. "Problems will only arise if parishioners don’t abide by this rule of mutual respect."

As in many Chinese congregations, women make up the bulk of believers in the two Changsha churches - 85% of believers are middle-aged or elderly women. Furthermore, unlike in some other areas of China, the congregations in Changsha are not fussy about the gender of their pastor. "Parishioners here react in a very positive way to having a female pastor", Rev. Xu observes.

However, in rural areas, not all congregations are fortunate enough to have an ordained pastor at all and must rely on lay workers and evangelists. The latter usually undergo training at Changsha Bible school, which offers both three- and twelve-month courses. Students attending the one-year training course have to be high school graduates and must not be more than 30 years old. As qualified evangelists, many of them will lead their own congregations upon their return to their home churches. For the shorter course leading to a lower qualification, study requirements are more flexible.

Changsha Bible school places particular emphasis on musical training for all of its students, and singing instruction, piano and/or organ lessons form part of their training. The school also hosted the first-ever training of social workers in the province aimed at church-workers who are to run welfare projects (See ANS 2000.5/6.6.) This highlights once again the involvement of Hunanese Christians in social welfare issues, an involvement particularly remarkable given their relatively small number.

How many Protestant Christians are there in Hunan? For Changsha and its surroundings, the number is rather easy to assess. The provincial capital and its adjacent districts have five churches and 10 registered meeting points. Right now, there are approximately 10,000 Protestant Christians in this area, but the Christian community is still growing. Every year, about 700-900 people are baptized in the city of Changsha alone. For the countryside, however, reliable numbers of Christians are harder to ascertain. Many rural congregations remain unregistered because they do not meet the conditions required for registration. Therefore, it is difficult to come up with exact data on a provincial level. One of the pastors I met estimates Protestant Christians in the whole of Hunan to number about 300,000.

ANS Focus: Hunan Province

Outreach Through Church-Run Social Projects In Hunan

Church-initiated social and development projects are becoming increasingly common in China. More and more churches run kindergartens, retirement homes or rural development projects. A noteworthy example of this new trend can be found in Hunan Province, where Protestant congregations are active in these areas in numerous ways. In April this year, ANS editor Katrin Fiedler visited church-run projects on an exposure tour to Hunan organized by the Amity Foundation.

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Arriving in Xinhua township, a day’s bus ride from the provincial capital, Changsha, felt like arriving in the middle of nowhere. We were to call this agglomeration of dusty roads and construction sites home for the next few days, departing from here on daily trips to church-run projects scattered around the county.

The Protestant church in Xinhua dates back to missionary times, when Norwegian
missionaries founded the first church 103 years ago. Today the church building located in Xinhua township constitutes the only one in a county which once had 14 churches. Nevertheless, the number of Christians in the county is higher than ever, despite the inconvenience of often meeting in makeshift locations. Only five of the nine existing meeting points in the county meet official requirements and are registered. In some places, believers have to gather outdoors because they cannot afford a church building. Renting a place for meetings can be rather difficult since this depends on coming to an agreement with the rest of the village. In areas where even drinking water is scarce and precious, using resources to maintain a regular meeting point seems a luxury to some local communities and sometimes encounters opposition from the local community.

Xinhua County is recognized by the authorities as a poverty-stricken area. This means the average yearly per-capita income is RMB 800 (=US$ 96 approx.) or less. Roads and transport options are shoddy, and many villages take the form of tiny settlements scattered over extensive mountain ranges. The scarcity of arable land and frequent droughts make agricultural production a constant struggle for survival. For these reasons, a large number of Amity projects in the area aim at implementing or improving irrigation systems for fields. Despite this focus on agricultural needs, we also saw a church-run village clinic, a biogas-project and a newly-built school. As well as Amity projects, Xinhua County has seen a number of church-run development projects implemented in the past few years. Usually, the church provides part of the project funding, with the local government making up the rest. Church representatives usually oversee the project as a whole with logistic support provided by local authorities where needed. The actual labor involved in the project is supplied by the villagers who will benefit directly from the project. Clearly, tiny Christian communities in a poverty-stricken area cannot fund such development projects through their own means. In the case of Xinhua, substantial financial support comes from Norwegian partner churches.

With only 2 - 3,000 Christians in a total population of 1.25 million, Xinhua County is not exactly a hive of Christian activity. Nonetheless, given this small percentage of Christians within the total population, the number of church-assisted development projects and their impact on communicating the Christian message in the area are amazing. In one location, where the church has helped set up a pumping station, we were greeted with the news that "Now, every villager has heard of the Gospel". At the centre of the pumping station we find "Gospel Well," a concrete structure with a short inscription inspired from Scripture. Construction work on projects often involves the whole village community, a fact that also helps to make Christianity more widely known. In Mehuadong, for instance, an irrigation project required the building of a kilometre-long channel by the village population. The youngest participant was twelve years old, while the oldest person involved was an 83-year old villager. Through their work on this project, these villagers discovered something about the Christian message from the believers who had started the project and were working alongside them.

"The involvement of Hunanese Christians in development projects is, above all, a great message of hope," notes Seikko Paunonen, a tour participant from the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission. "It means hope to local communities who profit economically or in other ways from these projects. And it is a sign of hope that Chinese Christians will increasingly reach out into society. They do not exclude themselves any longer from what's going on outside of church buildings. Chinese Christians used to focus solely on Bible study and prayer, but this narrow focus is becoming more and more a thing of the past."

2000.5/6.8

NEWSBRIEFS

Musical Education: The first-ever church accordion workshop was run in February in Yunnan Province. Jointly organized by the Yunnan Provincial Christian Council and Yunnan Provincial Bible School, the course attracted more than 40 participants from all over the province. Du Peiliang, music teacher at the school, instructed students in musical theory and accordion techniques.

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Lay Training: A special church worker training course was held in Chuxiongzhou, Yuanmo county, Yunnan Province from March 18-28, 2000. The overall aim of the course was to equip church workers to deal with dangerous influences from sectarian movements. Training included instruction on how to distinguish correct from false beliefs with the help of the Bible. More than 150 pastoral workers from different ethnic backgrounds around the Province took part in the program.

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Theological Education: A fund for theology students has been set up by Christians in Binhai District, Jiangsu Province. Offerings taken on the first Sunday in September will go into the fund as well as any specific individual donations. It is hoped that the fund, which will be awarded to theology students excelling in their studies, will also serve as an incentive for prospective seminarians.

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World Day of Prayer: Christian churches all over China celebrated the World Day of Prayer on March 14, 2000. Jiangsu Provincial Bible School took this opportunity to hold a special prayer meeting, with more than 130 students and teachers gathered in a local church. In silence, they prayed for world peace, the reunification between Taiwan and the Mainland, and economic, political and religious freedom in Indonesia.

In the Western province of Qinghai, the provincial women church workers' committee had called on believers to participate actively in the World Day of Prayer. More than 500 women joined in prayer for world peace, women in Indonesia, and guidance in their own lives.
Places Mentioned In This Issue Of ANS

1) Shanghai
2) Linchuan (Jiangxi)
3) Changsha (Hunan)
4) Xinhua (Hunan)
5) Chuxiongzhou (Yunnan)
6) Binhai (Jiangsu)