# AMITY NEWS SERVICE
Communicating the news and views of the China Christian Council as a service to the international Christian community.

## Volume 15.11/12, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeing Neighbours and Strangers through God's Grace and Truth</td>
<td>2006.11/12.1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religions for Peace:</td>
<td>2006.11/12.2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confronting Violence and Advancing Shared Security</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Hospital of Loving Kindness&quot;:</td>
<td>2006.11/12.3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCC/TSPM Clinic Celebrates 20 Years of Love and Service</td>
<td>2006.11/12.4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Church Workers at the Margins of China</td>
<td>2006.11/12.5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace in Trials and Tribulations</td>
<td>2006.11/12.6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Concept of &quot;Peace&quot; in the Gospel of Matthew</td>
<td>2006.11/12.7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Origin and Character of Authentic Chinese Church Music</td>
<td>2006.11/12.8</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEWSBRIEFS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

May all that you do, in your work and in your celebrations through this Advent season, be done in the hope of peace on earth and goodwill toward all people. Wishing you a blessed Christmas and New Year,

With kind regards on behalf of the editorial team,
Archbishop visited the TSPM/CCC headquarters and the Holy Trinity Cathedral, currently under plans for renovation. In the evening, the visitors were scheduled to meet young Shanghai clergy at a church in the Pudong area.

The Sunday service at Mu'en church was an occasion of thanksgiving and celebration of friendly relations between the churches and nations of China and Great Britain. It began with the choir and the congregation joining in the opening hymn "Ye watchers and ye holy ones" which accompanied the procession of the local clergy and the guests into the church. The Apostles' Creed was recited by "the watchers and the holy ones" in unison; British and Chinese clerics took charge of the intercessory prayer and Bible readings while Rev. Cao Shengjie led the service; Archbishop Williams preached.

The Archbishop urged Christians, having already responded to the call to "come and see", to take a step further and enter, on Jesus' invitation, a new world where they see God and their neighbours in a new way. This way, however, is not a philosophy but the way of life and wisdom which Jesus came to teach, as is well rendered in the Chinese translation of the first verses of the Gospel of John (the Chinese equivalent for Word is 道 dao signifying 'wisdom'; 'way'). While challenging the Christians to see the truth in themselves and in their surroundings, the new way also invites them to see beyond appearances without making rushed judgements. Seeing the truth is not necessarily easy, and therefore, truth needs to be combined with grace and love.

In his sermon, Archbishop Williams elaborated that the call to come and see is also a call to approach a stranger, to come out of one's comfort zone. God has given human beings the spirit of wisdom and understanding to assist them in making right judgements, and in responding to one another and to their society. In the Old Testament reading from Isaiah, the prophet talks about peace on earth; this peace is possible when the wisdom and word of God is alive in people's hearts. Seen through God's wisdom and understanding the stranger is no longer a threat and people will stop hurting and destroying each another.

On Monday, 9 October, the Archbishop was invited to the national TSPM/CCC headquarters, where the entire staff had gathered at the main entrance to welcome the honoured guests. In subsequent meetings, the Archbishop met leaders of the current national TSPM and CCC Standing Committees. He was also briefed by Chinese church leaders about the current situation in the Chinese Protestant church.

For his evening meeting with young members of Shanghai TSPM/CC clergy, the Archbishop had chosen "Church in learning" as his topic, urging his listeners to maintain a spirit of constant learning. This entails studying the Bible from historical and canonical perspectives so as to discover God's ways of confronting the world. God made his covenant with groups rather than individuals and therefore, knowing God and his people is a communal effort. The Archbishop also encouraged the clergy to study society and the human race but cautioned against giving hasty

1Hymn number 8 in the Chinese hymnal; melody dates back to 17th century Germany, lyrics and harmonisation to 19th century Britain (John A. L. Riley and Ralph Vaughan Williams respectively). It was first published in the English Hymnal in 1906.
International Conference Hall. The multi-religious audience had occasion to witness the famous Japanese calligrapher Juichi Yoshikawa practice his art by drawing a massive Japanese character for "path" as a prelude to a youth performance carrying the same title as the Assembly anthem "On this Path".

The Chinese contribution to the inter-religious dialogue through *Religions for Peace* began in 1994 with the foundation of the Chinese Committee on Religions and Peace (CCRP), which joined the Asian Conference on Religions and Peace (ACRP) the same year. The main emphasis of the national inter-religious organisation has been on building bridges between religious bodies in China and increasing believers' awareness of peace issues, in particular through the "Chinese Prayer Week for Peace" initiated a year after the establishment of the Chinese CCRP.

This year, a few weeks prior to the Kyoto Assembly, a Chinese delegation visited the *Religions for Peace* headquarters in New York and met the RFP General Secretary Dr. William F. Vendley in order to hand over a memorandum with the Chinese views on peace efforts in the present-day world. On 23 August 2006, a group of 27 Chinese religious representatives travelled to Kyoto to attend the 8th Assembly of *Religions for Peace*. Chen Guangyuan, president of the China Islamic Association and the vice-chair of the Chinese Committee on Religions and Peace (CCRP), acted as the head of the delegation.

The Chinese perspective on peace building was brought forth by the delegation members in plenary sessions and group meetings. Venerable Xue Cheng from the China Buddhist Association addressed the plenary session, reminding participants that the key to peace and harmony in the world lies in everyone's heart and thus, all religions need to teach their followers basic lessons of universal love and mercy, equality and harmonious co-existence. The delegation head, Chen Guangyuan encouraged the promoters of peace to remain objective and patient in their efforts to resolve conflicts without expecting instant success while Cao Shengjie warned against the risks of religious exclusiveness and "violent" promotion of what each religion regards as truth.

In regard to peace efforts, the year 2006 has been unusually challenging. Conflict in the Middle East, nuclear crises in Iran on top of the terrorist attacks in Madrid, London and Mumbai has rendered the world scene, if possible, even more complex than before. Using terminology introduced by north European scholars of peace studies as early as the 1960s, in our current world there is a need for both positive and negative peace building, negative peace action indicating elimination of war and its reasons, positive peace action referring to initiatives against structural violence in society which hinders the development of human civilization.

The 8th Assembly of *Religions for Peace* appealed to the participants for both positive and negative action for peace. The Kyoto declaration issued in the last plenary session of the assembly on 29 August states that "Religious communities are called not only to reject war and foreign occupation, sectarian violence, weapons proliferation, and human rights abuse, but also to identify and confront the root causes of injustice, economic inequalities, governance failures, development obstacles, social exclusions, and environmental abuses."
has grown steadily and it has won the people's trust: it has become known to everyone as the Hospital of Loving-kindness. The clinic regards compassion as the basis for medical ethics, and patients are treated equally regardless of their faith or position in society. Furthermore, the respectability of the clinic's medical practice has grown because of its commitment to quality of service. The clinic's services are based on local resources, and no informal channels to deal with finances or "sales commissions" are accepted.

Faced with the needs of both Christians and general members of society, the clinic offers reduced fees and discounts to laid-off workers and others in financial difficulties. Over the course of the last 20 years, the clinic has offered more than RMB 724,000 (over US$ 92,000) worth of reductions in the cost of medicine and services (x-rays, ultrasounds, ECG's, etc). As a response to the problems of medical access and increasing costs created by the development of a market economy, the clinic has organized teams of volunteer medical personnel to make house calls, periodic visits to the countryside, and even to raise funds for disaster relief.

While continuing to serve patients in the immediate vicinity, the clinic has extended its reach to neighbouring districts and even to several of Anhui's larger cities. People who learn about the clinic and its highly qualified staff frequently remark that in today's fiercely competitive market, such excellent doctors could be earning much higher salaries. The clinic physicians are quick to point out that their aim is to serve and make a meaningful contribution. "We wouldn't be here," they say, "if we were in it for the money."

The stories about the physicians could be told at great length. Dr. Yang Zhenqiu, for example, is a well-known specialist in Chinese Medicine, who specializes in cases which are difficult to treat, such as young couples with infertility problems or patients with cancer. Dermatology expert Dr. Zhang Xiuzhen has served the clinic for 18 years curing successfully 95% of his patients suffering from vitiligo and dermatitis. His reputation has attracted around 14,700 patients from all over the country.

One story tells about an encounter between a doctor called Liu and a young woman from Chaohu (a city to the north-west of Wuhu); the woman was suffering from gestational disease. A stay of only a few days in the provincial hospital had already cost her several thousand Chinese yuan. Someone introduced her to the clinic and she went there the very same night. Staying in a local guest house for 7 days, the woman spent only RMB 300 (US$ 31.10), and under the care of Dr. Liu, she was completely cured. When she returned to her village she told everyone about the excellent care she had received at the Wuhu Clinic, and also sent many of her relatives there for treatment.

Personal faith is the root of compassion for the clinic's staff and they have a long tradition of meeting for Bible study and prayer twice a week before the clinic opens. The present Clinic Director Liu Hongqing repeatedly reminds his staff that the difference between a Christian clinic and medical service in the ordinary social arena has to do with the role of faith in healing and the fact that patients were treated like family. At the Wuhu Clinic, concern and care is shown to a passing visitor, and a patient who has no money to pay is offered a helping hand from the brothers and sisters around. Prayers are offered for comfort and healing to patients, including those who suffer from the intense mental pressure of modern society. One patient
instance, there are only five ordained pastors serving some 100,000 Christians. In some counties of that region, such as Gongshan County on the upper reaches of the Nu River, elders care for as many as 10-20 separate congregations within their district. In other words, congregations have a pressing need for leaders and theologically-trained personnel but, due to poverty and low levels of education, suitable candidates for regional Bible Schools and seminaries are few and far between. Prefectural Christian Councils have tried to solve this problem of scarce church personnel by setting up regional training centres which offer courses that take into account the students' backgrounds and the most crucial needs of the churches in these areas.

In Gongshan County, construction of a lay training centre was completed in 2003. The head of the centre, Rev. Yexi, is not himself an ordained minister and yet the title 'reverend' was still bestowed upon him out of respect for his acknowledged gifts in pastoral ministry. His grandfather was a devoted Christian who decided not to follow his Christian brothers and sisters by fleeing to Myanmar out of fear of the growing pressure being put on Christians in China in the 1950s. Rev. Yexi was born soon after the Cultural Revolution started and, as a child, he used to hear his grandparents chanting and reading the Bible in dim lamplight, without really knowing what his grandparents were doing. In 1980, his grandparents started a home worship meeting and, eventually, Yexi himself also converted to Christianity.

Currently, Rev. Yexi is in charge of the Gongshan County Christian Training Centre, comprised of 49 students and 12 teachers (three full-time and nine part-time). The centre offers a one-year training programme which is divided into two five-month segments over two years. In order to qualify for this programme, students need to be recommended by their home churches and have a strong commitment to serve. With regards to educational background, students do not necessarily need a formal school education to enter the programme but they do need to possess literacy skills in the local Lisu vernacular equivalent to middle school level. [At present, the Lisu vernacular is widely used within Lisu society, and newspapers and magazines are published in Lisu. In fact, the first written form of the Lisu vernacular was developed in the early 20th century by a Scottish missionary J. O. Fraser with a view to Bible translation. The Bible has now been translated into two different Lisu dialects and is in active use in the Gongshan County Christian Training Centre and within churches in Lisu minority areas. (source: research of linguist Philip Bradley)]

The Dali Christian Bible Training Centre in Dali, the prefectural capital of the Dali Bai Autonomous Region, has very different dynamics from the Gongshan training centre. For example, in Dali, the language of education is Mandarin Chinese, simply because the students at the centre come from nine different ethnic minority backgrounds and Mandarin is the one language they all share in common. However, even though the students study in Mandarin, they are expected to operate in their vernacular languages when they return to their home churches. Secondly, the Dali Christian Bible Training Centre is located in an area where the percentage of Christians is actually relatively low. Therefore, rather than serving local churches exclusively, this training centre's scope extends to a wider area and wider range of ethnic groups. In addition, the study programme currently offered by the centre in Dali is a three-year, full-time course which naturally enables the students to obtain a
the Lord. Tribulations are an inseparable part of the secular life but on the spiritual level, they can be overcome through Christ. When a Christian has overcome the world, he will have peace.

First of all, to overcome the world does not mean closing one's eyes to the world but rather adopting a wise attitude to it. The modern world evolves rapidly and many new things appear in the blink of an eye. Still, no matter how fast the world develops, all the changes are guided by natural laws established by God. Unless we accept God's call to live in conformity with these laws, our behavior will jeopardize peace and bring about adverse consequences. Deliberate violation of God's laws has a similar outcome to violation of traffic rules: accidents are likely to happen. We have naïve expectations that God will safeguard "our peace" irrespective of our indifferent attitude; moreover, when our refusal to co-operate with God results in disasters, we easily blame God for not granting us peace.

Secondly, overcoming the world refers to the Christian view of life as a spiritual concept: Christians will have peace when they strive for spiritual aims, while material pursuits limit their vision to the earthly realm. Instead of adoring the Saviour of our lives, many people revere Jesus as a kind of "god of fortune", a "god of fertility", a "marvellous magician", or even a "doctor" who offers services free of charge. Our Holy and solemn God is debased, and He is no longer seen as the source of peace. Similarly, the Christian concept of peace is not just a synonym of harmony or accord, but it refers to a spiritual state of mind that transcends pragmatism. Peace does not end at death, nor vanish in misadventure. The interpretation of 'peace' is grounded in God, because God has promised His peace to people in Christ. Therefore, we cannot comprehend peace by human standards, neither can we understand that "accidents are blessings in disguise" unless we see the circumstances through our spirit.

Finally, to overcome the world is to unite with the Lord totally, just as the Lord Jesus was united with God the Father. If we abide in Christ, worldly circumstances and misadventures will have no influence on our faith. Quite the contrary, they may help us to understand the fragility of human nature and to see trials as an inherent part of human life, and eventually, they may nourish our love for the Lord. Peace can be found amidst trials and tribulations, because in them, the infinite nature of God's grace can be revealed. Peace amidst trials is like a lighthouse of hope in rough seas, on which Christians sail in the vessel of salvation. When relying on God's care, Christians will not act like cowards who deviate from the course because of fear or difficulties; instead, they retain their peace of mind - something they have learnt through trials and tribulations.
whole of humankind. The essence of Jesus' teaching is summarised in the Sermon on the Mount in chapters 5-7.

The Sermon on the Mount begins with Jesus' teaching on the Beatitudes showing a link between moral behaviour and God's blessings. In chapter 5 verse 9, Jesus says "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God." Subsequently, He calls his disciples to become peacemakers in an unconventional way by teaching them not to repay evil with evil, nor to kill or even get angry with their brother.

Nevertheless, Jesus does not intend his disciples to lay down their arms or to integrate naively with the world. His peace entails joint efforts for the establishment of harmonious order and co-existence. In other words, peacemaking does not mean avoiding conflicts or pretending that difficult problems do not exist, nor does it refer to an over-lenient, compromising attitude. Christians cannot separate themselves from others, either, not even for the benefit of their individual sanctification, because they were created to live as members of the human race and to build others up through acceptance and recognition of their needs. Most importantly, however, the peace which Jesus brought to humankind as the Messiah embodies the restoration of the relationship between Man and God.

Reflections on Harmonious Co-existence in the Gospel of Matthew

The author of the Gospel of Matthew starts developing the concept of the universality of the Gospel at the very beginning of his book through Jesus' genealogy. The Jews consider genealogies very important, but usually only male members of the family are recorded in the family line. In the Jewish culture, women did not have legal status, and thus, they could not be regarded as independent members of society but rather as a kind of property belonging to fathers and husbands. There are records of Jewish morning prayers giving thanks to God for not being born a Gentile, a slave or a woman.

Contrary to the prevailing tradition, Jesus' lineage in the Gospel of Matthew mentions four women: Rahab, a prostitute in the city of Jericho; Ruth, a Moabite, a tribe detested by the Jews; Tamar, who disguised herself as a prostitute, and Bathsheba, whose marriage to Uriah was ended by David's ruthless arrangements. Matthew manifests through this choice of Jesus' ancestors that the segregating barriers between genders and different tribes are torn down in Christ.

Key Elements of Peace in Jesus' Teachings

The compilation and arrangement of the subject matter in the Gospel of Matthew reflect the importance the author lays on Jesus' teaching on harmony and peace, which is not only a theory or slogan but a mindset to be practised. The key elements of these lessons are: Love and concern, forgiveness, engagement and understanding.

Jesus' uncompromising nature is manifested in his concern and love for those despised by the Jewish community. Matthew himself, who was a tax-collector, represents an illuminating example of this. Tax-collectors were detested by the Jews because they served the Roman conquerors and dealt daily with money, which was
differences. Dialogue with other religions does not weaken or change the basics of Christianity, but on the contrary, it enables believers to define their own faith from a more global perspective. Interfaith dialogue is a prerequisite for people from different religious and cultural backgrounds to collaborate in creating a harmonious world order.

Family ethics is the most basic form of Christian ethics: unless harmony prevails in a family, it cannot prevail in society. According to a survey carried out by the China Women's Federation in 2002, domestic violence occurred in 30% of the 270 million families surveyed; another survey, conducted by the Tianjin Daily newspaper, showed that 80% of the participants had encountered domestic violence of some degree. Added to the increase in divorce rates during the past few years in China, these surveys reflect a growing lack of trust in interpersonal relations, including the most intimate family relations. Christian ethics rejects violence even as a response to violence and stresses forgiveness and mutual understanding. These ethical principles cannot become a reality at higher levels, including interfaith relations, unless they are first practiced in individual and family lives.

At present, the human race boasts of unprecedented achievements. At the same time, the international community, faced with multiple challenges and concerns, constantly appeals for peace in ethnic conflicts and religious disputes. In China, the government advocates a harmonious society; Chinese Christians cannot overlook the national efforts, because their lives are intertwined with those of their neighbours and fellow citizens. On the contrary, Christians should respond to this appeal and stand together with brothers and sisters from other religious backgrounds if they wish to become blessed peacemakers according to the Gospel of Matthew. This is not mere fantasy but a necessary and possible ideal.

2006.11/12.7

The Origin and Character of Authentic Chinese Church Music

(ANS) Christian music started to become part of the Chinese culture in the beginning of the 20th century after Western and Chinese music styles merged to become something completely new. How Christian music developed its authentic Chinese characteristics is explained by the author, Wang Xin, in the following article, published in Tian Feng June 2006 issue number 287. He claims that a comparison of Chinese and Western music helps us to understand how both traditions became one and why, in the process, a genuinely Chinese church music tradition emerged.

Logical and Intuitive Thinking

Western and Eastern ways of thinking have different backgrounds. Whereas the Chinese tend to think in a holistic way, believing that "nature and man are one", the West developed an antithetical way of thinking, emphasizing that "nature and man are separate". Both ways of thinking, the Western and the Eastern, shaped their respective worldview and epistemology. Subsequently, the West now emphasizes logical thinking, whereas China stresses an intuitive mindset.
carefully before writing a new composition. So in Western music, the characteristics of "logical thinking" become apparent everywhere.

Traditional Chinese music is based on the laws of the Five Elements (the five notes of the pentatonic scale representing the five elements, which are wood, fire, water, metal, and earth). The melody in the pentatonic scale sounds very natural. Even though the range of possible modulations is certainly somewhat limited without the half-note intervals, these shortcomings did not impede musical development in the past because the melody is so important in Chinese music. The Chinese musical tradition has always focused on the linearity of the melodic line, not on aspects of musical harmony. In contrast, Western music with its multi-layered patterns of harmony and polyphony has developed a three-dimensional design or "spatiality" in its musical style.

Chinese and Western Musical Aesthetics

The very origin of Western art can be found in its architectural style, whereas Chinese art finds its origin in the art of calligraphy. Chinese music emphasizes the experience and expression of the "creative concept" or the "artistic mood" of the artist, taking "consonance" as being the most important aesthetic category. It is this characteristic which is expressed in the incisiveness of a calligraphic line. The quest of Chinese music for consonance and rhythm reveals the Chinese aesthetic intention. Chinese music emphasizes the response of the heart to nature, the union of man and the world.

Western music emphasizes "beauty". This term differs from the Chinese understanding of it in so far as "beauty" here means equilibrium, symmetry, harmony and coordination. Western music pursues harmony in a Pythagorean way. The ancient Greek school of Pythagoras considered the universe to consist of numbers. Harmony was realized by putting the numbers into proportion. In the west, this concept of harmony is often applied in music, when we look at the equilibrium and harmony between tones, lines, and movements. It all points to the fact that Chinese and Western music are completely different.

The Development of Church Music with Chinese Characteristics

Since Western church music merged with traditional (native) Chinese music, all of the church music that is produced in China naturally displays a whole range of Chinese and Western musical characteristics. Certainly, cultural development is often accompanied by a cultural exchange, including an exchange inside a country, for example between minorities, or an international exchange. In the process of this cultural exchange, every party involved receives and incorporates, creating or renewing cultural forms and contents. Yet the mixture of Chinese and Western church music seems even more special because, as we have seen above, the paths Western and Chinese music styles have taken are not the same and they might even run in opposite directions. Even more important is the fact that there are huge differences between Chinese and Western religious cultures. Therefore, the tendency of a "clash of cultures" intensifies and makes the integration process of Chinese and Western sacred music more complicated.
NEWSBRIEFS

Training. As part of the efforts to build the congregation up, Funan County CC/TSPM in Anhui Province organised two innovative training courses. A literacy course was held on 28 March - 28 June 2006; 130 illiterate church members attended the course using Anhui CC/TSPM Committee's publication titled "Guide for reading the Bible" as course material. On 7 August - 11 August 2006, senior middle school and university students were invited to attend a series of lectures with the topics "Human pursuit - from emptiness to the fullness of life" and "Abandoning falsehood, returning to the truth, knowing Jesus". On the basis of biblical evidence, visiting lecturers discussed the vitality of Christian religion and God's love as shown in creation and salvation. 56 students attended the training session.

Yun County Christian Training Centre organised training sessions for volunteer church workers on 14 - 20 August 2006. 98 participants, two thirds from the Yi ethnic minority, attended the training. Three trainers, one from the Yunnan Theological Seminary, one from Lincang CC/TSPM committee and one long-term volunteer from a country congregation shared on basic Bible knowledge and church regulations. As an added benefit, all the trainers had a sound knowledge of Chinese medicine, which they applied outside the lecture hours to treat students' ailments.

A research team was formed by Shaanxi provincial CC/TSPM to carry out an investigation on the situation of grass-roots level churches. On 3 - 8 August 2006, the research team, made up of three vice-presidents of the provincial "two committees," visited churches in six counties and a district within the city of Yan'an. The main objective of the visits was to meet church members and clergy so as to assist them in internal and external matters of church management, such as setting up church ministries, resisting heretical doctrines, preparing documents for the registration of the church and establishing relations with the local religious authorities.

Ecclesiastical Exchange. Zhongwei city church (Ningxia) received a medical team from Hong Kong Baptist Church on 10 - 15 August 2006. During their five-day visit, the team performed free medical check-ups to 950 church workers, church members and their friends, and participated in evening church fellowships.

Christian Witness. Yangcheng county CC/TSPM organised a fund raising to help people in areas hit by natural disasters. RMB 8,000 (US$ 1,017) was raised in three days. --- --- St. Paul's Church in Daqing city, Heilongjiang province, donated RMB 10,000 (US$ 1,272) in support of 10 students' primary school education. The students are ethnic Mongolians, one of the 56 officially recognised ethnic groups in China.

Ordinations. Three male pastors were ordained on 4 June 2006 at Jingxin Church in Wuding County, which is part of the Chuxiong Yi Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan. Two of the ordained pastors were of ethnic minority origin (Yi and Miao). --- --- One male and five female pastors were ordained on 6 August 2006 in Wuhan city (Hubei).