There are probably more Christians attending church in China on any given Sunday than there are in the whole of Europe. The increase in the number of new church buildings can barely keep pace with the surge in church membership over the last two decades. Many new church buildings in major cities have seating for two thousand or more.

In contrast, the ivy covered St. Paul’s church, one of Nanjing’s oldest churches, has to cope with a congregation of 4,000 by holding multiple services every Sunday. More unusual is the holding of an English language service every alternate Sunday to accommodate both expatriates and English-speaking members of its congregation.
Dear Reader,

As we celebrate the Easter season, Wang Weifan’s* reflections come to mind: The long night is over. The first rays of the morning sun shine across the land. Christ is not in the long night. How could the night hold back the dawn, its morning light breaking through the rosy clouds?

In September 2007, when the Amity Printing Company saw its 50 millionth bible roll off the press, it was like a miracle, especially for older generations of Chinese Christians. That this could happen in China was unimaginable twenty years ago (p. 8).

Another significant sign of renewal and hope is the fact that a new generation of church leaders have emerged. In January 2008, the 8th National Conference of the Christian Churches in China was held in Beijing where the torch was passed on to a new set of leaders with an average age of 50 (p. 5). In this issue, they share a little of what they perceive as challenges and hopes for the Chinese church (p. 3). More attention, no doubt, will be paid to youth as indicated in a Tian Feng article calling for more importance to be given to youth ministry (p. 18).

Younger generation Christians may know very little of the church’s struggles in the past 50 years. Philip Wickeri’s much awaited magnum opus, Reconstructing Christianity in China: K. H. Ting and the Chinese Church, is a timely reminder. One of the best studies of the church in China, the magnificent work provides fresh insights into the complex development of Bishop Ting’s work and thought in the tortuous landscape of China’s contemporary history and politics. It is reviewed in this issue by Raymond Whitehead (p. 9).

In a sermon delivered around Valentine’s Day, a young lay leader at St. Paul’s Church in Nanjing elaborates on love and compassion as the core of the Christian message (p. 16). This is echoed in the speech on Christian participation in social service by the General Secretary of the Amity Foundation (p. 13).

We bid a fond farewell to Elisa Nousiainen as ANS editor. She was responsible for the new look of the printed edition and reaching more readers. Our best wishes go with her as she starts a new job.

Finally, if you have enjoyed reading past issues of the ANS, we urge you to renew your subscription and recommend this to more friends!

With warm wishes,

Theresa Carino

* Wang Weifan, who has retired from the faculty of Nanjing Union Theological Seminary, is the author of Lilies of the Field, a collection of devotions translated into English by Janice and Philip Wickeri.
New Church Leaders Stress Need for Unity

In February, Theresa Carino visited the Shanghai headquarters of the National CCC/TSPM and interviewed newly elected leaders Rev. Gao Feng, President of the CCC and Elder Fu Xuanwei, Chair of the TSPM. Their hopes and concerns are summarized below.

At the age of 46, Rev. Gao Feng is the youngest leader to take the helm of the China Christian Council since its establishment in 1980. Hailing from Shandong Province where he made his mark as the leader of both the CCC and the TSPM there ten years ago, Gao also heads the Shandong Provincial Seminary. Since 2002, he has served as a Vice-President of the CCC at the national level and is a member of the Chinese Peoples’ Political Consultative Conference (an advisory body to the Chinese government.)

Speaking of his new job as CCC President, Gao stressed the need for unity among China’s church leaders: “Zhong Xin He Yi - We need to work together to do things well.” He spoke self-effacingly about his stint as leader of the Shandong TSPM/CCC, saying he had to “learn on the job”. He realized, though, that having a supportive team had definitely helped him avoid many pitfalls: “We made fewer mistakes because we were united and worked as a team.”

Elder Fu Xuanwei, newly elected Chair of the National TSPM, agreed wholeheartedly with Gao. Also a member of the CPPCC, he was previously one of the Associate General Secretaries of the National TSPM. Born in 1944, Fu has been active in the Chinese church, especially in Shanghai, for decades and remains the Chair of the TSPM in Shanghai. Under his leadership, the Shanghai TSPM/CCC has seen an influx of youth and professionals into its ranks and women constitute the majority among the city’s clergy.

Pointing to the new situation and new context among grassroots churches, Elder Fu explained the need for pursuing theological reconstruction. “Many grassroots leaders are not trained. Our society has undergone opening and reform resulting in changed perspectives and attitudes among people – which is both good and bad.” Alluding to new social and ethical challenges, he believes that Christians should provide leadership in areas affecting human relationships and inter-faith relations. Issues which are no longer considered problematic in some countries may still be regarded as controversial in China. For instance, some theologians may say that other faiths have their own integrity but this may not be well accepted by some grassroots believers in China. “Our challenge,” says Fu, “is how to provide leadership for a church that has grown so much. Some old ideas and attitudes in the church may no longer be in keeping with the needs of the times.”

There have been notable changes in the government’s attitude towards religion and many different sectors have emerged besides the state in Chinese society. At last year’s Party Congress, it was reiterated that religion can make an important contribution.
to the building of a harmonious society. Observing the new importance attached to religion, Gao and Fu agreed that Christian churches should evangelize and make social contributions. The church has a strong tradition of diakonia which has its basis in the bible.

Through its social service department the CCC/TSPM could reach those in need both within and outside the church. It was an important medium of social witness. Both leaders expressed a strong concern that materially rich churches along China’s eastern seaboard should share their growing resources with much poorer churches in China’s west.

A common statement of faith

They highlighted the significance of the revisions to the Chinese Christian Church Order that had been approved at the 8th National Conference of the CCC/TSPM in Beijing in January. For the first time, there was a clear and fairly lengthy common statement of faith. This common understanding was crucial given the wide range of church traditions that have co-existed under the umbrella of the CCC/TSPM. Elder Fu emphasized that “We still respect the different church traditions whether they are Anglican, Adventist, Baptist and so on. But mutual respect is crucial. Grace Church (Mu En Tang) in Shanghai was originally a Methodist Church, but many Christians of an Anglican background worship in it. The Adventists continue to have their sabbath on a Saturday and we respect that.”

As a post-denominational church, however, one of the biggest challenges facing the Chinese church is how to develop a church order and common liturgy. With China’s opening, denominational tendencies are re-emerging, putting stress on the church’s fragile unity. This has been further threatened by the many Christian sects that dot the Chinese countryside, exerting an unwelcome influence on some grassroots believers. According to Elder Fu, “Our responsibility is to properly nurture our grassroots believers. The new constitution is very important and we need to put it into practice.”

Theological exchanges and ecumenical relations

Theological education is another area of primary concern. Both leaders underscored the pivotal role played by the Nanjing Union Theological Seminary, the only national level seminary in China. Tasked with producing leaders for all other seminaries in the country, it is crucial to the development of the church in China.

At present, faculty development is a primary focus and it is hoped that before too long, the seminary will be able to offer its own doctoral program. Elder Fu expressed his hope that courses on pastoral care and counselling would eventually be included in every seminary’s curriculum. Noting its importance for the nurture of church pastors and lay workers, he announced that the CCC/TSPM will be holding a course on pastoral counselling in June this year, in Shanghai.

Exchanges with Chinese scholars of Christianity were welcomed by Elder Fu, who explained that three years ago, thirty-eight pastors, evangelists and seminary graduates from Shanghai had attended a program on church history, New and Old Testament studies, and...
New Leaders Elected at the 8th National Conference of the TSPM/CCC

New leaders of the Chinese Protestant churches were elected at the 8th National Conference of the TSPM/CCC on January 12th, 2008 in Beijing. The National Conference, which is convened every five years, brought together nearly 300 delegates from all over China. Among the 181 representatives elected to the new conference, 84 were chosen to be on the Standing Committee of the National Conference of the TSPM/CCC. The conference marked the passing of the torch to a new generation of leaders whose average age is about 50 years. Four out of the 16 new leaders are in their 40s and six are in their 50s. (See profiles below) The leaders were unanimously elected through a show of hands.

Rev. Gao Feng, aged 46, from Shandong, was elected the new President of the China Christian Council (CCC). Among the several new Vice-Presidents of the CCC were: Rev. Lu Dezhi, Rev. Fan Chengzu, Rev. Lin Zhihua, Rev. Ni Guangdao, Rev. Gao Ying and Rev. Tang Weimin.

Elder Fu Xianwei from Shanghai was elected Chair of the National Three Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM). The following became Vice-Chairs of the TSPM: Rev. Yu Xinli, Rev. An Xinyi, Rev. Yu Wenliang, Rev. Shen Xuebin, Mr. Chen Shunpeng and Ms. Jin Wei.

Rev. Xu Xiaohong was elected General Secretary of the TSPM while Rev. Kan Baoping will be the General Secretary of the CCC.

Mr. Luo Guanzhong became the Honorary Chair of the Advisory Committee to the TSPM/CCC while Presbyter Ji Jianhong and Rev. Cao Shengjie became the Co-Chairs.

Bishop K.H. Ting remained the Honorary President and Honorary Chair of the TSPM and CCC respectively. Ye Xiaowen, Head of the State Administration for Religious Affairs, and other leaders made important remarks and gave congratulatory speeches at the Conference.

Delegates from ethnic minority areas wearing traditional costumes
Bishop Ting’s speech “Building a harmonious Church is a contribution towards a harmonious society” was read to the audience.

During the conference which began in Beijing on January 9th, delegates gathered to discuss key concerns of the Protestant Churches in China. They heard the work reports of the 7th National Conference of the TSPM and the 5th National Conference of the CCC. Amendments were made to the TSPM/CCC Church Order. They accepted proposals to support the 2008 Beijing Olympics and recommendations on how Chinese Christians can make contributions to the economic and social development of the country.

Among the 277 registered delegates at the Conference, 75 (or 27%) were female while ethnic minority groups constituted 10%. Compared to the 2002 National Conference, the 2008 conference saw a drop in the average age of delegates to 50.

Profiles of the newly elected leaders:

**China Christian Council**

**President**

Gao Feng
Male, Han, born 1962, M. Th., doing Ph. D, pastor. Chair and President of Shandong Provincial TSPM/CCC; President of Shandong Provincial Seminary; member of national CPPCC; Standing Committee member of Shandong CPPCC. Was Vice-President of China Christian Council.

**Vice-Presidents**

Fan Chengzu
Male, Han, Born 1938, vocational school graduate, pastor. Chair of Inner Mongolia TSPM and Vice-President of Inner Mongolia CCC; member of national CPPCC.

Gao Ying
Female, Han, born 1954, M.A., pastor. Vice-President of Nanjing Theological Seminary; President of the Beijing YWCA; Vice-General Secretary of the China Committee on Religion and Peace, member of Beijing CPPCC.

Lin Zhihua
Male, Han, born 1940, graduate studies, pastor. Vice-President CCC; President of Fujian Province CC; Vice-Principal of Fujian Seminary, member of National CPPCC.

Lu Dezhi
Male, Han, born 1964, postgraduate studies, Ph.D. candidate, pastor. President of Heilongjiang Provincial Christian Council; Chair and President of Haerbin City TSPM/CCC; Vice Principal of the Heilongjiang Bible School; standing committee member of Haerbin CPPCC. Was Vice-General Secretary of the CCC.

Ni Guangdao
Male, Han, born 1941, Junior middle school graduate, pastor. Vice-president of Zhejiang Christian Council; Chair of Hangzhou TSPM; member of Zhejiang CPPCC. Was the Associate General Secretary of the National TSPM.

Tang Weimin
Male, Han, born 1965, university graduate, graduated from Pastors Course at Nanjing Theological Seminary, pastor. President of Henan Provincial Christian Council, member of Henan Provincial CPPCC.

If you are interested in Chinese theology, read the Chinese Theological Review (CTR). CTR provides an excellent follow-up of theological discussion in China. Find details on the Amity News Service website: www.amitynewsservice.org

If you are interested in Chinese theology, read the Chinese Theological Review (CTR). CTR provides an excellent follow-up of theological discussion in China. Find details on the Amity News Service website: www.amitynewsservice.org
**General Secretary**
Kan Baoping
Male, Han, born 1957, M. Th., pastor. Director of the Research Department of TSPM/CCC. Was the Associate General Secretary of the CCC.

**Three Self Patriotic Movement**

**Chairman**
Fu Xianwei
Male, Han, born 1944, university graduate, graduate of Pastors Course at Nanjing Theological Seminary, elder. Chair of Shanghai TSPM; member of national CPPCC. Was the Associate General Secretary of the National TSPM.

**Vice-Chairs**
An Xinyi
Male, Han, born 1949, college graduate, Graduate of Pastors Course at Nanjing Theological Seminary, pastor. Presently Chair of Jiangsu Provincial TSPM; member of National CPPCC and Jiangsu Province CPPCC.

Chen Shunpeng
Male, Han, born 1948, university graduate. Vice-Chair of the National TSPM; Chair of Guangdong Province TSPM; member of National CPPCC.

Jin Wei
Female, Han born 1951, university graduate. Vice-Chair of National TSPM. Acting General Secretary of the National YMCA/YWCA; member of National CPPCC, member of standing committee of the All China Women’s Federation.

Shen Xuelin
Male, Han, born 1955, college graduate, pastor.

Yu Wenliang
Male, Lisu nationality, born 1958, Senior high school graduate, pastor. Chair of Yunnan Province TSPM, member of National CPPCC.

Yu Xinli
Male, Han, born 1939, vocational school graduate, pastor. Chair and President of the Beijing TSPM/CCC, member of the Beijing CPPCC. Was Associate General Secretary of the CCC.

**General Secretary**
Xu Xiaohong
Male, Han, born 1964, University graduate; Graduate of Pastors course at Nanjing Theological Seminary, pastor. Director of the Publications Department of TSPM/CCC. Vice-Chair of Shaanxi TSPM and Vice-President of Shaanxi CCC; Dean and Vice-President of Shaanxi Bible School. Was an Associate General Secretary of the National TSPM.

---

For subscription fees or any voluntary donation to cover the production and postage expenses of the ANS, please mail a check with your name and address to the Amity Hong Kong Office. Please make your check payable to “The Amity Foundation, Hong Kong, Ltd”.

For other ways of donating, please visit the Amity website: www.amityfoundation.org/index.php

Thank You!
Made-in-China Bibles for the 2008 Olympics

Speaking at the celebration of the printing of the 50 millionth Bible by the Amity Printing Company (APC), Mr. Ye Xiaowen, Director of State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA) announced that Bibles printed at APC will be made available at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. He underscored what Rev. Cao Shengjie, President of China Christian Council (CCC), said in her speech earlier, that the Olympics is a great opportunity for sharing between Chinese Christians and Christians around the world. The TSPM/CCC is preparing to provide free Bibles and church services during the games to participants.

In his speech at the start of the December 8th celebration, Bishop K. H. Ting, recalled that it had been his dream many years ago, when Amity Foundation was established, to have a Bible printing company “of our own”. “It would meet the spiritual needs of the Chinese Christians on one hand and help Amity's social work on the other,” said Bishop Ting. In 1988, a 10-year joint venture agreement was signed between the Amity Printing Press (now the Amity Development Company) and UBS (United Bible Societies) Publishing Company to establish the Nanjing Amity Printing Company (APC). In his speech Rev. Miller Milloy, General Secretary of UBS, paid tribute to Bishop Ting and the late Dr. Wenzao Han for their vision on insisting that the Chinese should depend on themselves in Bible publishing and printing. The printing plant that was originally designed to produce 600,000 bibles a year is now capable of producing 6 million bibles a year. In 2008, it will have the capacity to double this to 12 million bibles a year.

In fact, the Amity Printing Company is now one of the biggest Bible printing presses in the world and one of the thin paper printing experts in China. To date, the company has produced 41 million bibles for distribution in China and 9 million bibles for overseas distribution. The 9 million bibles exported have been printed in 75 different languages, including English, German, Spanish, French together with many African languages. With the increased capacity of the printing press, China could very well become the Bible producer for the whole world.

Reflecting on the great leap made by the printing company over the last 20 years, Mr. David Thorne, Asia Pacific Secretary for UBS, said that when he took part in the signing of the first agreement between UBS and Amity, the present outcome was totally unimaginable. “At that time, we thought 10 million bibles in 10 years would have been worth it.” He noted the “incredible historical timing” of the joint venture which started just before Deng Xiaoping made his famous speech in Guangdong in 1986. The shift from a grant to full cooperation has given stability to the project. At the start, the company had to hire and train technicians from the rural areas who at best knew only about tractors. Today, the company can boast of at least 350 employees with some of the best trained technicians in the business. When the printing press moves to its new production facility in 2008, it will be equipped with a British built Timson T32 high-speed web-press, custom-built to the requirements of the Nanjing based printing company.

Sending his congratulatory message to the celebration, the most Revd. Dr. John Chew, Archbishop of the South East Asia Province of the Anglican Church, said that the completion of 50 million copies of the Bible “is truly a public and most commendable witness and testimony of the genuine and fruitful partnership of many Christians and churches both in and outside of China.” Tributes were also paid to the TSPM/CCC, SARA, and the Jiangsu provincial and Nanjing municipal governments for their support and encouragement. The management, staff and workers of the printing company were praised and congratulated for their outstanding performance.

Mr. Qiu Zhonghui, General Secretary of the Amity Foundation and Chair of the Board of the Amity Printing Company, enthused that the work of the printing company serves Chinese Christians, overseas
Christians and the social service work of the Amity Foundation. Bishop Ting, quoting Corinthians I 13:8 “Love never ends,” proclaimed that the Bible printing ministry provides a way to spread the gospel and the love of Jesus. It opens a door for the exchange between Christians at home and abroad.

Amity and UBS extended their joint venture for another 10 years till 2018 at a signing ceremony that preceded the celebration. Almost 200 people, including national and provincial officials, Chinese church leaders, representatives of the UBS and churches in Hong Kong and overseas attended the celebration held at Shui Xiu Garden Hotel in Jiangning, in the suburbs of Nanjing. It concluded with a visit to the new premises of the printing company and a symbolic pressing of the start button of the new state of the art printing equipment.

Reconstructing Christianity in China: K. H. Ting and the Chinese Church.

A Book Review by Raymond Whitehead

Philip Wickeri spent many years researching and writing this magnificent study of Bishop K. H. Ting and his era. In this brief review I can only highlight a few dimensions of the book. I will approach his study in what I see as four intertwined aspects of his writing. He presents us with a huge amount of information on the twentieth century Chinese Protestant Church, making the book a useful reference volume in itself. Secondly, he traces in great detail the development of K.H. Ting’s work and thought. Thirdly he gives us his own interpretation of how the Chinese church developed and responded to its political and social context. And fourthly, he gives us his own take on K. H. Ting’s life and significance.

First, on information, Wickeri draws on a wide variety of Chinese and English published material, meticulously referenced in footnotes. He also includes a Glossary of Chinese Terms, a Glossary of Chinese names mentioned in the text (which readers unfamiliar with the context may need to use frequently), and an extensive bibliography. Photographs, drawn from various institutional and individual archives, grace the pages with some quite rare historical images. The study is also peppered with China-watcher type “insider” information from interviews and comments collected during the author’s years of living and working in China.

Part 1 of the book covers Ting’s life from birth in 1915 through early family and church life, student days, first work assignments and marriage. This was the period of Japanese occupation of eastern China and the ensuing world war. The five post-war years of work and study in Toronto, New York and Geneva are covered, concluding with the return to China of K. H. Ting, his wife Kuo Siu-may and their infant son, in 1951.
Part 2 is entitled “Deconstructing Christianity in China, 1951-1976”. In fact Wickeri’s historical narrative is not totally about deconstruction since some important groundwork is laid for the future including the training at the Seminary in Nanjing in the 1950s and 60s of a number of leaders who carried an important load of work in the 1980s and 90s. Also a great amount of work was done enabling the church to respond to the new social reality.

Mostly Wickeri describes the turmoil of the times, especially the cultural revolutionary era of the late 1960s. Part 3 describes the renewal of the church in the 1980s and after, a story more familiar to many. Wickeri fleshes out this history with his wealth of documentary evidence and personal observation and identification of major players in church and society.

In order to present the story of K. H. Ting, the author needs to present the story of the church in China, but to present this story he needs to cover a great deal of general religious, social and political history. Thus the information in the book is not only biographical in relation to Bishop Ting, but also covers major social and political developments. Anyone interested in 20th century China will find here a mountain of information.

A second aspect of Wickeri’s study is the specific biographical information on K. H. Ting and his family and friends. The interviews the author had with Bishop Ting provide new information about his life in pre-war Shanghai, and his life in post-liberation China. Archival research and talks with those who knew Ting in the post-war years fill in the picture. The book begins with a two page “portrait” of K. H. Ting that gets at the essence of his persona, but the whole study is also a continually developing picture of the life of a Christian leader formed in the context of struggle and love, and shaped by great historical events. The reader will come away with a deepened sense of who this man is, and grateful to Wickeri for bringing this personal history to life.

The third aspect of the study I want to refer to is that of interpretation of the information. The author states on page xiii that “the interpretation presented here is [his] alone.” Obviously he has his own perspective as does any writer and obviously there will be those who will raise questions about his interpretive work. Each reader will have her or his own view. Chinese readers may see their history differently. Other Asian, African, and Latin American and western readers may look from different perspectives. For example, questions about the Chinese Revolution and Christianity may be framed differently if looked at in the light of historical parallels or from the present context of living with Empire.

Two examples of historical parallels where turmoil and violence were mixed with positive human progress are the Puritan and the French Revolutions. The Puritan Revolution with Oliver Cromwell’s military leadership had violent and destructive aspects. One can deplore the violence and still affirm the democratic advances that were made against “the divine right of kings.” The French Revolution led to chaos. Heads rolled. We look back with horror on the use of the guillotine. Napoleon emerged as both a heroic leader and villain. None of this means that those inspired by the ideals of “liberty, equality and fraternity” were simply naive or out of touch with reality. Perhaps it will take another generation to gain historical perspective on the Chinese Revolution to be able to make such distinctions.

Today, many progressive church people around the world look at the issues facing us in the context of Empire—meaning principally American power and control. The Chinese Revolution from the beginning
confronted Empire. The Containment Policy of the United States intended to strangle China. It entailed aggressive military action against China in the Taiwan Straits, Korea, and Vietnam. We should not isolate Chinese political and social developments from this context. Ideological anti-communism morphed with the US military-industrial complex and was supported by the diatribes of evangelical-fundamentalist Christians. A clash of ideologies existed between China and America.

For example, looking at any point in the latter half of the twentieth century, one may ask who was more in peril, an active Christian in Communist China or an active Communist in Christian America? Framing the question this way brings a different perspective to what was going on in China. How did McCarthyism, red-baiting, labelling artists, writers and film makers as evil “fellow-travelers” in the US compare with China’s various campaigns against supporters of western imperialism? The differences are great but the parallels are clear. It is well to keep in mind Christian writings such as the following:

> There are two and only two dominant ‘methods’ in the world today. One is anti-individual freedom, anti-democracy, anti-God. This method is Communism. The other is pro-individual freedom, pro-democracy and pro-God ... I stand with those who realistically strive to defend, enrich and perfect these. I stand with the overwhelming majority of all Christian missionaries in China and at home ... I stand with Generalissimo Chiang and Madame Chiang and many other Methodists in China ... Democracy and Christianity will have to fight for their very existence if Russia is allowed to consolidate her gains in China (Christian Herald, March 1950).

Numerous such statements could be quoted from a number of American Christian journals. Here is another:

> Red lies, red murder, red rape, red slavery and red atheism are over half the world today. These are incredible facts but they are facts. ... In the United States today there are a few ... ‘red deans’, red educators, red labor leaders, red politicians and red journalists.

The article goes on to say that these people need to be rooted out because they represent the enemy in a fatal struggle. There is “only one issue—Communism—and with that issue joins the life and death struggle of the freedom to survive” (Christian Herald, May, 1953). China stood under the threat of an American invasion that many Christian leaders were urging. It is not surprising that China’s response might be seen as iron-fisted or “extreme.”

By 1970 it was clear that American military action in Vietnam, aimed at “containing” China, was going to fail. It is not a coincidence that in 1971 Beijing leaders had the confidence to invite the US table tennis team to China, followed soon after by the first delegation of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars. At the same time Henry Kissinger made his secret trip to Beijing, setting up the Nixon China visit. Soon actress Shirley MacLaine, head of the All-Africa Council of Churches Burgess Carr, Afro-American civil rights leader Hosea Williams, folk-singer Peter Singer, and host of friendship groups travelled there.

Some observers would give more emphasis to these international changes in trying to understand China. With the threat of Empire reduced things started to change in China and by 1972 K. H. Ting was able to begin correspondence with foreign friends again. These changes presaged the deaths of Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong and the overthrow of the Gang of Four in 1976.

A fourth aspect of the book is the author’s evaluation of K. H. Ting and others in the Chinese Church. Wickeri shows Bishop Ting to have strengths and weaknesses, but overall gives a positive view of the role he played in leading Chinese Protestantism in a time of radical social change, and argues forcefully against the negative views of those evangelical-fundamentalist Christians who demonize Ting and label him an agent of the
Chinese government. It is probably necessary to speak to this blinkered-mentality of the American Christian right-wing. In many other parts of the world, however, this ideological anti-communism is absent, and being a Marxist or a Communist is not equated with being the Devil. In the struggle against Empire in fact, some Christians have seen the Marxist option as quite sensible. Wickeri has a convincing argument that K. H. Ting never joined the Communist Party (although he notes that a few Chinese Christian leaders including several Anglican priests did join). For many enlightened Christians this may not be a burning issue.

Bishop Ting is an unrelenting advocate of the “Three-Self Principle” and bristles at any foreign meddling in the internal affairs of the Chinese Church. Wickeri’s book touches on the 1981 Montreal Conference on the new beginning for international churches and the Chinese church. The Canada China Program of the Canadian Council of Churches organized this gathering. Two years before the conference, when K. H. Ting was in Toronto, he wrote a short paper called “Facing the Future or Restoring the Past”. The paper was in response to what Ting saw as a slight to the Chinese church by a European church leader. He worked on this document at my house in Toronto and was visibly angry at continuing western imperial attitudes. This incident formed some of the background of the Montreal conference.

Ting and other Chinese church leaders were ready for an international church gathering but they were not prepared to walk into a hostile context with western Christians attacking the Chinese church. K. H. Ting trusted the Canada China Program to organize a conference that was respectful of the selfhood of the Chinese Church. The invitations to attend and the organizing of the agenda were in the hands of the Canada China Program, the only proviso being that anyone invited have respect for the leadership of the Chinese church, that they were ready to face the future and not trying to restore the imperialist past. Bishop Ting saw events such as the fundamentalist Christian “Love China” gathering in Manila in 1975, and parallel Roman Catholic activities as continuing the imperial mentality. This contrasts with Wickeri’s positive evaluation of these groups (p. 185). The Montreal conference showed that another way was possible.

In the twenty-first century we still face the issue of Empire. The Chinese church continues to be vigilant in protecting its own selfhood. Many European and North American and Korean Christians have their own agendas for Christianity in China. They feel justified in meddling in the internal affairs of the Chinese church, making judgements about who are the good Christians and who are the bad Christians, and taking sides. They try to tell the Chinese Christians how to run their church and how to do theological education. A better approach is to respect the leadership of the Chinese church. They seek to run their church well. They will evaluate their past and plan for their future.

Philip Wickeri has given us a sensitive portrait of Bishop K. H. Ting. As we understand Bishop Ting more clearly we can perhaps learn how to better support the Three Self principle he espoused, and look to the future work of Christian leaders and theologians in China who will write their own church history.

Raymond Whitehead was the Professor of Ethics and the Dean of the Toronto School of Theology for many years. After retirement, he was visiting professor at the Nanjing Union Theological Seminary in China and the Divinity School at Siliman University in the Philippines. He is the author of No Longer Strangers: Selected Writings of K. H. Ting (Orbis 1989).
Qiu Zhonghui, General Secretary of the Amity Foundation, delivered a speech on social service at one of the sessions of the 8th National Christian Conference held by the TSPM/CCC in Beijing in January. Mr. Qiu was a delegate to the Conference and was elected a member of the Standing Committee of the 8th National Conference of the TSPM. Below is an abridged version of his speech.

My dear ministers and co-workers in the Lord,

In Christ, I bring my regards and wish you all a peaceful New Year. As God graciously leads the Chinese church into the year ahead, let me express my thanks to the national Three-Self Patriotic Movement for allowing me to share with you some of the endeavors of the Amity Foundation in social service.

**Social Service as a Testimony of God’s Love**

God is Love. Bishop Ting has said this; that the all-inspiring God of our Lord Jesus Christ has as His greatest attribute not His omnipotence, not His omnipresence, not His omniscience, not His eternal nature, not even His exalted majesty, but rather His love. The Gospel moves people; it stirs up our hearts. That is why people may not be moved or convinced by religious doctrine, but they are moved when love is made manifest; when love is held up – when love spreads. This all anticipates the day when Love at last fills all the earth. We rejoice as we see men and women beyond number growing in their devotion to endeavors that spread Love across this country.

Since its establishment in 1985, Amity has held up the banner of this kind of love. Under Bishop Ting’s leadership, with the help of the CCC and TSPM, and with the involvement of people from all walks of like, Amity has served society through work that benefits people and upholds world peace. We believe that even the Son of Man came to serve, and this has inspired our efforts to lift up the weak and powerless throughout our 23 years as an organization. Our goal is to deliver
compassion and warmth to the many good people who find themselves in dire circumstances. To this end more than one billion Yuan (ca. $US 138 million) has been raised both at home and abroad, and millions of people throughout China have benefited. In 1999, the State Council gave Amity an honorary title for work that promotes harmonious relationships among ethnic minorities, and in 2006, we received the second China Poverty Eradication Award, which is given in recognition of contributions to the development of public charity, socialism, and a harmonious society.

Amity has helped promote change and hope in impoverished areas through projects that provide: clean drinking water, irrigation and cultivation of farmland, integrated rural development projects, the rebuilding of schools and subsidies for impoverished students, the placement of foreign teachers, training for village medical workers, medical treatment for those who suffer from polio and cataracts, care for orphans, and cooperative social welfare projects with churches. We also work hard to facilitate emergency relief in the face of annually occurring national disasters.

I, along with all my Amity colleagues, am blessed to play a part in promoting compassion, spreading the cause of Love and witnessing the progress and development of Amity itself. This growth arises not only from knowledge, experience and interaction with those who have practical needs, but also from a deeper understanding of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“The Professional Discipline of Putting Love into Practice”

Amity has come a long way since 1985 when the first three staff members raised several hundred thousand Yuan. Today, with a 50-member staff and an annual fund-raising income of one hundred million, Amity is listed among the country’s 13 biggest public charity organizations. We believe that the key to our progress lies in our emphasis on a spirit of devotion and compassion, as well as in the development of specialized skills appropriate to the fields in which we work. Because we desire to reach great heights in our service to society, we are committed to strengthening our internal structure and our expertise.

Our main methods are:

1. Research and development:
   With the help of the Academy of Social Sciences Social Policy Research Center and Nanjing University’s Scientific Research Academic Unit, Amity made a thorough study of development trends among public charity organizations at home and abroad. Through this process, we reached a deeper understanding of factors that pre-figure social needs, and based on these findings, we formulated a strategic plan for Amity’s work.

2. Accurate discernment of social needs:
   More than ten years ago, Amity saw that climate change was creating problems for China’s western regions. We targeted five provinces and initiated projects to promote renewable sources of energy, grassland management, and effective use of agrotechniques. We also investigated the benefits of tree-planting in rocky areas and regions that suffer from desertification. Our efforts to develop the local economy and protect the environment, have won praise from all levels of government and society.

3. Strict project management standards:
   Mindful that all our funding comes from donor contributions, Amity is strictly committed to good stewardship and wise use of project management funds. Drawing on a participatory model for project management, we exercise a standard of project fund control over the workflow that helps to consolidate and strengthen project assessment and auditing. On-site visits are a regular practice as this relatively small expense guarantees the quality of both project implementation and secure use of funds.

4. Scrupulous commitment to honesty:
   Public welfare and charity work depends on credibility for its survival. Amity’s principled commitment to sincerity and honesty is a key to its successful cooperation with organizations both at home and abroad. Project
funds given for a special purpose are to be duly used for that purpose. Surplus funds are to be returned to the donor. The principles remain the same whether the amounts are large or small. It is honesty which has won Amity the esteem and trust of many partner organizations, and it is honesty which propels our on-going search for new and better ways to develop our projects.

5. Persistence in blazing new trails:
For years, Amity has used a model of project funding, in which three parties -- Amity, the local government, and the local beneficiaries -- all contribute. New social development theories and new social realities in China are now revealing other “3-way relationships” that also impact community development. In society, religious believers, secular professionals, and the local government all join in making a contribution; in project implementation, local economy, local society and local environment must all be considered. This is leading us to a new awareness of how to build “3-fold benefits” into our project objectives.

6. Attention to organizational culture/education:
Amity’s organizational culture has grown out of more than 20 years of experience in spreading the work of Love. This has sharpened our focus on 3 Qualities (Compassion, Commitment, Competence) and 3 Strengths (Communication, Cooperation, Creativity). This emphasis has not only motivated and encouraged the Amity staff, but it has also cast its spell on a multitude of volunteers who are increasingly drawn to this fulfilling work.

Working Hand-in-hand to Build a Harmonious Society

In the 20 years since China began its policy of reform and opening to the outside world, the nation’s economy and society have undergone tremendous changes, and while the broad course of change continues to be positive, we have not yet achieved the goal of a harmonious society. Data shows that the number of Chinese living in poverty has been substantially reduced, but due to our enormous population base, the actual number of poor people is still very great. At the end of 2006, the number of citizens still without warm clothing and adequate food was 21,480,000; those with income below the poverty line numbered 35,500,000. There are also about 143 million elderly and 82 million handicapped making up another huge group of disadvantaged people. All of these people need care and assistance from citizens in every sector of Chinese society, including those of us in religious circles. Helping disadvantaged communities means addressing emotional and spiritual needs as well as physical needs, so each and every one of us has a gift to offer and a duty to perform. God has entrusted this mission to every follower of Jesus Christ.

Amity’s long engagement in social service has led to a personal understanding that works of compassion are an indispensable component of building a harmonious society. It seems especially true that when the church participates in actions that confer benefits on society, it brings uniquely positive dynamics into play. General Secretary Hu Jin Tao recently stressed the importance of comprehensively carrying out the Party’s basic guiding policies regarding religious work. He encouraged religious circles to be faithful to their religion and their country, to advance together in serving our society’s traditions, and to play a positive function in society’s economic and socialist development. These words from General Secretary Hu will undoubtedly provide open doors for Christians to step forward and give a great witness through their contributions to social service and the expansion of public charity work. I am convinced that this kind of witness will draw more and more people to commit themselves to works of compassion, and that the power of Love will find its way into the hearts of everyone.

It is recorded in the Bible that Jesus walked among us, healing and delivering. He said, “As you have done it unto the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me.” To be servants to all is our commission as Christians. I am willing to join in this mission with all my brothers and sisters in the Amity Foundation, and, buoyed by the concern and care of the CCC, the TSPM and the many Chinese churches, we will lend our hands in showing forth God’s love and grace. •
Let’s Talk About Love:  
A Sermon by Cathy Zhang Jing

In another ten days it will be St. Valentine’s Day, a festival about love. Though this is a festival imported from western countries, it has become widely recognized by the Chinese. The Chinese name for this festival “qing ren”, lover, has very delicate connotations and ambiguities. It seems that only lovers should celebrate the festival. On that day, you see roses everywhere and young people are generously buying roses for their lovers. In the west, however, this festival is recognized as a festival for all ages. School children will have parties on that day sharing gifts of candies or chocolates with their classmates, friends and teachers. People send cards on St. Valentine's Day to relatives, friends, teachers, children. It is truly a festival about love, not only for romantic lovers, but for all human beings who have love and long for love.

Celine Dion, one of my favorite singers, has an album entitled “Let’s talk about love.” In this song, it is very clear that no matter how different human beings are in this world, there is one true emotion that reminds us that we are the same: we all have love in our hearts and we all are longing for love. Love is related to life, truth, trust and us. Love runs through our life from the very first moment of our birth to the very end days. Love is the thread that connects us. Love is as subtle as the breeze and as gentle as the falling leaf. Love can fan a flicker to a flame. Love can be as powerful as the rage of any storm and as deep as any sea. This song has described the nature of love very explicitly, which reminds me of the scripture we are going to read today. (1Cor. 13: 4-7)

Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, (love) is not pompous. It is not inflated. It is not rude. It does not seek its own interests. It is not quick-tempered. It does not brood over injury. It does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

Every Christian loves this ode to love written by Paul and many Christians treat this ode as the special reference to God’s love. Truly, the nature of love described in this poem can barely be manifested by any human being. So many times, people in love find themselves in pain and suffering because they are in love but fail to see the patient and kind love that is not jealous or pompous or inflated or rude. On the contrary, people in love easily get jealous, pompous, inflated and rude. Lovers mind their sensitive feelings. They hope their lovers can bring them happiness. Very often love turns out to be selfish and demanding. People love this poem about love because they themselves cannot do it but they hope their lovers can. Many others believe that this can only be the love of God. God waits for us no matter how bad and sinful we are. God’s love is patient, constantly waiting for our repentance. We all love God for God’s love is as perfect as described in this poem. This perfect love is the foundation of our faith in God and assures us of the forgiveness of God. This Ode to Love is so perfect that few pastors use these verses at a wedding ceremony.

I want to try to say something about the nature of love from these verses, which human beings can think about and often reflect in their daily practice of love. The concept of love mentioned here today is not limited to the romantic love between man and woman, but refers to the love between lovers, among family members, or love among friends. I call it True Love.

“Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, (love) is not pompous. It is not inflated. It is not rude.”

There is a village in northern India which is very poor because the land cannot produce much. There is a simple and bumpy road near the village where many trucks pass every day. One day a truck with many cans fell and cans were everywhere. The villagers moved the cans back to their homes and they had food for many days. All of a sudden they discovered that the easiest way to survive was to steal and grab the food on the trucks. They made the road worse by digging pits and started robbing more and more trucks. The local government
This is my prayer to thee, my lord ---
Strike, strike at the root of poverty in my heart.
Give me the strength lightly to bear my joys and sorrows.
Give me the strength to make my love fruitful in service.
Give me the strength never to disown the poor or bend my knees before insolent might.
Give me the strength to raise my mind high above daily trifles.
And give me the strength to surrender my strength to thy will with love.
(Tagore)

We all know that Paul's letters are to a specific church dealing with specific problems in that church. This ode to love appears in the thirteenth chapter of this letter. In the previous twelve chapters, Paul has been dealing with all the problems appearing in this church. The Corinthian church had been established by Paul so Paul was scolding its members as if they were his children.

The church had the problem of worshipping idols, and eating sacrificed meat; some members had brought shame to the church because they had done immoral things, some were tangled in lawsuits with each other while others had marital problems. But the most serious problem was the schism in the church. The unity of the church was being threatened, which to Paul was of the greatest concern.

In Chapters 12 and 14, Paul talks about the spiritual gifts. However, in Chapter 13, he inserts an Ode to Love in between his discussion of the spiritual gifts such as preaching and speaking in tongues. Why? The problem must be so serious that Paul had to use a very good method to convince the members of the Corinthian church that they had to do something to change the situation. Paul knows that the only thing that can glue the hearts of people is love: the true love that Paul finds in this ode to love. If we wear a pair of glasses equipped with true love, the love that seeks only for the goodness of the other, we will notice that the many serious problems Paul had to deal with can be solved and we can more easily understand what Paul has been saying in the previous chapters.

Take Chapter 8 for example. Here Paul talks about the food offered to idols. Paul explains that Christians are set free because of their faith in Christ. The food offered to idols cannot destroy Christians any more because God does not bless God's people according to the food he/she eats but according to his/her faith. It is fine for Christians to eat the food offered to idols. However, there are some brothers and sisters in the community who are serious and strictly pious in their faith. They may not have the same understanding and still worry that the food may defile their bodies and the honor of the community.

Paul therefore reminds the former group that “if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.” Although I don’t think the food offered to the idols will defile my or anyone’s body, I have to respect those in my community who think the food will defile them. If I truly love them, I need to give up my...
Youth Ministry

More than 50% of China’s population is below the age of 35 and growing numbers of youth are worshipping in both rural and urban churches. The following is a translation of an article in Tian Feng No. 322 Nov. 2007 p. 38 by Lin Zhao Qun of Fujian Province. The author alludes to increased campus violence and alienation among youth as reasons for the church to pay more attention to youth ministry. Translated and edited by Yip Man Hei and Kim Strong.

The church is characterized by a great deal of demographic diversity. Young people, however, are a group in need of special attention. God’s great love for the world is a message of salvation for everybody, and no one has the authority to prevent the young people from worshipping the Lord. Moreover, those of the younger generation need guidance and nurture, and the significance of youth work lies not only in the church training young people for today, but even more importantly for the future. Recognizing this critical necessity, church leaders have come to realize that youth ministry should be a priority for the church.

Youth work is however not a church invention. Many secular organizations and institutions have long been aware that young people are leaders of tomorrow, and they have already spent a great deal of energy in training future youth leaders. This reality again raises the questions of whether or not the church can afford to delay in equipping its future leaders. The necessity of youth work is spelt out in the following four aspects.

Youth Work is Beneficial for Society

In recent years, campus violence involving young people has increased sharply. While the rates of youth delinquency are on the rise, the moral values of young people are spiraling downward. What is the church to do, under such circumstances? If even secular organizations and institutions feel the urgency of training our youth, is it not right that the church itself needs to do more to address the needs and problems of our lost younger generations? Throughout the course of history, the church has been exemplary in making contributions to the society’s progress and well-being. There is certainly no reason now for the church to cast aside its good works to society; rather, the church needs to do what is right to do (cf. Galatians). A well-known saying goes, “Circumstances may challenge the younger generation, but the younger generation makes circumstances”. The church should embrace the young people, and through working with them, the society and nation will be blessed in the age to come. In this regard, youth work is significant and should be started as soon as possible.

Some local congregations have already begun to mobilize their resources for training youth leaders with

The Necessity of Youth Work

More than 50% of China’s population is below the age of 35 and growing numbers of youth are worshipping in both rural and urban churches. The following is a translation of an article in Tian Feng No. 322 Nov. 2007 p. 38 by Lin Zhao Qun of Fujian Province. The author alludes to increased campus violence and alienation among youth as reasons for the church to pay more attention to youth ministry. Translated and edited by Yip Man Hei and Kim Strong.

The church is characterized by a great deal of demographic diversity. Young people, however, are a group in need of special attention. God’s great love for the world is a message of salvation for everybody, and no one has the authority to prevent the young people from worshipping the Lord. Moreover, those of the younger generation need guidance and nurture, and the significance of youth work lies not only in the church training young people for today, but even more importantly for the future. Recognizing this critical necessity, church leaders have come to realize that youth ministry should be a priority for the church.

Youth work is however not a church invention. Many secular organizations and institutions have long been aware that young people are leaders of tomorrow, and they have already spent a great deal of energy in training future youth leaders. This reality again raises the questions of whether or not the church can afford to delay in equipping its future leaders. The necessity of youth work is spelt out in the following four aspects.

Youth Work is Beneficial for Society

In recent years, campus violence involving young people has increased sharply. While the rates of youth delinquency are on the rise, the moral values of young people are spiraling downward. What is the church to do, under such circumstances? If even secular organizations and institutions feel the urgency of training our youth, is it not right that the church itself needs to do more to address the needs and problems of our lost younger generations? Throughout the course of history, the church has been exemplary in making contributions to the society’s progress and well-being. There is certainly no reason now for the church to cast aside its good works to society; rather, the church needs to do what is right to do (cf. Galatians). A well-known saying goes, “Circumstances may challenge the younger generation, but the younger generation makes circumstances”. The church should embrace the young people, and through working with them, the society and nation will be blessed in the age to come. In this regard, youth work is significant and should be started as soon as possible.

Some local congregations have already begun to mobilize their resources for training youth leaders with
efforts that include teaching them foreign languages, computer skills and so on. Putting love into action, will cause young people to notice a difference. For instance, those who attend the free English class take a natural interest in knowing more about the teachers and their reasons for providing these services. Often, these conversations lead to sharing about the Christian faith. As the church undertakes service ministry to young people, it makes a positive contribution to society and creates an opportunity for young people to gain a better idea of what the Christian faith is about.

The message that the church concerns life and the path to truth and love. To the extent that young people find it relevant, they respond positively to the gospel. These young converts will eventually bring back what they learn from church to their communities, and in this sense, they function as light and salt in society.

Youth Work is Beneficial for the Church

When the church fails to engage with young people, it fails to live out the Great Commission (cf. Matt 28: 18-20). Proclamation defines what it means to be church, and young people matter, if the church is to proclaim the gospel. The Christian faith is not simply inherited, even if a young person happens to be born in a Christian family. If that young person does not really know Christ, the Christian name becomes nominal, and there is no true faith in that person. Such a young person needs the gospel. Those who have interest in the Christian faith have a right to receive spiritual teachings through the church, and the church is obliged to provide this. Young people today may be comparatively more independent, and they have their special thoughts and interests. Taking this into consideration, the church may need to give space and time to making youth work more appealing to young people. Young people may be the direct fruit of church’s evangelization work, but the links are not always so exact, and young people may also bear fruit of their own. It is important to let young people evangelize among their peer groups. This will bring more effective results, since they share the same language, and they have better ways to solve their own problems.

Conversely, if the church does not care about the young people, it will become a dry and dull place. The absence of younger generations in church will run the risk of having no one to carry on the baton. In other words, this will result in lack of church leadership. A further implication is that insufficient numbers of young helping hands make diakonal work difficult, since many local congregations are actively involving in social services. Many community service efforts require manual labor, such as setting up the venues for festival celebrations and community services, and young people are perfect for this sort of work. Through serving their respective communities, these young people become active witnesses of faith. Through activities like these, the church is training its future leaders, and we can draw evidence of how effective this is since many of those who now hold important positions in church were also members of youth fellowships and assumed leadership roles at a young age.

Youth Work is Beneficial for the Family

When it comes to family problems, some believe that young people are the victims, and others may think that young people are the trouble makers, causing all sorts of problems for the family. A happy family is never a guarantee amid the era of technological advancement, rapid social development, and better living standards. Young people, who believe in Christ and have life-changing stories to tell, may however bridge the gaps among family members, and their resulting commitment to the family can also change their parents’ perception of them. As worries about kids who were once believed to be problem children decrease, parents begin to trust their children and to believe that they can make a difference in the family.

Many young people try to share the gospel with their family members through explaining how their encounter with Christ has changed their own lives. In some cases, the Bible messages that these young people bring to conversations with their families prevent the problematic families from breaking up. The role of these young people cannot be ignored, and significantly, they can be a source of blessing for their families.

“When the church fails to engage with young people, it fails to live out the Great Commission.”

ANS March 2008  Page 19
Most of the parents do hope that their children will have a bright future. The prevailing social ideologies, however, make parental expectations of children difficult to fulfill. People were more rational in the past, but now having entered the epoch of postmodernism, young people do not like reason alone; they tend to talk more about their feelings. They often do what they want, without thinking about the consequences. Most of these young people do not have the right set of moral values, not to mention an understanding about the meaning of life. Who else can give pointers to these postmodernized young people, but the church? Many young people find the Truth as it is preached in church, and after finding it, their lives are no longer the same as before.

**Youth Work is Beneficial for the Youth**

Practically speaking, church youth work can help young people in a variety of ways. The most striking one is the teaching of the Truth that prepares young people to make a healthy transition to the next step of their journey. As we all know, youth is an important period of transition in a person’s life, and it is also a time for building up one’s knowledge and forming one’s value system. The meaning of life and its value cannot be shaped by the world, but the truth of God. God’s word is the lamp to the feet of young people, guiding them to the right path. “How can young people keep their way pure? By guarding it according to your word. With my whole heart I seek you; do not let me stray from your commandments. I treasure your word in my heart, so that I may not sin against you.” (Ps 119:9-11) When the love of Christ comes to these young hearts, they are able to grasp the promise of abundant life.

**Summary**

As mentioned above, church youth work brings positive effects on society, the development of church ministries, family, and the young people themselves. It is necessary and it is also a key to the church’s revival. Young people are energetic and they can make a difference through witnessing their faith to others, and bringing them to God. Realizing the critical need for youth work and its potential to transform lives, church leaders will not want to lose a minute before undertaking this important task.

![The courtyard of St Paul's Church in Nanjing](image)