



Messenger

FALL 2022 NEWSLETTER



Holy Cross Day, 14 September 2022.

Dear brethren in Christ,

Thanks be to God that this winter we are once more meeting in person at a conference centre, and that the work of WCCC has never stopped in any year of the Covid pandemic. The Lord, knowing what he himself had permitted to happen, had already been leading the leaders of WCCC in ways that would carry us through the Covid years. When Covid hit the American shores shortly after our 2019 winter conference, which celebrated WCCC's 50th anniversary, the Lord's leading had ensured that we already had many things in place to continue the work of God's kingdom.

In particular, in the early months of 2019 some of us had sharply disagreed over the matter of holding meetings online to

plan for the next winter conference and, beyond the conference, for the long term. Some firmly believed that those planning meetings, held every month, must be held in person, and that no one could attend meetings by calling in from elsewhere. I myself, elected at the 2018 conference, bought a plane ticket to get to the first meeting in January 2019. At the airport, my flight to California for the meeting was first delayed and then cancelled. I had no way of attending. Even after this incident, some of the WCCC leaders maintained that we must attend all meetings in person to be counted in attendance, take part in discussions, and vote on motions; others contended that, when circumstances made it impossible for some leaders to attend meetings in the flesh, we should use the explicit permission in Cal-

ifornia's state law to allow leaders to call in to official meetings. In the end, we proceeded with what the law allowed and circumstances made necessary: we began to admit online meeting attendance in order to keep WCCCC going, and at the 2019 conference we even unveiled an updated set of bylaws for WCCCC to reflect the need to respond to changing circumstances.

Just weeks after our 2019 winter conference, Covid hit and international air travel was restricted, and in retrospect we saw the hand of God in what we had done and experienced in 2019. Unlike many other organizations, by early 2020 we had already grown used to calling in to our meetings online. As many churches and Christian organizations shut down their operations, we were able to continue our work online: we continued to hold our Thematic Bible Conference that very summer, online, and the winter conference we moved online as well until circumstances would permit us to meet offline again. So as we return to a conference centre in person, we give thanks to God that he has providentially guided us through one of the most challenging times that WCCCC has ever seen, into the next 50 years.

In this fall 2022 quarterly update of WCCCC's *Messenger* newsletter, we also officially announce that the WCCCC winter conference is renamed the Kingdom Leadership Conference, to challenge, train, and broaden perspectives for those who are to lead the work of God's kingdom for the next 50 years. Now inviting you to join us in praying for, giving to, and attending this winter's renamed Kingdom Leadership Conference, I remain,

Yours faithfully,

Lue-Yee Tsang

Secretary, WCCCC Board of Directors

A Prayer, of the Rev.

JEREMY TAYLOR, in *The Golden Grove, or, A Manual of Daily Prayers and Litanies* (1655).

Blessed be thy Name, O God, and blessed be thy Mercies, who hast preserved me this night from sin and sorrow, from bad chances, and a violent death, from the malice of the Devil, and the evil effects of my own corrupted nature and infirmity. The out-goings of the Morning and Evening shall praise thee, and thy servants shall rejoice in giving thee praise for the operation of thy hands. Let thy providence and care watch over me this day, and all my whole life, that I may never sin against thee by idleness or folly, by evil company or private sins, by word or deed, by thought or desire; and let the employment of my day leave no sorrow, or the remembrance of an evil conscience at night: but let it be holy and profitable, blessed, and always innocent; that when the days of my short abode are done, and the shadow is departed, I may die in thy fear and favour, and rest in a holy hope, and at last return to the joys of a blessed Resurrection, through Jesus Christ: In whose Name, and in whose words, in behalf of my self and all my friends, and all thy servants, I humbly and heartily pray,

Our Father, &c.

About the Wcccc Logotype and Motto.

Lue-Yee Tsang

THE Wcccc logotype at the beginning of this newsletter is a version of the one that has been used since the 1980s, a distinctive logotype recognized for decades as representing the work of an organization that has enriched the life of Chinese churches for more than 50 years now.



The large W in the logotype may be seen as a baton and a torch with a flame above it. These stand respectively for responsibility in the Church and the world at large, and the flame of the Holy Spirit which we have received from those before us and strive to pass on to the generations that follow.

The four Cs may be seen to resemble the arrayed ranks of Christian soldiers who, bearing the Holy Spirit and their Christian duty, follow the Cross of Jesus Christ with confidence that his Name conquers. As a well-known 19th-century hymn says,

*Onward, Christian soldiers,
marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus
going on before!*

In the 19th century, many Christians had a sense of assurance that evangelicals today sometimes do not share. At the time, the success of the British empire, which for all

its flaws was guided by a sense that God was using the British people around the world for his own higher purposes, made it easier for many English-speaking Christians to feel optimistic about the progress of society and the expansion of God's kingdom. The passing of the once-great British empire, and the disappointing decline of faith in a postwar West dominated by an American power whose character is increasingly anti-Christian, have often led Christians to think rather of contraction than of expansion, of self-protection rather than self-denial for the greatness of God's kingdom. Yet the basis of our confidence has never changed: as Scripture declares, and as the Greeks have sometimes written on the walls of their churches, IC XC NIKA (*Iēsous Christos nika*), or Jesus Christ conquers.



This much is already inherent in the classic Wcccc logotype, which we have inherited from the 1980s, and we give thanks to God for his faithfulness in anything that his word has promised.

I would also here explain some of the elements of the more elaborate version of the Wcccc logotype.

Underneath the basic logotype, we note that Wcccc was established in 1969, in thanks for more than 50 years of the Lord's work among us. It is our hope that Wcccc, with its charism (i.e., spiritual gift) of zeal for God's word and God's kingdom, will continue to strengthen the Church for 50 years more, even when the world changes around us.

In a circle around the edge of the logo-type, a motto describes what WCCCC does: challenging, training, and broadening perspectives. This description is familiar to those who have attended WCCCC for decades, and we have thought it necessary to include this old motto in the visual expression of the organization's identity, both to keep ourselves on the "straight and narrow" and to show those who are new to the organization's work what we do.

In the putting on of yearly conferences, it can be easy to forget what purpose these conferences serve. Some churches, grasping at straws to attract people, neglect the word of God but attempt the gimmick of offering blessings for people's pets. Likewise, there is a risk that WCCCC leaders will merely try to maintain a yearly conference and choose to invite speakers who happen to be popular. But our intent is to offer content that will truly challenge conferees with God's word, train them to serve Christ well, and broaden their perspectives on the Holy Spirit's work in the world.

JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ON I Corinthians 10.

And why do I speak of the world to come? Since here this mystery makes earth become to you a heaven. Open only for once the gates of heaven and look in; nay, rather not of heaven, but of the heaven of heavens; and then you will behold what I have been speaking of. For what is there most precious of all, this will I show you lying upon the earth. For as in royal palaces, what is most glorious of all is not walls, nor golden roofs, but the person of the king sitting on the throne; so likewise in heaven the Body of the King. But this, you



are now permitted to see upon earth. For it is not angels, nor archangels, nor heavens and heavens of heavens, that I show you, but the very Lord and Owner of these. Do you perceive how that which is more precious than all things is seen by you on earth; and not seen only, but also touched; and not only touched, but likewise eaten; and after receiving it you go home?

Make your soul clean then, prepare your mind for the reception of these mysteries. For if you were entrusted to carry a king's child with the robes, the purple, and the diadem, you would cast away all things which are upon the earth. But now that it is no child of man how royal soever, but the only-begotten Son of God himself, whom you received, do you not thrill with awe, tell me, and cast away all the love of all worldly things, and have no bravery but that wherewith to adorn yourself? Or do you still look towards earth, and love money, and pant after gold? What pardon then can you have? What excuse? Do you not know that all this worldly luxury is loathsome to your Lord? Was it not for this that on his birth he was laid in a manger, and took to himself a mother of low estate? Did he not for this say to him that was looking after gain, "But the Son of Man has not where to lay his head?"

What Wcccc Is For: Conquest Through Christ (Appendix A).

By Lue-Yee Tsang, a rationale for renewing the emphasis of the winter conference to face 21st-century challenges.

IN 1969, some Chinese students held a retreat in the week after Christmas Day, and in the ensuing years the retreat was transformed into a conference for a Chinese Christian student movement. In 1986, Susan Fan being board chairman, it became clear that what was originally a student movement had outgrown its original purpose, and the West Coast Chinese Christian Student Winter Conference was reincorporated as the West Coast Chinese Christian Conference, or Wcccc. Over the years since the conference's numerical heyday in the 1980s, it has become unclear to many, even to those who attended in the 1980s, what exactly the West Coast Chinese Christian Conference is for. According to our current bylaws, adopted on 7 December 2019, "W4C shall be a religious organization that fosters education in the Holy Bible, the Christian Scriptures. In response to the triune God and the purpose of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16–20), W4C shall be established *to challenge, train, and broaden the perspectives of its members for them to become good and faithful spiritual leaders for God's kingdom. W4C is founded to advance the holistic teachings and practices of the principles in Holy Scripture.*"

In the context of Chinese churches, especially that of Chinese churches in North America, a perspective-broadening em-

phasis on God's kingdom has been a great need for decades and remains a great need. Through the existing religious cultures of many Western missionaries and through the Chinese Christians' own alignment (by and large) with the fundamentalist side in the fundamentalist-modernist split that shook early 20th-century Protestantism, the Chinese churches have inherited a pietistic orientation toward quiet individualized relationship with God, rather than of common participation in the life and continuing work of Jesus Christ in his body the Church. Ask a Chinese Christian at random, and he will probably say that the individual believer comes logically before the organism of the Church, and that individual piety comes logically before the gathering of the Church. Rather than the lives of cells receiving their meaning from the life and soul of the whole organism, Chinese Christians tend to hold that the life of the organism – if it exists at all – exists to fulfill the lives of the cells that make up the organism.

Still less are many Chinese Christians, brought up in social environments hostile to Christianity or to the social power of Chinese persons, whether in Asia or in America, prepared "to follow Jesus as Savior and Lord, to become good and faithful spiritual leaders, and to be conquerors through Christ" (Romans 8.37; cf. 16.20). In America, identifying publicly as a Christian, once a social asset expected in what Aaron Renn calls a "positive world", has become a social liability in a "negative world". Since the US Supreme Court's 2015 *Obergefell v. Hodges* ruling requiring all 50 US states to recognize same-sex marriage, it has become clear that the US establishment accepts only one religious and moral line as normative. Traditional Christians who reject same-sex marriage,



Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, rebukes the emperor Theodosius and keeps him from entering the church after the slaughter of innocents.

not only for themselves as a matter of personal taste but also for the commonwealth as a matter of public morality, are at best a tolerated minority. This development has affected not only America, but also all the countries under its geopolitical and cultural influence. Within the Church since then, matters are not helped by the likes of Russell Moore and Tim Keller, who publicly say that losing social influence and power, defeat rather than victory, is the way forward for the Church. To accept defeat and conform to the public morality established by the enemies of the Church is the way for the Church to have a “moral witness”. Despite the witness of Romans 16.20, the notion of being conquerors through Christ, of exercising dominion in Christ as the restored image of God, has fallen on

hard times. But WCCC’s bylaws say that WCCC’s mission is to help its members do just this: to help members “to follow Jesus as Savior and Lord, to become good and faithful spiritual leaders, and to be conquerors through Christ”.

It is here exactly that we, frail humans, formed of the dust, dependent for our existence on the will of the living God, called in Jesus Christ out of the dying mass of reprobation and into the kingdom (or reign) of the reign of God in the person of that crucified and risen Christ, need the word of God. And we do not need merely to hear some sound waves coming to our ears from a pulpit, however holy, or to accept whatever is said and taken for granted at a pulpit (or a music stand, as the case often is); rather, we need minds that observe carefully and think through what exactly Scripture says, not taking for granted that today’s conventional wisdom is biblical or even old in the history of the Church, but testing all things by the word of God and submitting all things to the word of God. It is by the word of God that Christ, having risen from the dead, opposed the chief priests and elders’ command to the tomb guards to tell a lie (viz. that Jesus’s disciples had come by night, and stolen him away while the guards slept, Matthew 28.11–15) by giving his own command to the Eleven to tell the truth about his resurrection: to go and disciple all nations, by God’s vesting in him all power in heaven and on earth. It is by the word of God that the kings of the earth are made to bow the knee at the Name of God’s anointed king Jesus (Psalm 2; Philippians 2.10), and by the word of God that every nation – not just some persons taken out of every nation, but every nation itself – is made to confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. This is the power of the word

of God, and of the Word of God that was made flesh and dwelt among us. Dare we take just what others have said about him, or what we ourselves have liked to believe about him, and not the real Word given to us from on high and sacrificed on the altar of the Cross? This is the Christ who conquered death through his death, and this is the word that conquers the nations and breaks the wicked with a rod of iron, and dashes them in pieces like a potter's vessel (Psalm 2.9), as his Church speaks with all boldness, stretches forth the Father's hand to heal, and does signs and wonders by the name of the Father's holy child Jesus (Acts 4.29–30). All of this God has done and now does by his word, and for this reason we do not conquer the nations without the word, but conquer by it. The very kings are commanded by God's word to restrain the wicked by bit and bridle, but God's word also speaks to the understanding of reasoning man: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye" (Psalm 32.8). So in both a temporal manner and in a spiritual, both outwardly in the rule of men and inwardly in the direct rule of the Holy Ghost, the reign of Jesus Christ as both God and man is made manifest, "which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1.3–4). Thus, as the earth itself was made by the word, so the Eden of God's reign is extended out to all the earth, and down to the oceanic deep of every soul, by the word.

For this reason WCCC is "a religious organization that fosters education in the Holy Bible, the Christian Scriptures", and for this reason it pushes at the limits of the Chinese (and, indeed, non-Chinese)

churches' understanding by that very word of God, so that Jesus's blessings may indeed flow far as the curse is found. By experience we have found that systematically inductive Bible study is a way for participants can be guided, through questions about details of both the biblical text and today's practice of the faith, to discover the answers themselves in the word of God, as did the ancient fathers Athanasius of Alexandria, Hilary of Poitiers, John Chrysostom, Ambrose of Milan, Augustine of Hippo, and Maximus the Confessor. Some, like my father, were converted to the faith by picking up and reading, as Augustine did; some, through inductive Bible study in groups, have become doers of the word and not hearers only, because of the power of God which "is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart" (Romans 10.8); some, hearing God's word say what men have often not taught, have been moved to enrich the contemporary Church's sense of what it is that we have received from Jesus through his holy Apostles, his plenipotentiary ambassadors by the word of God. What we have seen bearing spiritual fruit for the last 50 years, especially through a culture of true inductive Bible study, continues the work of the Apostles of Christ, the Church fathers, the medieval schoolmen, and the Protestant Reformers. Such a culture of the Scriptures can shake Egypt and Babylon, "and I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of hosts" (Haggai 2.7). We will not give up the legacy of this conference, and we will not give up the inheritance of the Apostles, and we will not give up our partaking in the life – and the kingly rule – of the risen Christ who now sits at the right hand of God to rule heaven and earth.

Renewing the Emphasis of the Winter Conference (Appendix B).

By Tony Chan.

THE work of W4C began in 1969 as a retreat for college students. It has been further developed as a college-student movement since the mid 1970s. The key event was the 4-night, 5-day Winter Conference, which for more than 50 years was always scheduled after Christmas Day and before the New Year. The major activity was focused on organizing a conference to address Christian spiritual growth and evangelism.

Since the mid 1970s, this student movement has gone beyond the December Winter Conference. In the 1970s, w4c developed other year-round programs such as team teaching work and follow-up programs. This college student movement also provided 1- or 2-day weekend seminars or mini conferences on topics such as personal spiritual growth, leadership, and how to lead small group Bible study. In the mid 1980s, this movement expanded to include young adults and career professionals. Also, a summer conference was developed with a dedicated focus on studying God's word, called the Thematic Bible Study. This summer conference was held during the 2-night, 3-day Memorial Day long weekend in the last weekend of May. In recent years, we called this summer conference the annual Thematic Bible Conference (TBC).

The TBC has a dual focus on studying the Scriptures and training inductive Bible study leaders, whereas the Winter Conference was focused on personal spiritual growth and evangelism. This Winter Conference focus had a bold mission with a much broader scope. Early on, the founding leaders of this student movement envisioned equipping college students and young adults to serve the Chinese churches. By God's grace, in 50 years, this college and young student movement has borne many fruits. It has produced many church leaders including pastors, lay leaders, and mission workers.

For the future of this movement, it is indispensable for current leaders to envision and renew the direction of w4c. By God's providence, in 2019, a new team of w4c leaders was installed to address the use of remote online technology for necessary operations. The previous outdated Bylaws of the 1970s and 1980s have been revitalized by the current leaders with the help of legal experts in nonprofit organizations. The current Bylaws have been scrutinized by the Alliance Defending Freedom, and this newly revised document addresses the risks posed by anti-Christian groups and other challengers. The leadership shall diligently implement strategies to organize the Winter Conference today to fulfill the organization's renewed vision and mission.

The current W4C Bylaws (Article II, Purpose and Mission) stipulate clearly, "W4C shall be established to challenge, train, and broaden the perspectives of its members for them to become *good and faithful spiritual leaders for God's Kingdom*. ... W4C's mission shall be to help members to follow Jesus as Savior and Lord, to become *good and faithful spiritual leaders*, and to become *conquerors through Christ* [emphases mine]."

Therefore, the Winter Conference shall focus on discipleship, God's Kingdom, and spiritual leadership to fulfill its purpose and mission as stipulated in the By-laws. The summer conference is an annual Thematic Bible Conference (TBC); similarly, the winter conference, it shall be an annual Kingdom Leadership Conference (KLC).

FROM MARTIN BUCER'S Treatise *The Kingdom of Christ* (1550).

We read that this Kingdom is called "the Kingdom of God" (Matt. 6.33), "the Kingdom of the beloved Son of God" (Eph. 5.5), and "the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. 3.12). Now we know that a kingdom, if it is rightly and properly so called, is said to be the administration of a people or state by which the one person who excels the others in wisdom and every virtue so arranges and obtains whatever is for the well-being of the citizens that nothing at all is lacking to them, in such a way that from earliest childhood everyone is formed and led toward a responsible and happy way of life. Since this is the nature and purpose of any kingdom which can really be called a kingdom, let us consider that the kingdom about which we are reading is called the Kingdom of God. Whatever good properties exist in any human kingdom exist and are found in fuller perfection here, inasmuch as God is above all men, both in the wisdom of his governance and in the benevolence of his will for all mankind. Indeed, since God alone is good, wise, and powerful, only in his Kingdom can those things which ought to be done by royal rule be plainly perceived.



Our year-round work through the four seasons.