

ANNUAL REPORT ON YOUTH/ENGLISH MINISTRIES

August 24, 2002

The Chinese Church of Greater Albany launched its Youth/English Ministry on September 10, 2001, having retained a director to provide leadership for its newly adopted program. This report is presented in capsule form with the understanding it is intended as a foundation for discussing the progress realized over the past twelve months and looking ahead to the future.

First and foremost, we give praise and honor to our great God for the gift of salvation through the finished work of our Savior, Jesus Christ, and for the power available to us through His Holy Spirit. This has enabled us to serve as “ministers of reconciliation” to the youth of this Church with confidence and joy.

I Worship Hour

The youth worship hour has been consistent in that it normally begins with a “Call to Worship”, sometimes read by the worship leader while, occasionally read responsively. Prayer and worshipful music is followed by announcements, the Scripture reading, prayer, a Bible-centered message, the offering, a closing hymn and prayer. The messages over the past 12 months have included the following themes:

“Knowing God Through Tragedy” (following 9/11)

“Tasting the Goodness of God” (His Word)

“Giving Thanks to God”

“Understanding the Names of God”

“Growing in God’s Word”

“Heaven and Hell”

“Cross Words” (The last words of Jesus on the cross)

“Old & New Testament Walks” (Similarities & Differences)

“How I Can Walk With God” (Practical)

“Living By Faith”

“Forgiveness” (Current)

All of these messages have been Christ-centered, aimed at building up “the body” and encouraging each member to seek a more consistent and fruitful walk with Him ... while also challenging the non-believers in our midst to consider the offers of Christ in the personal lives.

The size of the congregation during the year has varied from 20-40, depending upon the vacation/holiday seasons.

II Sunday School

The Sunday School classes have included the Juniors, High Schoolers and College Students from RPI, SUNY Albany and the Albany School of Pharmacy. Although no accurate attendance records have been kept during the year, classes have ranged from:

Junior Fellowship - 3-8

High School Fellowship - 4-10

College Fellowship - 3-15

Attendance has been influenced by holiday weekends, vacations and, sometimes, the willingness of parents to allow their children to remain for this teaching hour. The College Fellowship attendance, later in the school year, was dependent upon their commitment to other church services during the 11:00 - 12 Noon time period. The chart below outlines the topics covered and teaching staff involved with each group:

<u>Junior</u>	<u>High School</u>	<u>College</u>
Topic(s) Gospel of John		“Marching Order of
Proverbs	“Know Why You Believe”	the Disciple of Christ”
Joshua	“That The World May Know”	
Samuel Morris		
Teachers: Jenny Chen	Sunny Shih	Phil Woodrow
Bao-Zhu Yang	Lisa Liu	Blossom Woodrow
Jackie Show	Phil Woodrow	Ming De Lin
Blossom Woodrow	Blossom Woodrow	
Phil Woodrow	I-Hsin Wu	
Sam Lee		

Qualifications established for our teaching staff are that they must:

- 1) be believers;
- 2) possess and/or seek to develop their spiritual gift of teaching; and
- 3) be willing to spend the time to diligently prepare a Christ-honoring lesson plan.

III Leadership Teams

The involvement of Leadership Teams is recognized as a key element in the planning for and involvement of our membership in every phase of the English/Youth Ministry.

College Fellowship: although the Chinese Christian Fellowship is under “the umbrella” of this ministry (though not directly supervised by the Director), there has been a close working relationship with them. Their Leadership Team for 2001-2002 consisted of: Sunny Shih; Barbara Tong; Ben Lam; Carrie Fung; James Lau; and William Chu.

High School Fellowship: this Team had been operating prior to the formal establishment of the “ministry”, consisting of: Hwa-Gan Chang; I-Hsin Wu; and Lisa Liu. Since last September, it was expanded to include: Gary Geng; John Chao; Sunny Shih and Phil Woodrow. Meetings were held monthly until the team began to plan three-months at a time, after which it has met quarterly thereafter.

Junior Fellowship: This is the most recent team to take shape and has been made up of Eugene Chen; Eric Tse; John Chao; and Phil Woodrow. They met in March, seeking to stimulate more activities for this younger group. (More to follow)

IV Activities

College Fellowship: This group met weekly (sometimes more frequently) to plan for their activities. In addition to their regular Friday Night Praise and Worship events, there were a number of special events held at the homes of John Chao; Gary and Carol Geng’s; Keith and Helen Cheung’s; and the Woodrow’s. There have also been opportunities to counsel a few facing stressful situations and to disciple one of the leaders on a regular basis. Nurturing and teaching this group has been a special blessing as well as serving as a mechanism to directly involve key members in the teaching, worship and social activities of the church.

High School Fellowship: What started out slowly, ended with a flourish. There seemed to be little enthusiasm for the sports activities that were organized in the Fall. Beginning with the YFC Excel Weekend in January, however, the high schoolers became much more involved in participating in the various events that were planned and coordinated by the Leadership Team. These events are listed below:

October - Sports Outing at Blatnik Park with lunch @ the Chang’s
November - Golfing and lunch @ Golden Bear Golf Complex
January - Excel Weekend in Saratoga
February - Visitation at Albany Veteran’s Hospital

March - Lunch at the Woodrow's
April - Visitation - Albany County Nursing Home
May - Bible Fellowship at the Chang's
June - Word of Life Island Day Trip*
 Out-of-School Celebration @ the Woodrow's*
July - Hofstra University Retreat Weekend
August - Lunch in Prospect Park*
September - Back to School Cookout at the Wu's
October - Trout Farm Fishing in the Adirondack's
November - Serving Thanksgiving Dinner @ the Equinox
December - Christmas Musical @ the Chinese Christian Church

The last four months listed above are in the planning stages, the result of an August 8 Leadership Team Meeting.

Junior Fellowship: Because this younger group was reluctant to become involved with social activities, the aforementioned Leadership Team was formed, met in March, 2002, and planned activities through June. It began with a Saturday luncheon (and games) at the Woodrow's. A planned trip to Howe Caverns had to be canceled at the last moment due to a lack of commitment on the part of the youth/parents involved.

We are learning as we go, however, and have included the Junior Group in a number of High School activities with some degree of success. These joint events, marked with an asterisk (*) under "High School Activities", were well attended and enjoyed by the younger group.

V Music Worship Leadership Team: One of the most exciting accomplishments of the year has been the formation of a Music Worship Team. This evolved over the Summer and included both college and high school -age students living in this area for the school vacation period. Thanks to the generosity of the Board of Deacons, a drum set was purchased which has added a new dimension to the Music Worship Team.

They have met at least once during the week (sometimes twice) over the past month in preparing themselves, both musically and spiritually, for leading the Sunday morning worship hour in a season of worship through music and praise. Dr. Gary Griffieth met with this group on two separate occasions to encourage and instruct them in the importance of preparing and leading in worship.

We have been sorry to see some of the founding members already depart the Capital District to attend their more distant schools, but overjoyed that those who have been away for the Summer will be returning within days to fill these vacancies.

Sunny Shih has been appointed the leader/coordinator for this group which has, thus far by God's grace, brought about a dynamic change to our Sunday Morning Worship Hour.

VI Conclusion

Special thanks are offered to Clifton Park Community Church for the many ways they have supported this English/Youth Ministry, including the use of its library, copying equipment and, most recently, its sanctuary, enabling the Music Worship Team to rehearse during the week. We are also thankful to David Triller, owner of the Only Guitar Shop, for providing a very nice drum set at a significantly reduced price.

Finally, we extend many thanks to Pastor Hsia, the Board of Deacons, and members, friends and students of the Chinese Christian Church for their support of and service to the Youth/English Ministry Program in its first year. It is our prayer that our Lord will bless each, as well as continue to excite and involve and even more as we seek to carry out His work, His way, by His provision in the year ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

**Philip W. Woodrow
Director**