

A MINISTRY PROPOSAL TO STRENGTHEN THE LEADERSHIP
OF CHINESE CHURCHES IN NORTH AMERICA

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ABSTRACT

As the Chinese churches in North America enter the 21st century, they face unprecedented challenges as well as opportunities. A key factor in meeting both and to fulfill their God-given mission is strong spiritual leadership in local churches. A ministry program, Christian Leadership Renewal Center (CLRC), is proposed to help assist local Chinese churches to develop and to strengthen leaders of these churches in North America.

CLRC employs a threefold, holistic approach to accomplish its overall goal: continuing education, disciplined fellowship and personal renewal. Continuing education will focus on the systematic, short term training of the three crucial aspects of spiritual leadership: character formation, biblical knowledge and leadership skills. Disciplined fellowship will provide programs designed to promote genuine and disciplined sharing of church leaders' burdens as well as ministry insights. Personal renewal will involve providing suitable facilities and a conducive environment for church leaders to spend a period of time for refreshment in the form of rest, recreation and personal disciplines. This approach was determined after a careful review and research of literature, and an analysis of the current environment in which North American Chinese churches operate, and the contributing historical and cultural factors leading to the current state of the Chinese churches. It is also based on sound biblical principles.

The CLRC program is described in terms of five main parts: vision/mission, objectives, rationale, guiding principles and program ideas. A questionnaire was designed to evaluate and validate the five parts of the program. It was sent to a carefully selected panel of five distinguished Chinese Christian leaders, and leaders of four local Chinese churches that are typical of

the target community in the United States. The results of this evaluation were analyzed and conclusions drawn.

The primary conclusion was that the CLRC vision and the proposed program are generally on the right track in meeting the critical needs of strong leadership in Chinese churches in North America. Therefore, it is recommended that the implementation of the CLRC proposal should proceed. The evaluation also helped to reveal weak areas where further consideration and possible modifications are needed. This included creating a more detailed implementation plan, defining of criteria for selecting teachers, and exploring the possibility of joint efforts with other organizations.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The proposed ministry program, **Christian Leadership Renewal Center (CLRC)**, was born out of the recognition that Chinese churches in North America, to a great extent, are not being as effective as their God given potential in fulfilling their missions. Of course, there is no single easy answer to this “state of the Chinese church” in North America, nor is this unique to Chinese churches only. However, one of the most fundamental causes is attributable to the lack of strong and robust spiritual leadership with its associated problems. This lack of strong spiritual leadership, in turn, is due largely to the lack of qualified leaders and the state of unmet critical needs of existing church leaders. It is said that the first tragedy for a church is the lack of a shepherd and the second is the lack of a good shepherd. As the Chinese churches in North America enter the new Millennium facing unprecedented opportunities and challenges, the need for stronger spiritual leadership has become even more critical. A “break through” or perhaps, “many break throughs” are needed in order to meet the challenges. The CLRC program is being proposed in order to help bring about the *strengthening* of both the full-time as well as lay leaders of Chinese churches.

Some definitions of terms used in the project:

- Church leaders: Pastors, elders, Deacons or their equivalent.
- Critical needs (of church leaders): basic personal needs/problems that prevent the leaders from carrying out their ministry effectively.
- Chinese churches: local churches where the primary or one of the primary languages used is Chinese and the majority of members are ethnic Chinese. For the purpose of this paper, they refer

primarily to Chinese churches in North America. (The term “North America” is used here and throughout this paper because of the similarity of characteristics of Chinese churches in both Canada and the United States, although many sources used in this paper came from Chinese churches in the United States.)

Justification and rationale

There are at least two main types of justification which point to the urgent need for stronger and more robust spiritual leadership in the North American Chinese churches. The first type of justification consisted of manifestations of certain undesirable and/or unhealthy phenomena in many Chinese churches. This can be described by the following three phenomena:

First, there appears to be a chronic and acute shortage of qualified pastors/workers (Wong et al., Crisis of Worker Shortage, 1998, 46). This is evidenced by the number of existing churches who are looking for pastors in advertisements and through other means, and by the length of time it took to find someone eventually. The situation is even worse for some geographical regions such as the Midwest (Ko 1997, 19). This shortage is also worsened by many “burnouts” and “dropouts” of full time and part time workers (North America Chinese Churches Today 1993). Although no specific statistics is available in this area for Chinese churches, statistics available from “PastorCare”, the National Clergy Support Network, showed that for American churches, 50 percent of those who go into full-time service drop out within five years and 50 percent have considered leaving the ministry in the past three months (PastorCare Ministry Brochure).

Second, there exists a relatively high level of internal conflict within many churches and insufficient cooperation among churches. “The greatest hindrance the church faces in fulfilling the Great Commission is not external in nature but the internal conflicts, strife and division with-

in the church” (Wong et al., Manifesto, 1998, 4). This is evidenced by frequent church splits and divisions. It is said that over 50 percent of Chinese churches in North America came about as a result of divisions, not of normal church planting or growth (Wong 1994, 21). Even if no actual splits occurred, this kind of conflict often result in serious damages to the congregation and the people involved. What happened to the Chinese church in Budapest, Hungary in the early 1990s as described by a pastor (Stop Division 1997, 38) have been repeated many times in America, except in most cases there was no reconciliation as a result.

Third, relative to its potential, the impact of Chinese churches on the Chinese community as a whole is limited and uneven. There are eight hundred to a thousand Chinese churches in the United States whose members are by and large well educated and financially well off. Yet this constitutes only 5-6 percent of total Chinese population with very limited penetration and influence upon certain Chinese community segments such as the American Born Chinese, the restaurant workers and the older generation professionals.

For the above mentioned phenomena, it is important to recognize the contributing historical and cultural factors which are summarized below:

1. The average church has a small congregation of approximately one hundred or less, and is independent with no denominational affiliation (Directory, 1998). Both of these facts often contribute to the lack of systematic leadership development due to manpower, financial or other constraints (North America Chinese Churches Today 1993).
2. The majority of churches originated from the Chinese Bible Study Groups (CBSG) developed in the ‘60s. The same people have since assumed leadership role, but they lack well balanced training in biblical doctrines and ministry. This has resulted in shallowness in doctrines, leading by trial and error, lack of clear ministry vision and direction. There is confusion between abso-

lutes and non-absolutes, between form and function. Furthermore, as most of them are professionals with a busy career and family, it is difficult for them to pursue lengthy full time training.

3. Many Chinese churches in North America have full time “immigrant pastors” who came from the older generation of Chinese pastors overseas (Ling, The Chinese Way, 1997). These older pastors, who were trained and served in the Far East for many years, came to a very different environment in America. Although some of them, especially the younger ones, went after additional training and adjusted well, many of them were not able.

4. The existence of extremely diverse and complex multi-cultures and subcultures within the local church presents unique challenges to communication and conflict resolution (Elmer 1993). Although common to a certain degree in the Chinese heritage, there may be twenty different types of Chinese representing different behaviors, thought patterns, life styles and/or languages/dialects. Besides the major groups such as American Born Chinese and Overseas Born Chinese, there are many subgroups within each category such as Chinese from the Mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong and South East Asia regions. There are even “hybrids” known as the third or fourth culture groups who have experienced multiple cultures in their life time (Ling, The Chinese Way, 1997). In addition, because most Chinese churches are independent and interdenominational, most members come from different denominational background and/or hold different theological views which contribute to different biblical interpretations and ministry approaches.

5. Many Chinese have a low view of full time pastors because many early pastors came from the uneducated converts of the generation in China prior to World War II with low social standing and income (Wong et al., Crisis of Worker Shortage, 1998, 47). This is in contrast to most

members of the Chinese churches and the Chinese society today that have higher educational background and are more affluent.

6. Many believers expect the pastors to do and to be everything to everybody. Ironically this came from two extreme but erroneous views towards the pastors: one view regards the pastor as an employee who is hired to do whatever work decided by the church governing board; the other view puts the pastor on a lofty pedestal as some kind of spiritual super-being. As a result, the pastors are even more overworked, and give low priority to the biblical responsibility of developing potential leaders (Wong et al., Crisis of Worker Shortage, 1998).
7. The orientation of Chinese culture which emphasizes “face/shame,” “family privacy” and “regional cliques” tends to prevent the openness required for genuine fellowship in a diverse church environment (Bond 1986; Ling et al., Gospel and Chinese Intellectuals, 1997).
8. A large proportion of church members, especially those in the leadership role, are highly educated professionals who hold advanced degrees. Under the influence of the American culture and their secular training, they tend to be overly dependent on “worldly” approaches in church matters and are more likely to harbor a sense of pride and self-importance (Lee 1995).

The second type of justification for the urgent need of stronger spiritual leadership consisted of some very significant developing trends for the last two decades. First of all, there has been a tremendous growth of Mainland Chinese population (students and immigrants) in the United States and, more importantly, it is coupled with their openness to the Gospel. They have become the largest new source of Chinese students and immigrants and those being baptized in Chinese churches (Ling, Gospel and Chinese Intellectuals, 1997a; North America Chinese Churches 1997b, 6). This has created a strategic opportunity for North America Chinese

churches as well as the urgent need for leadership development among the new MC converts and for the new churches.

Secondly and in parallel with the above trend, there is the continuing explosive growth of Chinese churches in Mainland China, and the inevitable more “open door” to the West. The Chinese church in Mainland China has become the fastest growing segment of all churches worldwide. As a consequence, it has created the urgent need for leadership development for those new churches in China. Due to the close ethnic, language and other unique relationships between the Chinese churches in North America and Christians in the Mainland, there is a historic opportunity for the North American Chinese churches to provide, among other things, potential resource of leadership training for the Chinese churches in the Mainland. (Chao, OCSS Conference Workshop, 1997).

Thirdly, there is an urgent need to pass along the valuable insights and wisdom of seasoned spiritual leaders of the older generation to the upcoming new generation of leaders, before it is too late (Yu 1997). Although some of these older, more seasoned spiritual leaders have been involved in mentoring and/or teaching tasks, it is not widespread, nor has there been sufficient means provided to make that an ongoing and more accessible program. The Chinese churches are faced with the potential consequence of a missing generation of younger mature leaders.

In summary, based on the above observations and analysis, it is paramount to promote a more intensified “focus on the strengthening of church leadership”. The proposed CLRC program is dedicated to assist Chinese churches to achieving this goal.

Overall and subsidiary objectives

The primary objective of this project is to develop a ministry program in the form of a “proposal” and to evaluate its potential relevance and effectiveness to the target community. The primary target community are the local Chinese churches in North America. This proposed ministry program (CLRC) is composed of concise statements of five major descriptions of the ministry in a form suitable for evaluation. The five descriptions of the ministry are contained in appendix 2, which consist of vision/ mission, objectives, rationale, principles (core values), and general ideas of programming content. Also included in the same appendix are a brief history of the CLRC vision and its statement of faith. For effective communication to the Chinese churches, these materials were also translated into Chinese, which are contained in appendix 3.

The second part of the primary objective was to design a questionnaire to evaluate the five aspects of the proposed ministry by the target community, which is contained in appendix 4. The questionnaire was distributed to leaders of four Chinese churches for feedback and evaluation. In addition, the “expert” opinions of five distinguished leaders of Chinese Christian community were solicited by means of the same questionnaire.

Scriptural and theological bases

The universal church, as a collection of true believers from the local churches with Christ as its head, is God’s appointed instrument to carry out His purpose in the universe (Eph. 3:10-11). In particular, the great commission was given to Christ’s disciples to evangelize and to teach (Matt. 28:19-20). The church is also the pillar and foundation of God’s truth (1 Tim. 3:15b). Therefore, it is no surprise that the Scripture has also made it clear how important it is to develop and to install *qualified* leaders in a local church (Acts 6:1-6; Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Tim. 3:1-12; 2 Tim. 2:2; Tit. 1:5-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-3). It is no secret that Christ spent a great deal of time with his twelve

selected disciples to train them for future leadership of His church. Apostle Paul trained Timothy, Titus, and others. Without strong spiritual leadership, a local church can hardly grow to a healthy stature.

It is also abundantly clear that a spiritual leader needs to continuously “train” oneself to be godly (1 Tim. 4:7-8). Apostle Paul never considered himself to be already “perfect”, but continue to “press on to take hold of that. . .and straining toward what is ahead. . .” (Phil. 3:12-14). Elsewhere he also said, “. . .Everyone who competes in the games goes into *strict training*. . .I beat my body and make it my slave. . .” (1 Cor. 9: 24-27). I believe that this training includes various spiritual disciplines which will develop a leader’s character, biblical knowledge and leadership skills (2 Pet. 1: 5-8; 1 Tim. 3: 1-12).

Apostle Paul, as described in the New Testament, also gave us an example of a leader who maintained a healthy, genuine fellowship with his fellow workers as well as enlisted their support and prayers. Romans 16 recorded the names of over a dozen such people, who were Paul’s close supporters and associates. Paul constantly asked his fellow workers and churches to pray for him (Eph. 6:19) and he for them (Eph. 3). The Scripture admonishes us not to give up meeting together but to encourage one another and spur one another on toward love and good deeds, especially as the Day is approaching (Heb. 10:24-25). The Christians are to speak the truth in love with one another (Eph. 4:15). It is amazing that even Jesus requested the company and prayers of His inner circle disciples (Matt. 26:36-38). Before going to the Cross, Jesus especially prayed for His disciples to develop the kind of unity as modeled after the Triune God (Jo. 17: 11). Jesus commanded His disciples to love one another as He loves us (Jo. 13:34). This kind of unity and love is impossible without genuine and disciplined fellowship. The leaders of a church must start with their fellow workers and set an example for the flock.

Last but not the least, a church leader needs “Sabbath rest.” The Scripture recorded the Sabbath day which came after all creation and was given to man for his benefit (Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 20:8-11; 23:12; Mk. 2:27). Jesus asked his disciples to come with Him and get some rest (Mk. 6:31). He often prayed alone and retreated into solitude before and after major ministries (Mk. 6:46; Lk. 4:42; 6:12-13). In solitude, prayer and meditation, one learns to be close to God and receives the heavenly insight concerning one’s life purpose and calling. God is also concerned with our physical well-being as exemplified in the Lord’s prayer (Matt. 6:11), Paul’s admonition to Timothy (1 Tim. 5:23) and John’s letter to Gaius (3 Jo. 2). We are told that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). Our continuous and normal fellowship with God requires a healthy mind and body.

Assumptions and presuppositions

The success of the project assumes and depends on the objectivity of a panel of five distinguished Chinese Christian leaders who were contacted and requested to participate in the evaluation by means of the questionnaire. In addition, it is also dependent on the following factors with respect to the selected churches for the evaluation:

- Number of respondents from the selected churches
- Objectivity and spiritual maturity level of the leaders who responded.
- The description of CLRC program and questionnaire in the English language does not constitute a hindrance in understanding, as only one copy of the Chinese translation is provided for each church.

This project is limited in that the proposed program did not include any actual implementation plan or schedule. To many who received the program proposal for evaluation, the question of actual implementation may be just as important as the content.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

An abundance of Christian literature is available which speaks of the crying need for strong leadership in a local church. It is said that a church is as strong as its leaders. “Biblical history demonstrates that people will seldom rise above the spiritual level of their leadership” (Strauch 1995, 70). In Chapter 1, the biblical basis of why local church leadership is so important is examined. The more difficult questions are: (1) What constitutes “strong leadership” in a local church? (2) Are there any unique needs or situations regarding leadership in the Chinese churches, especially in North America, that require our special attention? (3) How then do we address these needs? What’s available in the field? Accordingly, the focus has been the review and research of literature in these areas. Sources are listed in the bibliography. They cover a wide range of books, published articles, unpublished manuscripts, and ministry brochures, written in both English and Chinese. Several sources of materials were particularly helpful in the understanding of the past and current state of Chinese churches in North America. One such source is a collection of articles entitled “Perspectives on American Born Chinese and the Chinese Churches in North America” (Ling, Perspectives, 1997). Another is a course reader entitled “The Gospel and Chinese Intellectuals” (Ling, The Gospel, 1997). Still another is the publication by the Great Commission Center International (GCCCI) and the Chinese Coordination Center of World Evangelism (CCCOWE) entitled “New Strategy for 21st Century Chinese Ministry” (Wong et al., 1998). This particular work was a joint effort compiled by over eighty noted Chinese Christian leaders and scholars from all over the world, who met in 1997. The final publication contains a “Manifesto of the 21st Century Chinese Church Consultation,” as well as thirteen reports produced by the work-groups organized around particular themes and seventeen

pre-conference reading papers. Also helpful were many of the articles on Chinese churches published in *Ambassador For Christ* magazines, CCCOWE's *Chinese Churches Today* and the *Great Commission Quarterly*. With respect to spiritual leadership, several courses I took from Moody's graduate program such as "Excellence in Leadership" and "The Training of Leaders" were most helpful. In addition, I have attended a national "PastorCare" conference, collected many para-church ministry brochures and have personally visited several of their ministry sites. A sampling of these brochures/sites are listed in the bibliography. The following gives a brief summary of the main findings with respect to the three questions.

Question #1: What constitutes strong leadership in a local church?

Strong leadership in a local church involves the existence of a shared leadership team, whose members are called by God with the qualifications and qualities as described in 1 Timothy 3 and elsewhere in the New Testament, and who are able to influence the local congregation to accomplish God's purpose for their church (Getz, Sharpening the Focus, 1984; Strauch 1995; Clinton 1988). These qualifications and qualities, which may be grouped and described in three categories, are essential for effective leadership:

First and foremost, a strong spiritual leader has a godly character. A godly character is the foundation upon which all the rest is built. This refers to the Christlike or "Spirit-filled" qualities such as integrity, prayers (dependence upon God), self-discipline (self-management), servant-hood, humility, and perseverance (Sanders 1994). This is the "being" of a leader and as R Clinton states, one's ministry should "flow out of one's being" (Clinton 1988).

Second, a strong spiritual leader must have a good understanding of the Word of God. This quality is closely tied to the first, but the latter emphasizes the knowledge of God's truths as revealed in the Bible. A spiritual leader must understand the Scriptures sufficiently to be "able

to teach” (1 Tim. 3: 2) and feed the flock. He must be able to discern errors and guard the flock against enemies.

Third, a strong spiritual leader has the ability and skills to lead. The ability to lead or “manage” (1 Tim. 3:5) includes having a “vision” to provide direction and capture the imagination and excitement of potential followers (Sanders 1994). He must be able to clearly communicate the vision and God’s truth. He must be able to work with others, plan, organize, and delegate to the degree necessary so the rest can follow, and together accomplish the goals of a local church (Benware 1991).

Question #2: Unique needs/situations regarding leadership in the Chinese church

In chapter 1 under “Rationale and Justification,” three significant developing trends were described: (1) tremendous growth of Mainland Chinese population in the United States and their openness to the Gospel; (2) the continuing explosive growth of Chinese churches in Mainland China; (3) the pressing need to pass along valuable insights and wisdom of the older, seasoned spiritual leaders to the upcoming new generation of leaders. In addition, three undesirable phenomena in Chinese churches were observed: (1) chronic and acute shortage of qualified pastors/workers; (2) relatively high level of internal conflict; (3) limited and uneven impact by the Chinese churches on the Chinese community as a whole. Before developing an effective ministry program to address these needs, it is important especially to recognize the contributing historical and cultural factors to the undesirable phenomena. These factors are summarized below:

- The average church has a small congregation of approximately one hundred or fewer, and is independent with no denominational affiliation (Directory, 1998). Both of these facts contribute to the lack of systematic leadership development because of the lack of manpower, funds or other constraints (“North American Chinese Churches Today” 1993).

- The majority of churches originated from the Chinese Bible Study Groups (CBSG) developed in the '60s. The same people have since assumed leadership roles, but they lack well-balanced training in biblical doctrines and ministry. This has resulted in shallowness in doctrine, leading by trial and error, lack of clear ministry vision and direction. There is confusion between absolutes and non-absolutes such as between biblical functions and traditional forms. Furthermore, as most of these leaders are professionals with busy careers and families, it is difficult for them to pursue lengthy full-time training.

- Many Chinese churches in North America have full-time “immigrant pastors” who came from the older generation of Chinese pastors overseas (Ling, The Chinese Way, 1997). These older pastors, who were trained and served in the Far East for many years, came to a very different environment in America. Although some of them, especially the younger ones, went after additional training, many of them were not able to do this, and therefore have not adjusted well.

- The existence of extremely diverse and complex multicultures and subcultures within Chinese churches in North America presents unique challenges to communication and conflict resolution (Elmer 1993). Although common to a certain degree in the Chinese heritage, there may be twenty different types of Chinese, representing different behaviors, thought patterns, life styles and/or languages/dialects. Besides the major groups such as American Born Chinese and Overseas Born Chinese, there are many subgroups within each category such as Chinese from the Mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Southeast Asia regions. There are even “hybrids” known as the third- or fourth-culture groups who have experienced multiple cultures in their lifetimes (Ling, The Chinese Way, 1997). In addition, because most Chinese churches are independent and interdenominational, most members come from diverse denominational backgrounds and/or

hold different theological views, which contribute to different biblical interpretations and ministry approaches. All of the above add to the complexity which leaders must manage.

- Many Chinese have a low view of full-time pastors because many early pastors came from the uneducated converts of the generation in China prior to World War II, with low social standing and income (Wong et al., Crisis of Worker Shortage, 1998, 47). This is in contrast to most members of Chinese churches and Chinese society today, who have higher educational backgrounds and are more affluent.
- Many believers expect pastors to do and to be everything to everybody. This came, ironically, from two extreme but erroneous views concerning pastors: one view regards the pastor as an employee who is hired to do whatever work is decided by the church governing board; the other view puts the pastor on a lofty pedestal as some kind of spiritual super-being. As a result, these pastors are further overworked, and therefore are more likely to give low priority to the biblical responsibility of developing potential leaders (Wong et al., Crisis of Worker Shortage, 1998).
- The orientation of Chinese culture, which emphasizes “face/shame,” “family privacy,” and “regional cliques,” tends to prevent the openness required for genuine fellowship in a diverse church environment (Bond 1986; Ling et al., Gospel and Chinese Intellectuals, 1997).
- A large proportion of church members, especially those in leadership roles, are highly educated professionals who hold advanced degrees. Under the influence of the American culture and their secular training, they tend to be overly dependent on worldly approaches in church matters and are more likely to harbor a sense of pride and self-importance (Lee 1995).

Question #3: How are the needs of church leadership satisfied

An understanding of what is involved in leadership development is necessary in order to address the question of developing qualified leaders in a local church and more specifically, the needs peculiar to a Chinese church. To be sure, leadership development includes all of life's processes which God uses to shape a leader. R. Clinton in his book, "The Making of a Leader," puts it this way, "God is the academic dean and one graduates with the right knowledge, character and skills for the specific job God has in mind" (Clinton 1988). In other words, there is no one person, institution or event which can produce the finished product. Indeed, it requires several development phases that one must go through to finally emerge as an all-around, mature leader (Clinton 1988). However, there is a common thread that seems to be necessary throughout the process, that is, deliberate and continuing training in the areas of character, knowledge, and skills. Ideally, a potential leader may acquire such training through a mentor or mentors who come into his life at appropriate times (Stanley and Clinton 1992). Typically, this calls for a healthy local church with mature spiritual leaders and/or special people in one's life who take an interest and invest their time and skills in such a responsibility. As stated earlier, such cases are rare among Chinese churches in North America. Still other leaders are given the opportunity to attend sound evangelical seminaries where, through intensive periods of study, foundations are laid for lifelong learning and disciplines. Again, such training is a luxury for many leaders in Chinese churches. Seminary extension is a step in the right direction to help solve this problem, but based on a cursory survey of existing opportunities, they are far too few and still lack flexibility in terms of the kind of courses offered and the teaching format. (For example, see ministry brochures of Christian institutions in bibliography.) There have been efforts in recent years by several para-church organizations such as Ambassadors For Christ, Great Commission

Center International, Christian Renewal Ministry and others to sponsor special leadership development courses and seminars. This is much needed but again, based on cursory survey of existing efforts, they lag behind western counterparts such as John Maxwell's INJOY, Jeff Reed's Biblical Institute for Leadership Development and Billy Graham's Training Center at the Cove, in terms of quality, consistency, and maximum attention.

Another critical area of needs of North American Chinese churches is how to deal with internal conflicts which yield negative repercussions. Further to conflict resolution, there is the need to foster the spirit of unity among church leaders as described in chapter 1. In diagnosing the causes of these conflicts, one needs to distinguish between whether they are due to "culture or the flesh or personality traits or spiritual" (Ling, Perspectives, 1997). Elmer states that a "large majority of conflicts resulting in brokenness are caused not by core theological values nor overt sin. Most conflicts that disrupt our lives grow out of innocent misunderstandings, unmet expectations, failure to get all the facts, or minor irritations that fester and become problems" (Elmer 1993, 24). This is certainly true with the Chinese churches because doctrinally most of them are conservative and evangelical (Tan 1988) so that disputes on theological issues are rare. However, as already mentioned earlier, the extreme diverse and multicultural nature of Chinese churches has increased the level of complexity and has made resolving conflicts more complicated. Adding to the difficulty is the "busyness" of most pastors and lay leaders alike in the current cultural environment, which makes the time-consuming task of relation-building and communication a rare commodity in the life of a church. We usually do not give "relationships with one another" high enough priority in our ministry. This is intensified by the fact that male leaders in a church are prone to be more "task oriented" rather than "people building." We forget that for true Christianity, relationship is essential: relationship with God and relationship with

one another. We forget that “unity,” which is an expression of love, is Godlike as embodied in the Triune God, and that Christ specially prayed for the unity of His followers before He went to the cross.

In addition, God’s people, especially leaders, need “true dialogue, coordination, net-working, mutual encouragement and cooperative projects” (Ling, Gospel and Intellectuals, 1997, 93), because need for fellowship is universal and leaders who are at the top of the pyramid are especially lonely (Sanders 1994). Companionship and comradeship of others are crucial for our spiritual health. It is said that there is something wonderful when we have our brothers stand with us and share our burdens and sorrows, as our afflictions become lighter and our victory sweeter. We do not acknowledge sufficiently that there is so much we can learn from one another, nor do we endeavor to share our spiritual insights and ministry resources. We often forget that we do not need to fight alone nor do we need to “reinvent the wheel.”

What’s the answer? The kind of systematic continuing education proposed in the CLRC program as described this paper with the installation of qualified leaders in a local church will go a long way to minimize unproductive, mishandled conflicts and their resultant negative impacts. The current state of Chinese churches, however, requires special efforts to deal with this phenomenon. In America, Promise Keepers seem to encourage unity and fellowship among Christian leaders from diverse backgrounds. However, this movement has not penetrated the majority of Chinese churches to the same degree as their western partners. Although many Chinese churches have started the “small/cell group” concept, which albeit helpful to a degree, is still insufficient as far as fellowship and comradeship are concerned at the leadership level. I believe a kind of “disciplined and genuine fellowship” (Sanders 1994, 54; Ling, Gospel and Chinese Intellectuals, 1997) is needed in order to help resolve conflicts, bring about leadership harmony and

exercise mutual encouragement so that the effectiveness of our ministry can be greatly enhanced. By “disciplined and genuine fellowship,” I mean the “getting together” of Bible-believing Christian leaders from the same and/or different churches, who may differ in many ways, to become acquainted and to share their spiritual lives in a genuine and sincere way. This may take the form of structured group sessions or informal “one to one.” It is the “discipline of sharing” within the “community formation” in the overall spiritual formation process (Wong, Spiritual Formation, 1998).

After surveying the many ministry programs offered by para-church organizations, there are very few, if any, especially across church denominations and/or organizational boundaries, which address this need in any consistent way. It is time we made a special effort to break down all the artificial barriers and develop *kingdom spirit* at all leadership levels so that the cause of Christ may be advanced rapidly.

A third area of critical need of Chinese church leaders is how to prevent “burnout” and maintain a healthy commitment to our calling as servants of God. There are different causes why full-time pastors “drop out.” These include such factors as personality and mismatched gifts, but physical and mental burnout along with interpersonal conflicts rank high on the list of primary causes (“Burnout Prevention” 1994). Pastors are placed among the most pressured and overworked professions in the world. Often pastors are ridden with guilt feelings or fear if they say “no” to demands and/or take time off for rest and recreation. Besides educating the congregation with a healthy concept of pastoral ministry, the full-time pastors, as well as lay leaders, must prevent such burnout by a disciplined and balanced life (“Burnout Prevention” 1994). We are created with body, soul and spirit. It is obvious that when we are continuously ill or overly tired, it affects our ability to study God’s word, maintain normal fellowship with God, and minis-

ter effectively. God has clearly given us some specific instructions in the Scripture concerning ways to maintain a healthy life such as the Sabbath Day, Sabbath Year, and God-centered enjoyment. Recent medical research has confirmed the benefits of rest, recreation and exercise on a regular basis. Covey in his book, “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People,” describes the seventh habit of “sharpening the saw”(self-renewal), which stresses the need for physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual renewal (Covey 1990). For God’s servants, rest and recreation may be profitably combined with such personal disciplines as private prayer, scriptural meditation, disciplined reflection, and solitude retreats. Such disciplines make leaders “stop and listen” (Busch 1998) and reflect upon what God is really doing in their ministry and personal lives so that they can adjust to His direction and pace (Wong, Return to Rest, 1994). MacDonald describes the “Sabbath Rest” as a time to (a) interpret our work, to press meaning into it and to make sure we know to whom it is properly dedicated; (b) fine-tune and pause regularly amidst daily routines to sort out the truths and commitments by which we are living; and (c) take a hard look at our mission and ponder where we are headed in the future (MacDonald 1985).

Pre-project Field Testing

In the pre-project field testing, an exploratory survey was conducted during June 1998. The primary objective was to find out the most critical needs and problems facing the leaders of North American Chinese churches, as well as to explore the critical needs of their own churches and Chinese churches in general. The assumption is that their ministry would be more effective if those critical needs and problems were satisfied and resolved. Accordingly, the survey consisted of two main sections: (1) critical church needs and (2) critical personal needs of church leaders (See appendix 1). The “Church Needs” section included two pairs of questions. The first pair (Questions 2 and 3) concerned the respondent’s own church, and the second pair (Questions

1 and 4) concerned Chinese churches in general. Each pair had a lead question, asking whether the respondent agreed with the proposition that there exists a critical problem or need. Under the other question, there were sixteen variables which corresponded to sixteen critical needs and problems. For example, variable one stated “strong spiritual leadership” as a critical need and variable two stated “timely and life-changing preaching” and so on. The respondent was asked to rank the sixteen variables in the order of 1 to 5, 1 being the most critical and 5 the least. Blank lines were also provided at the end of the question for any write-in variables that might not be listed. In a similar way, there were two questions for the respondent’s personal needs, a lead question and a ranking question that also had sixteen variables. However, no questions were asked of the respondent concerning the personal needs of leaders of other churches. See appendix 1 for the entire pre-project field testing survey and the complete definitions of the variables.

The survey questionnaire was sent out via e-mail to forty church leaders whose e-mail address happened to be available from a search of their churches’ Web sites. This was done for reasons of both speed and economy and as an experiment with the use of Internet technology. Unfortunately, the response rate was quite low: that is, only 20 percent. This was not unexpected given the nature of the population selection process. The results were summarized and conclusions drawn as follows:

- 100 percent of respondents either agree or strongly agree that Chinese churches in general have some critical needs and problems.
- 90 percent of respondents believe that their own churches have some critical needs and problems.
- For the critical needs and problems of the respondent’s own church, the variable that was ranked #1 with the most responses was “strong spiritual leadership” (variable 3.1 in shade in fig-

ure 1). The variable which had the second most responses was “genuine prayer life” (variable 3.4 in shade). They were followed by “genuine and warm fellowship” (variable 3.5) and “unity among members” (variable 3.15), both of which had an equal number of responses.

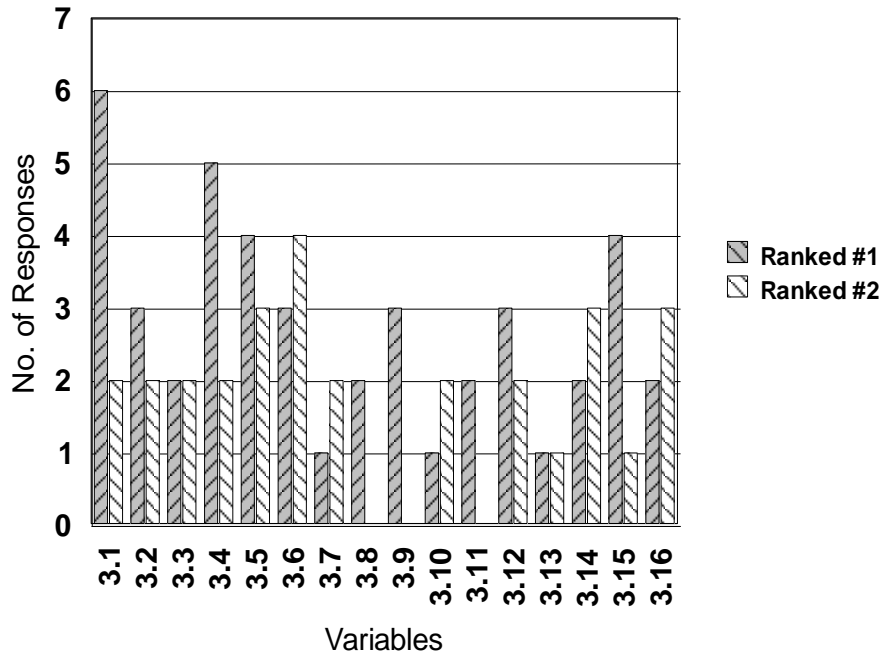


Fig. 1. Number of responses for variables ranked #1 & #2 for your own church

- For the critical needs and problems of Chinese churches in general, the variable that was ranked #1 with the most responses was again “strong spiritual leadership” (variable 4.1 in shade in figure 2). The variable with the second most responses was again “genuine prayer life” (variable 4.4). They were followed by “life-changing preaching” (4.2), “clear vision and purpose” (4.12), and “unity among members” (4.15), all of which had the same number of responses. With a few exceptions, these results showed remarkable consistency between the respondent’s own church and other Chinese churches, with “strong spiritual leadership” being at the top of both lists in terms of critical church needs.

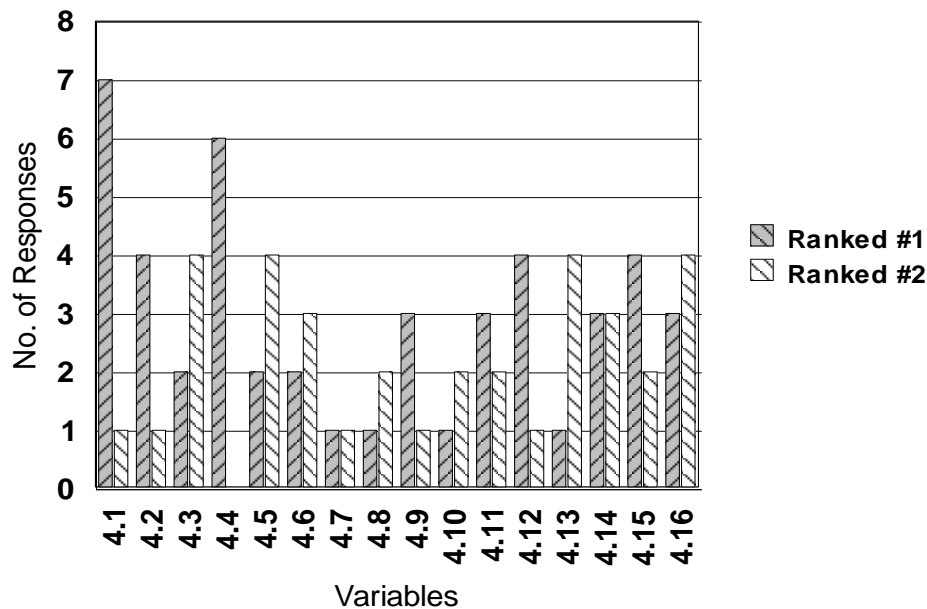


Fig. 2. Number of responses for variables ranked #1 & #2 for churches in general

- 80 percent of respondents answered “yes” to the question about having critical personal needs and problems. Of this 80 percent, however, 50 percent indicated that their problems had now been resolved, and 30 percent indicated that they still have unresolved problems and needs.
- For the ranking of critical personal needs and problems, two variables, “too busy” (variable 6.1 in shade in figure 3) and “lack of spiritual mentors” (variable 6.5), were ranked #1 with the most responses. They were followed by three variables with an equal number of responses: “lack of peers for sharing and praying” (variable 6.3), “lack of ongoing education opportunity” (variable 6.8) and “lack of Sabbath retreats” (variable 6.11).

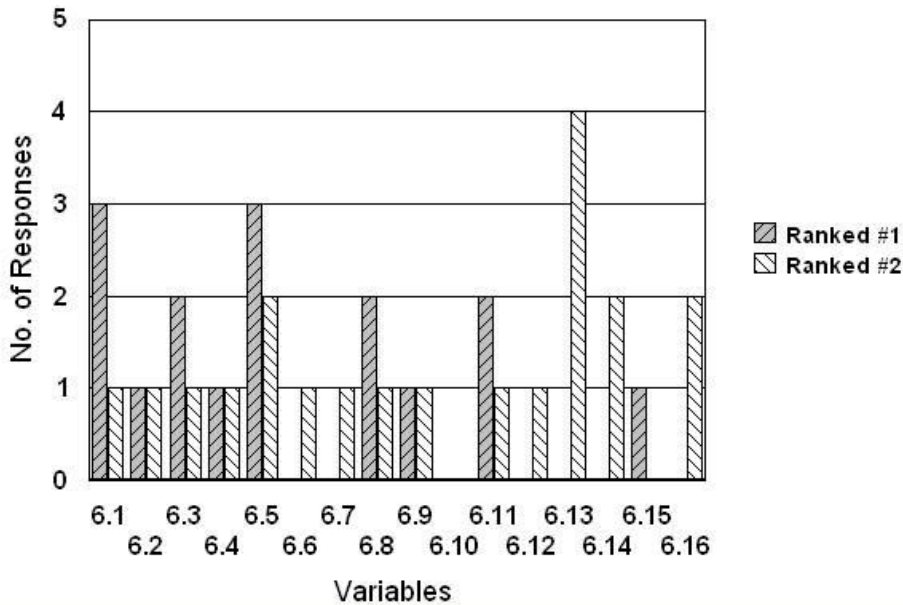


Fig. 3. Number of responses for variables ranked #1 & #2 for personal needs

The pre-project field testing data confirmed the importance and the critical need for stronger spiritual leadership in the local church. It also generally confirmed the need to provide church leaders with continuing training, encouraging peer fellowship and sharing, and time for Sabbath retreat. The strong personal need for spiritual mentors indicated by “mentoring” (variable 6.5), actually complements the need for continuing training and peer fellowship. The problem of “busyness” (variable 6.1) identified the need for education in “time management” and in “personal disciplines.” These results gave additional supportive evidence to the CLRC proposal in its early stage.

CHAPTER 3

DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MINISTRY PROGRAM

Description of the Setting of the CLRC Vision

In 1992, because of the IBM policy of encouraging early retirement, I began some serious thinking and asking God what I should do with the rest of my life. During a period of six months, I asked God for guidance and confirmations. I reflected on what God had been doing in my life--my upbringing, my spiritual journey, gifts, and various kinds of training. As I looked back at my life, several events stood out: (1) the diverse and sometimes adverse experiences of my life across drastically different circumstances; (2) my roots in China and the Chinese culture; (3) my long association with Chinese churches beginning in China and continuing in the United States; (4) opportunities to serve in the Chinese churches in a variety of roles and to work with God's servants. Through these experiences, I was exposed firsthand to different cultures and in particular, the needs, various issues and problems of the Chinese churches. In the meantime, I also discovered my gifts in teaching and planning, and I have developed a growing burden and commitment to the evangelization of the Chinese people. As I looked into the future, I saw the tremendous needs as well as potential of Chinese churches worldwide.

One of the verses that God gave me at that time to guide me in making the early retirement decision was Jeremiah 18:2-4. God was saying to me that He wanted to "reshape" and use this vessel of His as it seemed best to Him. At that time, I still did not know what God had in store for me to do specifically. But providentially, God closed some "natural" doors and in 1994, He opened the "unexpected" door for me, which I had not thought of. Subsequently, I enrolled in the Moody graduate program in ministry.

The initial idea about CLRC came about during the very first course I took at Moody, which was “Church Renewal Principles.” The basic question I asked was, “If God’s vision for the church is so glorious, why are so many local churches, in particular, Chinese churches, in North America, not living up to their potential?” Of course, there was no one easy answer. However, as I took more courses, read more Christian literature, and discussed the situation with other Christians, I gained valuable insights concerning possible answers to the question. Meanwhile, God has continued to shape and teach me in the various areas of my Christian life and ministry. There were disruptive events during this period, but each one made me better equipped, and they have contributed to the maturing of the CLRC vision. As the idea developed, I conducted some informal surveys and interviews. All of these contributed to the formulation of the current CLRC vision, mission, and its program.

The other major factor in the formulation of the CLRC vision is a growing personal burden for leadership training resulting from over thirty years of service in the Chinese churches. In particular, I have personally experienced and observed, through problems in the area of leadership, the damage that can be inflicted upon local churches, their leaders, and congregations. However, the focus on the strengthening of spiritual leadership by way of the threefold approach of systematic education, disciplined fellowship, and personal renewal was ultimately my “personal” vision as I felt so led by the Lord. I suspect, therefore, that another person starting from a different perspective, even with the same Scriptures, literature research and surveys, could come up with a different emphasis in meeting the most critical needs of Chinese churches and their leaders.

Development of the Project

The first part of the project consists of the proposed CLRC ministry program, which is described in the following five parts: (See appendix 2 for a complete description of the five parts.)

1. The general, overall purpose of the ministry as expressed by the “vision and mission.”
2. The primary goals of the ministry as expressed by the “objective statements.” They are the threefold ministry of (1) systematic continuing education; (2) genuine disciplined fellowship; and (3) personal renewal.
3. The assumptions and rationale for the ministry as expressed in summary statements, describing the underlying biblical, historical and cultural bases and current significant trends in the Chinese churches.
4. The core values used to guide and formulate the ministry program as expressed in “principle statements” and the “statement of faith.”
5. General content and approach of the program to be used in the ministry as expressed in “Ideas for CLRC Programming.” The program content addresses the three main objectives of the ministry as described in (2) above. Each of these objectives is further broken into specific purpose statements. Each of these purpose statements has a list of specific topics designed to accomplish the purpose. As an example, one of the purpose statements under the objective, “systematic continuing education,” is “to understand spiritual maturity as the foundation for spiritual leadership and the overall process.” Under this purpose statement, there are six topical subjects such as “character of a godly person,” and “biblical qualifications for a spiritual leader.”

As described in Chapter 1, Chapter 2, and the “ministry setting” above, Parts 1, 2, 3, and 5 of the ministry program were developed primarily based on research in literature, both in Chi-

nese and English, as listed in the Bibliography. The general need and primary objectives of the program were also substantiated, to a great extent, by the pre-project field testing described in Chapter 2. Statements contained in the “Principles” (4 above) were derived from general Scriptural truths as well as the literature. In particular, the content of the “Statement of Faith” was based entirely on the cardinal biblical doctrines, but the actual choice of words were largely taken from an existing document of a well-known evangelical para-church organization. The “Ideas for Programming”(5 above) were developed from, in addition to the general Christian literature, two primary sources. The first source came from courses that I took in the Moody Graduate Program, especially those on spiritual leadership and Christian ministry. The second source came from a review of several of the existing and/or proposed ministry programs by Chinese para-church organizations. I have, however, guided by the CLRC Objectives and Principles, modified and supplemented these programs. It is understood that these program ideas were broad topical subjects that will eventually need to be refined. They are also dependent upon who the teachers and program directors will be in actual implementation. Overall, the five parts of the ministry program were written in the format of concise “statements” as an outline in order to facilitate evaluation by others as described below.

The second part of the project centered around the validation and evaluation of the proposed program by a panel of five experts and also by leaders of four selected local Chinese churches. The “experts” were distinguished Christian leaders who are recognized in the Chinese community and were selected based on a set of criteria. The local Chinese churches were also selected based on a set of criteria and their leaders were defined as in Chapter 1. The evaluation was done by a questionnaire. The following section describes those selection criteria and the questionnaire design.

Methods and techniques used in research

The panel of experts are distinguished leaders by virtue of their position and/or expertise in the Chinese Christian community. As such they must satisfy two of the following three criteria:

1. Have taught or held office in an established evangelical seminary or have academic credentials such as Master, Ph.D., or honorary degrees in Christian- related fields;
2. Have pastored an established and growing Chinese church or have held the role of founder or director of a well known para-church organization;
3. Have authored Christian books or articles or have spoken at well-known Christian conferences.

Based on these criteria, six candidates were contacted by phone and/or letter. The purpose was explained and they were asked to participate in an evaluation of the CLRC ministry by a questionnaire. At the end, five of them accepted the request. However, some accepted with conditions such as their responses may not be in the exact format of the questionnaire requested.

The churches to be selected should have a profile that is representative, as closely as possible, of potential target candidates for the ministry subsequent to implementation. As such, the following criteria for selection were made:

1. The church is located within a reasonable driving distance from the proposed ministry site, which is located near the border between North Carolina and Virginia;
2. The church has been established at least for three years;
3. The size of the church is small to medium (from 50 to 250 in average Sunday attendance);
4. It is a Chinese church where the majority of members are ethnic Chinese and Chinese is one of the main languages spoken;

5. There is a defined and established church leadership structure such as pastors, elders, deacons, or their equivalent. It might also include leaders who do not hold official titles but are deemed as key leaders of the church.

Following the above criteria, four candidate churches were selected. Two were located in North Carolina, one in Virginia and one in Maryland. In each case, the senior pastor of the church was contacted and asked if he would participate in the evaluation and also to distribute the questionnaires to the other church leaders. All four of them accepted the request. It should be noted that as a result of the selection process of the churches and the panel of distinguished leaders, the questionnaire candidates are considered judgment samples as opposed to random. This would have an implication later in terms of evaluation technique to be used in the analysis of data.

The purpose of the evaluation was to get feedback from the panel of distinguished leaders and leaders of the selected churches on the proposed ministry program in terms of the five main parts described in appendix 2. A program evaluation in the form of a questionnaire was designed to get maximum feedback from the evaluators in terms of the ministry's relevance and effectiveness to the target community. See appendix 4 for a sample of the questionnaire.

To accomplish the objectives, the questionnaire must correspond to the five main parts describing the ministry program. Therefore, the main body of the questionnaire consisted of five sections. Each of these sections contained five-point Likert Scale (agreement or disagreement) questions which corresponded to each of the statements/items under the five parts of the ministry program. Only in the "Ideas for CLRC Programming" (Section V) are the specific topics to be evaluated grouped together under "categories" in the questionnaire, in order to save evaluation time and space. Spaces were provided under each section for comments and also for

additions or deletions of specific topics in the event of “Programming Ideas.” Besides the main body of the questionnaire, there is an introduction section that briefly describes the purpose and furnishes instructions for the survey. The instructions direct the respondent to write in either English or Chinese for any written comments after each of the sections. A brief demographic section is included at the end of the five main sections to obtain useful information such as identification and other pertinent data concerning the respondent. At the very end of the questionnaire, there is one question for the respondent to indicate whether the respondent or his church would use or support the CLRC ministry if it were available.

Every effort was made so that the questionnaire was easily understandable and brief, and that it should not take more than 30 minutes to complete. However, given the length of the five parts of the ministry program, the estimated time for completion is probably close to one hour. A Chinese translation of the ministry program was also made in case any of the respondents were uncomfortable with the English version. This translation is contained in appendix 3. The questionnaire, however, was available only in English.

CHAPTER 4

COLLECTING, ORGANIZING, AND INTERPRETING THE DATA

Collecting the Data

Having obtained their consent to participate, the questionnaires, along with the CLRC program, were mailed to the five experts. The same questionnaires were either mailed or given to the pastors of the selected churches. The pastors were asked to distribute those questionnaires to the appropriate leaders, either current or past office holders such as elders or deacons or their equivalent in their respective churches. (It so happened that none of the selected churches had elders on their leadership teams.) The total number of such leaders, including the pastors, was estimated to be approximately ten per church. Each pastor of the church was also given a stamped return envelop to mail back their responses together with the other leaders' responses. As it turned out, many of the responses were faxed to me directly without going through the pastors. The respondents were given two weeks to complete the questionnaire, but most returns arrived after the deadline stated in the questionnaire. After four weeks had elapsed, a cutoff was imposed. The total number of responses received was 24, of which 6 were pastors and 18 were lay leaders, out of a possible total of 40 for the four churches. This represents 60 percent of the total and exceeds the target set for 50 percent. All five experts responded. However, general comments rather than in the prescribed format of the questionnaire constituted four out of the five responses from the experts.

Organizing and Interpreting the Data

The data received were organized into tables. Tables 1 through 5 below correspond to the five main sections of the questionnaire (see appendix 4 for the evaluation questionnaire), each of which in turn corresponds to one of the five parts of the CLRC program. The rows repre-

sent the questions (including the corresponding number used in the questionnaire) and the columns give the question number (Q #), a brief description of the question, the total number of responses, the mean (weighted average), and the standard deviation of the responses. (Refer to appendix 2, “CLRC Ministry Proposal,” for a complete description of the statements in question in order to better follow the discussions below.) As pointed out in the previous chapter, the responses may be any one of the five choices from 1 to 5 defining the extent of disagreement or agreement. Therefore, a mean of 4 or greater indicates considerable agreement with the question from all the respondents. Furthermore, a small standard deviation would indicate a small difference from the mean in the responses. To note any significant difference between the responses from the pastors and the lay leaders, each row is further divided into two categories, one representing responses from the pastors and the other representing responses from the lay leaders.

Table 1 summarized the responses to the “vision/mission” statement of the CLRC program, which, as mentioned before, is to help strengthen the leaders of Chinese churches with the threefold ministry program. The large means and small standard deviations indicated that there was, from both the pastors and the lay leaders, strong agreement with the overall purpose and direction of the CLRC program.

Table 1. CLRC Vision & Mission					
Q #	Brief Description	Pastor / Lay Leaders	Total # Resp.	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Vision/Mission statement	Pastor	6	4.5	0.5
		Lay	18	4.22	0.79

Table 2 summarized the responses to the three objective statements of the CLRC program in the questionnaire. The objective statements provide a brief summary of the threefold ministry program of “systematic continuing education,” “genuine disciplined fellowship,” and “personal renewal.” Again, there was overall agreement from both groups with the three CLRC objectives as indicated by the large means (greater than 4) and small standard deviations. The pastors, however, agreed more strongly than the lay leaders as a group, as indicated by the larger means than those from the lay leaders.

Table 2. CLRC Objectives					
Q #	Brief Description	Pastors / Lay Leaders	Total # Resp.	Mean	Std. Dev.
2	Objectives I (continuing education)	Pastor Lay	6 18	4.5 4.28	0.5 0.73
3	Objectives II (disciplined fellowship)	Pastor Lay	6 18	4.83 4.06	0.37 0.62
4	Objectives III (personal renewal)	Pastor Lay	6 18	4.5 4.06	0.5 0.7

Table 3a summarized the responses to Parts A and B of the rationale statements of the CLRC program in the questionnaire. Part A, which consisted of five statements (A1-A5), describes the biblical or theological bases for the CLRC program. Part B, which consisted of statements, describes the three current phenomena of Chinese churches in North America. There was strong agreement from both groups with the five biblical bases. Both groups also agreed strongly on “phenomenon B1.” However, there was some divergence on “phenomena B2 and B3,” where the pastors seemed to support both phenomena a bit more strongly than the lay leaders. These two phenomena described the level of internal conflict within Chinese churches and the lack of significant impact on Chinese communities at large.

Table 3a. CLRC Rationale					
Q #	Brief Description	Pastors / Lay Leaders	Total # Resp.	Mean	Std. Dev.
5	Biblical basis A1	Pastor	6	4.83	0.37
		Lay	18	4.56	0.68
6	Biblical basis A2	Pastor	6	4.83	0.37
		Lay	18	4.33	0.67
7	Biblical basis A3	Pastor	6	4.83	0.37
		Lay	18	4.39	0.68
8	Biblical basis A4	Pastor	6	5	0
		Lay	18	4.39	0.68
9	Biblical basis A5	Pastor	6	4.83	0.37
		Lay	18	4.5	0.69
10	Current phenomenon B1	Pastor	6	4.5	0.76
		Lay	18	4.28	0.8
11	Current phenomenon B2	Pastor	6	4.67	0.47
		Lay	18	4	0.88
12	Current phenomenon B3	Pastor	6	4.67	0.47
		Lay	18	4	1.05

This should not come as a surprise because of the diversity within the respondent population and the varied environment among the Chinese churches.

Table 3b summarized the responses to Parts C and D of the rationale statements of the CLRC program in the questionnaire. Part C, which consisted of eight statements (C1-C8), describes the historical/cultural factors which contributed to the current phenomena described in Part B above. Part D, which consisted of three statements (D1-D3), describes the three current significant trends concerning Chinese churches in North America and China.

Table 3b. CLRC Rationale					
Q #	Brief Description	Pastors / Lay Leaders	Total # Resp.	Mean	Std. Dev.
13	Cultural factor C1	Pastor	6	4.33	0.47
		Lay	18	3.94	0.85
14	Cultural factor C2	Pastor	6	4.33	0.75
		Lay	18	3.56	1.01
15	Cultural factor C3	Pastor	6	4	0.82
		Lay	18	3.5	0.76
16	Cultural factor C4	Pastor	6	4.67	0.47
		Lay	18	4.06	0.78
17	Cultural factor C5	Pastor	6	3.83	0.69
		Lay	18	3.33	0.75
18	Cultural factor C6	Pastor	6	3.67	1.25
		Lay	18	3.67	0.88
19	Cultural factor C7	Pastor	6	4.17	1.07
		Lay	18	3.89	0.87
20	Cultural factor C8	Pastor	6	4.33	0.47
		Lay	18	3.78	0.71
21	Significant trend D1	Pastor	6	4.67	0.75
		Lay	18	4.33	0.75
22	Significant trend D2	Pastor	6	4.67	0.75
		Lay	18	4.39	0.59
23	Significant trend D3	Pastor	6	4.33	0.75
		Lay	18	4.11	0.46

Part C under rationale seemed to be the most controversial relative to other parts of the questionnaire, as indicated by the lower means and higher standard deviations for some of the questions. Of these historical/cultural factors, C3 and C5 had the lowest agreement among the respondents. C3 states that many of the so-called “immigrant pastors” in North America have not adapted well and C5 states that many Chinese have a low view of full-time pastors due to cultural and other factors. With respect to C5, as pointed out by some respondents’ written comments regarding this question, this claim is not as true in the United States as it is elsewhere. Furthermore, it was also pointed out by one of the persons on the panel of distinguished leaders, that the low view of pastors is due primarily to the fact that the early converts and pastors came from the uneducated people who generally had associated low social standing. Furthermore, it is also true that the low level of income has persisted in the Chinese ministry, especially in Asia, which, in the eyes of the world, makes a pastor’s profession seem lowly in prestige. These two conditions are no longer true in many Chinese churches in North America today. With respect to C3, the condition of ill-adapted “immigrant pastors” is becoming less and less prevalent as younger and better trained pastors take over more and more pastoral responsibilities within the Chinese churches. It is interesting to note, in the case of C3 and C5, the responses from the pastor’s group actually had higher “means” than from the lay leaders. An actual count of the choices showed no “disagreements” from them for the two questions.

Table 4 summarized the responses to the principle statements of the CLRC program in the questionnaire. There are eleven principles which are values and beliefs that guide the CLRC ministry programs and its operations. The data showed general agreement from both the pastors and the lay leaders with the principle statements. However, Principle V, which states that CLRC's "systematic continuing education" is short-term with emphasis on concepts and roadmaps, had a high standard deviation (1.21) coupled with a relatively high mean (4.17), for the pastor's group. From an examination of the actual count, this is accounted for by the one "disagreement" choice alongside four "strong agreement" choices.

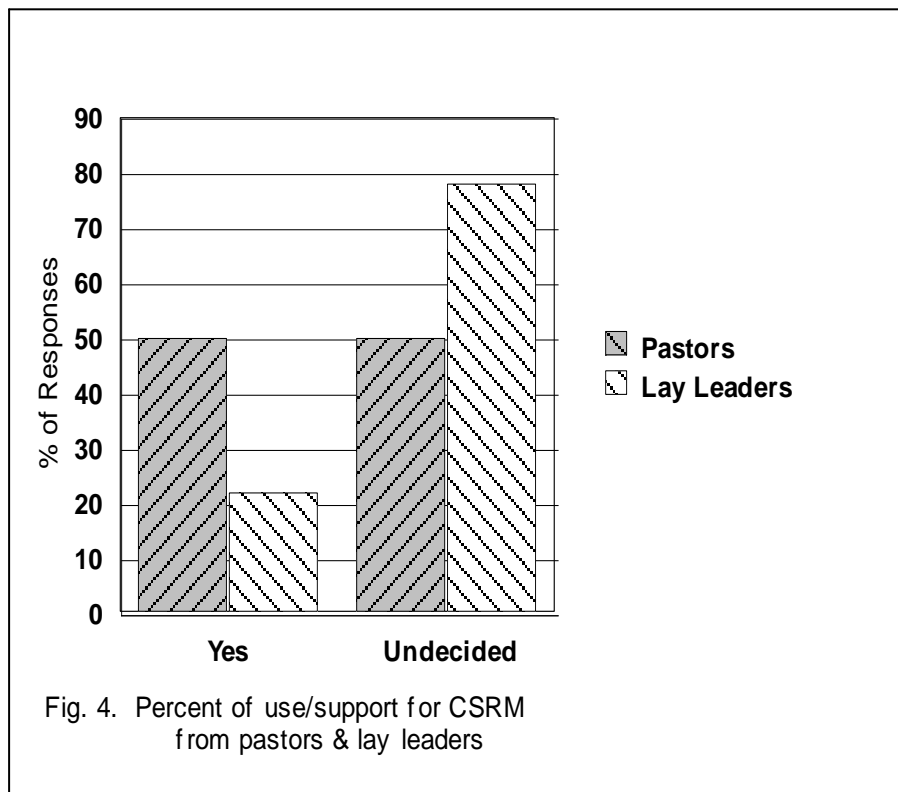
Table 4. CLRC Principles					
Q #	Brief Description	Pastors / Lay Leaders	Total # Resp.	Mean	Std. Dev.
24	Principle I	Pastor	6	4.67	0.75
		Lay	18	4.5	0.69
25	Principle II	Pastor	6	4.67	0.75
		Lay	18	4.56	0.6
26	Principle III	Pastor	6	4.33	0.75
		Lay	18	4.11	0.74
27	Principle IV	Pastor	6	4	0.58
		Lay	18	4	0.58
28	Principle V	Pastor	6	4.17	1.21
		Lay	18	3.94	0.52
29	Principle VI	Pastor	6	4.67	0.75
		Lay	18	4	0.47
30	Principle VII	Pastor	6	4.67	0.75
		Lay	18	4.22	0.53
31	Principle VIII	Pastor	6	4.5	0.76
		Lay	18	4.06	0.4
32	Principle IX	Pastor	6	4.5	0.76
		Lay	18	4.06	0.62
33	Principle X	Pastor	6	4.67	0.75
		Lay	18	4.17	0.6
34	Principle XI	Pastor	6	4.5	0.76
		Lay	18	3.94	0.7

Table 5 summarized the responses to the ideas for the CLRC programming in the questionnaire. They are divided into three areas A, B, and C, corresponding to the threefold ministry objectives: “systematic continuing education,” “genuine disciplined fellowship,” and “personal renewal.” Each area is further provided with a list of topical subjects that the respondents were asked to consider as a whole for evaluation (see appendix 2 for specific topics under each area). The data showed general agreement from both the pastors and the lay leaders concerning these statements.

Table 5. Ideas for CLRC programming					
Q #	Brief Description	Pastors / Lay Leaders	Total # Resp.	Mean	Std. Dev.
35	Continuing education A-I: spiritual maturity	Pastor	6	4.5	0.76
		Lay	18	4.39	0.68
36	Continuing education A-II: biblical knowledge	Pastor	6	4.5	0.76
		Lay	18	4.39	0.68
37	Continuing education A-III: leadership skills	Pastor	6	4.5	0.76
		Lay	18	4.39	0.68
38	Disciplined fellowship B-I: collective worship	Pastor	6	4	0.58
		Lay	18	4.28	0.73
39	Disciplined fellowship B-II: developing trust	Pastor	6	4	0.58
		Lay	18	4.17	0.76
40	Disciplined fellowship B-III: deeper sharing	Pastor	6	4.33	0.75
		Lay	18	4.11	0.74
41	Disciplined fellowship B-IV: ministry networking	Pastor	6	4.33	0.75
		Lay	18	4.11	0.81
42	Personal renewal C-I: personal devotion	Pastor	6	4.17	0.69
		Lay	18	4.33	0.67
43	Personal renewal C-I: personal rest	Pastor	6	4.33	0.75
		Lay	18	4	0.67
44	Personal renewal C-I: personal disciplines	Pastor	6	4.17	0.69
		Lay	18	4.22	0.71

Table 6 and the accompanying figure 4 represent responses to the final question in the questionnaire, that is, whether the respondent or his church would use and/or support the CLRC program if it were available. It shows that 50 percent of the pastors would use or support CLRC if it became available, in contrast to only 22 percent of lay leaders. The majority of the lay leaders responded with “undecided.”

Table 6. Would you or your church use or support CLRC			
	Yes	No	Undecided
Pastors	3		3
Lay Leaders	4		14



Written Comments

It is encouraging to find that 12 out of 18 of the lay leaders and all of the pastors responded with some kind of written comments in the questionnaire. In general, the written comments reflected results of the statistical data, which summarize the extent of agreement/disagreement by the lay leaders and pastors. Appendix 5 contains a synopsis of significant comments that are potentially useful and that will warrant further thought in the final implementation of CLRC. Comments of a minor nature or that which indicate an apparent misunderstanding of the questions are not included. From the synopsis of the written comments by the church leaders (pastors and lay leaders) in appendix 5, the following are especially significant.

1. The overall CLRC ministry program is idealistic, lofty, and laudable. It is well thought through, clear, and meets the need.
2. The implementation of CLRC will take time and may be difficult. Realistic expectations, patience, and faith are needed.
3. An implementation plan is needed, including financial support.
4. The selection criteria of the teachers in the ministry program need to be identified.
5. It will be important to have the right location for the ministry and the right time for the program.
6. The second objective (“genuine disciplined fellowship”) needs to be more focused and its program be given more careful thought in order to accomplish its purpose.
7. CLRC should explore the possibility of cooperating with existing organizations to achieve some of the objectives.
8. CLRC should explore the possibility of implementing Objectives I and II (“systematic continuing education” and “disciplined fellowship”) in different cities.

9. It would be very helpful if CLRC could also explore the possibility of matching prospective pastors with mentors, and with prospective churches.

10. CLRC should start by building a network of support.

As stated earlier, the majority on the panel of distinguished leaders in the Chinese Christian community responded with only general comments rather than following the prescribed format of the questionnaire. Their comments are also summarized in appendix 5. The following are especially significant; some are direct quotes:

1. “The analysis is clear, precise and balanced. The ministry is very much needed.”
2. “May the Lord give you wisdom, strength and patience.”
3. “God-given vision does not need man’s approval.”
4. “Would the Chinese church respond? Would Chinese pastors respond? Will most of them continue the same way: too busy or unwilling to learn?”
5. CLRC should target two groups of people: (1) elders and/or deacons and (2) pastors who promise to bring their elders and/or deacons.
6. CLRC should use small group format in its training, rather than large groups.
7. CLRC must explore ways to ensure that the “right people” come.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluation

Based on the data in Chapter 4, the following general observations can be deduced:

Means

All of the “means” of the questions are greater than 3. Furthermore, the means of 80 percent (35 questions out of 44) from the lay leaders and 96 percent (42 questions out of 44) from the pastors are equal to or greater than 4. This indicates that the great majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with almost all of the five main parts of the CLRC program proposal (vision/mission, objectives, rationale, principles, and programming). Only a few questions, primarily in section C under “rationale” which dealt with “historical/cultural factors,” were more controversial, as discussed in the previous chapter.

Pastors and Lay Leaders Comparison

In general, the responses of the pastors and lay leaders followed similar patterns. Furthermore, the pastors usually scored higher in terms of greater extent of agreement on almost all questions.

Support for CLRC

As noted in the previous chapter, 50 percent of the pastors responded that they would use or support CLRC if it became available, compared to only 22 percent of the lay leaders. Given the scope of this proposed ministry, the lack of explanation on most of the statements, as well as the absence of an implementation plan, it is not surprising that the majority of the lay leaders and half of the pastors are undecided when it comes to using or supporting CLRC.

Disagreements

Disagreements on any of the questions were few, with lay leaders expressing somewhat more disagreement than the pastors. However, as already noted above, most of the disagreements came from several of the “historical/cultural factors” under the “rationale” section. Besides the questions already discussed in chapter 4, there was another question (C2) under “cultural/historical factors” in the “rationale” section, which registered a relatively high number of “disagreement” from the lay leaders’ group as indicated by a lower mean (3.56) and a high standard deviation (1.01). This factor (C2) described a deficiency in lay leaders who had Chinese Bible Study Group background. As in the other cases, I believe that all of these can be explained by diversity within the respondent population and the varied environment among Chinese churches. There might also be two additional explanations. One is the lack of detailed explanations for the questions and the corresponding statements in the ministry proposal, which could have caused some misunderstanding. The other is the fact that not only was there a different maturity level among the church leaders and pastors, but given the same maturity level, Christians do not see the same things nor perceive them in the same way because of different personal experiences and gifts. This is reflected in the summary statistical data as well as in the written comments.

Significant comments by the pastors and lay leaders are already summarized in chapter 4. However, two thoughts stand out among them and are especially challenging to me. First, the proposed CLRC ministry program indeed meets the need. However, it is at the same time, as one pastor stated, also “idealistic and lofty.” Therefore, the implementation of CLRC will take time, and much patience, faith, together with a network of support will be needed. Cooperation or joint efforts with existing Christian organizations should be explored. Second, a potential expansion of the CLRC ministry may be to consider matching perspective pastors with mentors

and perspective churches. This was suggested by one of the pastors surveyed as an enhancement to the CLRC vision.

With respect to the significant comments made by the panel of distinguished leaders summarized in chapter 4, the following points need to be pointed out again and considered during implementation: Although the CLRC program is much needed, expectations may not be met in reality simply because Chinese churches and leaders may not respond due to busyness or an unwillingness to learn. Along the same lines, but not necessarily for the same reasons, many training programs of today unfortunately do not include the right people. As one expert with much leadership training experience puts it, “Very often those who should come, didn’t come, and those who shouldn’t come, came.”

I am very grateful to God and all those who responded and for all these comments. Overall, they are very helpful and encouraging. Although some of the suggestions have already been included, or are in the process of being implemented, they were important confirmations.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The following are conclusions and recommendations based on the research data and the above observations:

1. The proposed CLRC program is generally on the right track in meeting a very critical need to strengthen the leadership of Chinese churches in North America.
2. An implementation plan for CLRC should be created and publicized and that it should include the organization structure such as a governing board, a financial plan, and other details.
3. The CLRC program should spell out more detailed criteria for selecting teachers and/or instructors in the program.

4. The strategy for CLRC target audience should give priority to the two primary groups, that is, elders and deacons, and pastors who promise to bring their elders or deacons. This will enhance the commitment of the church to leadership training.
5. Objective II (“disciplined fellowship”) needs to have more focused goal and its specific program content be given more careful thought.
6. Parts of the CLRC program should include the possibility of working jointly with certain para-church organizations and/or seminary extensions.
7. CLRC needs to consider starting a network of supporters as soon as possible. This could include those who indicated “yes” on the questionnaire and on the pre-project field testing survey.
8. The five parts of the CLRC program need to be corrected, modified, and improved upon based on the comments, after which an Internet Web site as well as a hardcopy brochure should be created for the dissemination of this information.
9. It is paramount to continue to pray for God’s wisdom, strength and guidance for the implementation of this ministry.
10. With respect to the questionnaire, the name under the “Demographic information” should be made optional and “Title/Position” be placed after the “Church/Organization affiliation” to reflect its true intention. In addition, more time, probably about four weeks, needs to be explicitly allowed for the return of the response.

I believe that if most of the recommendations above are implemented, the level of support will increase. The last recommendation will increase the percent of return of the questionnaires.

Finally, I want to mention that it is my goal to continue to spread the CLRC vision and to create an initial prototype of the kind in a staged implementation. As some of the written comments indicated, the CLRC goals are very high indeed, and many more difficult tasks still lie ahead. It is my prayer that I will continue to follow the Lord's will in every step of the way regarding this ministry. I also firmly believe that God will provide all the resources needed for its implementation if this is God's leading as I believe it is. It is also my prayer that one day CLRC-like ministries will be available across America where there are Chinese churches, and that its principles and content, perhaps with some modifications, may also be useful for Chinese churches worldwide.

APPENDIX 1

Christian Leadership Renewal Center Survey

Dear Fellow-workers in Christ:

Greetings in the Lord. My name is Albert Yeh. I took early retirement from IBM several years ago and since 1994 I've been enrolled as a student at the Moody Graduate School. I also have a ministry vision for the renewal of God's servants and His church. The purpose of this survey is to understand the most fundamental and critical needs of Chinese church leaders (clergy and layman) in North America in conjunction with the proposed CLRC ministry and the Moody Graduate School research project. The results will be used to refine the CLRC vision and mission as well as to satisfy the requirements of the research project. Please understand that I'm not here to sell you anything or sign you up for anything. I'd just like to ask you several thoughtful questions concerning your own most critical needs as church leaders and what you believe to be the critical needs of your church. *THE TIME YOU SPENT IN ANSWERING THESE QUESTIONS IS SPENT FOR THE POTENTIAL BENEFIT OF GOD'S KINGDOM AND, GOD WILLING, YOU MAY BE ONE OF THOSE BENEFICIARIES IN THE FUTURE.* (Please note that because of difference in email software, I have included with this message the entire survey AND ALSO attached the same in the format of a text or a MS file for your review and response, whichever works for you.) If you have any further questions about me or the survey, please contact Dr. B. Wayne Hopkins, Dean of the Moody Graduate School in Chicago at (312) 329-4341 and/or Rev. Alan Liang, Senior Pastor of the Raleigh Chinese Christian Church at (919) 834-3815.

Instructions:

Please answer these questions candidly. (I apologize for not having the Chinese version of the questions ready for this survey.) All information will be used only in a statistical manner and for the purposes stated above. This survey *IS INTENDED FOR CHURCH LEADERS* who are Pastors, Elders, chairperson(s) of the Deacon Board (past/present) or their equivalent. If you are not one of these who received this survey, please kindly forward it to the appropriate person(s). *CRITICAL NEEDS* are defined to be those fundamental spiritual or other kinds of needs which are critical for the leader(s) or the church in order to carry out the ministry effectively as intended by God. *CRITICAL PROBLEMS* are defined to be those major issues which prevent the leader(s) and the church from carrying out their ministry effectively.

Church needs

1. Do you believe that most North American Chinese churches have some critical needs and/or critical problems? (Please mark x on one of the following.)

- 1.1 ☐ Strongly agree
- 1.2 ☐ Agree
- 1.3 ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- 1.4 ☐ Disagree
- 1.5 ☐ Strongly disagree

2. Does *your* church have some critical needs and/or problems at the present time?

- 2.1 ☐ Yes
 2.2 ☐ No
 2.3 ☐ I don't know

3. Rank each of the following in order of importance, which you believe are the most critical needs and/or problems (past or present) for *YOUR OWN CHURCH*: "1" being most critical and "5" least critical. Note that each rank may span multiple items. Several blank lines are provided at the end for you to rank and fill in your own brief description of the critical needs/problems, if not listed. Please override/delete the "underscore lines" if you fill in those blanks on line.

- 3.1 ☐ Strong spiritual leadership
 3.2 ☐ Timely and life-changing preaching
 3.3 ☐ Solid and biblical theological education
 3.4 ☐ Genuine prayer life
 3.5 ☐ Genuine and warm fellowship among members
 3.6 ☐ Quality youth/children program
 3.7 ☐ Good facility
 3.8 ☐ Ampler financial resource
 3.9 ☐ Effective administration and organization
 3.10 ☐ Undisciplined sins in the church
 3.11 ☐ Conflict resolution
 3.12 ☐ Clear vision/mission and purpose for the church
 3.13 ☐ Minimizing the influence from the secular world
 3.14 ☐ Consistent spiritual growth
 3.15 ☐ Unity among the members
 3.16 ☐ Networking and fellowship with other churches

 3.17 ☐ _____
 3.18 ☐ _____
 3.19 ☐ _____
 3.20 ☐ _____

4. Rank each of the following in order of importance, which, based on your understanding, are the most critical needs and/or problems for *NORTH AMERICAN CHINESE CHURCHES IN GENERAL*: "1" being most critical and "5" least critical. Note that each rank may span multiple items. Several blank lines are provided at the end for you to rank and fill in your own description of the critical needs/problems, if not listed.

- 4.1 ☐ Strong spiritual leadership
 4.2 ☐ Timely and life-changing preaching
 4.3 ☐ Solid and biblical theological education
 4.4 ☐ Genuine prayer life

- 4.5 ___ Genuine and warm fellowship among members
- 4.6 ___ Quality youth/children program
- 4.7 ___ Good facility
- 4.8 ___ Ampler financial resource
- 4.9 ___ Effective administration and organization
- 4.10 ___ Undisciplined sins in the church
- 4.11 ___ Conflict resolution
- 4.12 ___ Clear vision/mission and purpose for the church
- 4.13 ___ Minimizing the influence from the secular world
- 4.14 ___ Consistent spiritual growth
- 4.15 ___ Unity among the members
- 4.16 ___ Networking and fellowship with other churches

- 4.17 ___ _____
- 4.18 ___ _____
- 4.19 ___ _____
- 4.20 ___ _____

Personal Needs

5. As a church leader, have you ever had deep spiritual / personal needs and/or faced critical problems *WHICH PREVENTED YOU FROM SERVING THE LORD MORE EFFECTIVELY* either currently or in the past?

- 5.1 ___ Yes, I have had deep spiritual / personal needs and/or have faced critical problems during my ministry, but they have been satisfied and resolved now.
- 5.2 ___ Yes, I have had spiritual / personal needs and/or have faced critical problems during my ministry, and they are still unsatisfied or unresolved now.
- 5.3 ___ No, I have never experienced such needs and/or faced such problems in my ministry
- 5.4 ___ I don't know.

6. Rank each of the following in order of importance, which are the most critical needs or problems (past or present) that you have had which prevented you from serving more effectively in your ministry: "1" being most critical and "5" least critical. If you don't have any, please respond in terms of what you believe to be true for other church leaders that you know. Note that each rank may span multiple items. Several blank lines are provided at the end for you to rank and fill in your own description of the critical needs and/or problems, if not listed.

- 6.1 ___ Too busy
- 6.2 ___ Spending too much time on non-essentials
- 6.3 ___ Lack of peers with whom I can share honestly and pray together
- 6.4 ___ Inadequate ministry experience/skills (e.g., communication, administrative, etc. skills)
- 6.5 ___ Lack of spiritual mentor(s) from whom I can receive spiritual wisdom and insights
- 6.6 ___ Lack of mature coworkers
- 6.7 ___ Personal spiritual stagnation

- 6.8 ☐ Lack of regular, ongoing and effective education opportunity to grow myself for ministry
- 6.9 ☐ Lack of clear ministry vision and understanding of my spiritual gifts
- 6.10 ☐ Unconfessed and/or stubborn sins in my life
- 6.11 ☐ Lack of regular "sabbath retreats" for personal physical and mental refreshment
- 6.12 ☐ Inadequate financial resource
- 6.13 ☐ Lack of networking and fellowship with other fellow Christian servants
- 6.14 ☐ Lack of support from my family
- 6.15 ☐ Insufficient biblical and theological education
- 6.16 ☐ Too much self-reliance rather than faith and dependence on God
- 6.17 ☐ _____
- 6.18 ☐ _____
- 6.19 ☐ _____
- 6.20 ☐ _____

Demographic information

- 7.1 Name: _____ (optional)
- 7.2 Years in ministry: ☐ < 2; ☐ 3-5; ☐ 6-10; ☐ 11-15; ☐ > 15
- 7.3 Church affiliation: _____
- 7.4 Approximate church size: ☐ < 100; ☐ 100-200; ☐ 201- 300; ☐ 301- 500; ☐ > 500
- 7.5 Church address: _____
- 7.6 Email address: _____
- 7.7 Tel/Fax: _____ (optional)
- 7.8 Date: _____

8.0 Any other comments:

Please indicate yes/no if you would like to be contacted in the future regarding the CLRC ministry: ☐

I APPRECIATE GREATLY YOUR RESPONSE AND PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED SURVEY VIA EMAIL WITHIN TWO WEEKS, IF POSSIBLE, TO:survey-acy@worldnet.att.net

Alternatively, you may fax the completed survey to me at 919-8476730 or contact me at (919)847-2064 or mail me at 303 Dunwoody Dr., Raleigh, NC 27615

APPENDIX 2

CLRC MINISTRY PROPOSAL

I. CLRC Vision & Mission

Strong spiritual leadership is the most important key to a healthy church in order to fulfill God's great commission and purpose for His church. This has become ever more critical as Chinese churches worldwide enter the 21st century, facing unprecedented challenges as well as opportunities. **Christian Leadership Renewal Center** (CLRC) is dedicated to assist Chinese churches to develop and strengthen their leaders and to help them realize their full potential as servants of God. **CLRC** will focus on the critical need for strong church leadership by providing a threefold ministry program of *systematic continuing education*, *genuine disciplined fellowship*, and *personal renewal*.

II. CLRC Objectives

1. To provide periodic, short-term introductory through advanced leadership training. The teachers are carefully selected from the most gifted and seasoned servants of God and the class size is kept small. The content of training focuses on the three crucial aspects of spiritual leadership: *character formation*, *biblical knowledge* and *leadership skills*. The latest teaching and learning equipment as well as a multimedia resource center with a concentration on leadership and church growth materials are provided on site for the teachers and students.
2. To provide fellowship programs to church leaders in an environment designed to promote open and disciplined sharing of each other's burdens as well as ministry insights. Church leaders from the same or different churches with diverse perspectives, denominations or backgrounds can get acquainted, share and pray together for mutual edification and support. The goal is to tear down the barriers and build up the kind of biblical unity and love among church leaders, which Christ prayed for and commanded.
3. To provide suitable facilities and a conducive environment so that church leaders can spend a period of time for personal renewal in the form of retreat and disciplines such as prayer, meditation and reflection.

III. Rationale for CLRC

A. Biblical / theological bases

1. The centrality of the church of Christ in God's eternal plan to accomplish His purpose (Matt 28:19-20; Eph 1:10-12; 22-23; 3:10-11; 1 Tim 3:15)
2. The importance of qualified and trained spiritual leaders in a local church (Eph 4:11-16; 1 Tim 3:1-12,15; 2 Tim 2:2; Ti 1:5-9)
3. The need for continuous training for spiritual leaders (1 Tim 4:7-8)
4. The need for genuine fellowship with fellow workers (Ro 16:1-16; 21-24; Eph 6:19; Heb 10:24-25)
5. The need for personal renewal / Sabbath rest (Gen 2:1-3; Ex 20:8-11; 23:11-12; Mk 2:27; 6:31,46; Lk 4:42)

B. Some current phenomena of Chinese churches in North America¹

1. There is a general leadership crisis which is manifested in terms of an acute shortage of qualified pastors/teachers, of overworked leaders, and the lack of clear vision and road map for church ministry.
2. There exists a high level of internal conflict resulting in frequent unhealthy church divisions and serious damage to church leaders, congregations and the testimony for Christ.
3. There is a lack of significant impact upon the Chinese communities at large.

C. Historical / cultural / human factors contributing to the phenomena²

1. The small size of an average church (less than 100) and its independent nature (not associated with any denomination) often contribute to the lack of systematic leadership development due to insufficient manpower, funds or other constraints.
2. For the majority of churches, many were rooted in the Chinese Bible Study Groups (CBSG) developed in the '60s. The same people have since assumed leadership roles but they lack well rounded training in biblical doctrines and ministry.³ Furthermore, as most of them are also professionals with busy careers and families, it is difficult for them to pursue lengthy, full time training.
3. Many Chinese churches in North America have full time "immigrant pastors" who came from the older generation of Chinese pastors overseas, and who, for one reason or another, have not adapted well in the North American environment.

¹ This is a general description of some undesirable characteristics of many Chinese churches in North America. It may not be true for *all* Chinese churches. Nor are they necessarily unique to only *Chinese* churches.

² The list is not intended to be exhaustive, but to only include the major factors.

³ This is just to point out a side effect of CBSG's historical root. It is not meant to be a general criticism of the CBSGs. In fact, there are many positive aspects as a result of this historical origin.

4. The existence of extremely diverse and complex multi-cultures and subcultures within the local church presents unique challenges to communication and conflict resolution. In addition, there are denominational differences within an independent church which contribute to different biblical understanding and ministry approaches.
5. Many Chinese have a low view of full time pastors due to cultural and/or other factors.
6. Many believers expect the pastors to do and to be everything to everybody. On the other hand, many pastors, who are already overworked, do not give high priority to the biblical responsibility of developing other leaders.
7. The orientation of Chinese culture which emphasizes "face/shame," "family privacy" and "regional cliques" tends to prevent openness required for genuine fellowship in a diverse church environment.
8. A large proportion of church members, especially those in the leadership role, are highly educated professionals holding advanced degrees. Under the influence of the American culture and their secular training, they tend to be overly dependent on "worldly" approaches in church matters and are more likely to harbor a sense of pride and self-importance.

D. Other current significant trends

1. The tremendous growth of Mainland Chinese population (students and immigrants) in the US, their openness to the Gospel and subsequent church growth present a strategic opportunity as well as an urgent need for leadership development.
2. Similarly, the continuing phenomenal growth of Chinese converts in Mainland China coupled with the ever-increasing "open door" to the West, present another historical opportunity for Chinese churches worldwide.
3. There is an urgent need to pass along the valuable insights and wisdom of the mature spiritual leaders of the older generation to the upcoming new generation, before it is too late.

IV. Principles for CLRC⁴

1. CLRC board members or directors are first of all men of integrity, not necessarily of wealth or worldly honor. They are spirit filled and seasoned men of God, not perfect, but with hearts devoted to the Lord.
2. All CLRC teaching and programming materials are Bible-based.⁵ CLRC strives to practice biblical truths in all aspects of its ministry.
3. CLRC emphasizes prevention and proper maintenance to develop healthy spiritual leaders before they become victims that require special care.
4. Recognizing that man is made of spirit-soul, mind and body and that wholesome kingdom people are individuals as well as a community, CLRC employs a balanced, holistic ministry approach. As such, but not exclusively so, *systematic continuing education* focuses on the dimension of the mind; *genuine disciplined fellowship*, the emotions and interpersonal relationship; and *personal renewal*, the physical along with the spirit and soul.
5. Due to the urgent needs and the recognition that leadership training is a lifelong and many faceted process, the CLRC short term leadership training seminars and ministry programs are aimed at filling in the gap left by formal seminary training and regular church based programs. Based on this philosophy, the overall content focuses on the teaching of "concepts," "road maps" and most relevant topics. In as much as possible, however, biblical examples, "lab exercises" and personal applications are used in lectures to make such learning concrete and practical.
6. Recognizing the importance of the global English speaking Chinese network and the growing segment of English speaking American Born Chinese in North America, the CLRC ministry strives to be bilingual and to meet their needs in its programming.
7. Recognizing the priesthood of all New Testament believers and the importance of mobilizing the laity for God's ministry, CLRC pays special attention to the development and training of lay leaders.
8. Within the context of Bible-based programming, CLRC strives to be innovative in its approach and flexible in its content. The approach incorporates innovative teaching methods, human learning principles and use of the latest technology. The content takes into consideration cultural factors and the ever changing needs.
9. Before creating its own, CLRC attempts to make use of, in so far as is feasible, any existing programming materials which can accomplish its purpose and which can be adaptable.
10. CLRC does not replace local church functions but desires to assist the local churches to embark on a regular leadership training program. The local churches may in turn also become an important resource to support CLRC.

⁴ Principles are values and beliefs which serve to guide the CLRC ministry programs and its operations.

⁵ See separate Statement of Faith for CLRC.

11. CLRC gives priority to serve Chinese church leaders.

V. CLRC Programming

A. Systematic Continuing Education - Leadership Training Seminar	
Purpose	Topics *
Introduction / overview	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Philosophy of ministry 2. Philosophy of leadership
I. Understand <i>spiritual maturity</i> as the foundation for spiritual leadership and the overall process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Character of a godly person 2. Biblical qualifications for a spiritual leader / Measure of a man 3. Character formation / Personal management 4. Biblical character examples 5. Self inventory / maturity matrix 6. Action plan
II. Acquire <i>basic biblical doctrines and knowledge</i> for sound spiritual leadership.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Biblical / Systematic theology 2. Bible study methods/ Hermeneutics 3. Church history / Chinese cultural and church history 4. Survey of Old and New Testament 5. Spiritual formation 6. Church growth principles 7. Cults and Apologetics 8. Biblical ethics/contemporary theological issues 9. Difficult questions
III. Develop essential <i>leadership skills</i> .	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vision / Mission / Goals 2. Communication 3. Relational skills/Conflict resolution 4. Preaching / Teaching / Homiletics 5. Time management techniques 6. Strategic planning / Administration 7. Personality profile/leadership styles 8. Team ministry 9. Evangelism/ discipleship/ counseling/ shepherding 10. Biblical examples

Wrap up	Review, summary and conclusions
* <i>The topics will be selected based on availability of time and teachers and whether the class is introductory or advanced.</i>	
B. Genuine Disciplined Fellowship	
Purpose	Topics *
I. Collective devotion/worship	Songs, Scripture reading, meditation and prayers
II. Get acquainted, develop trust, and break down barriers	1. Brief personal background/life history 2. Personal conversion story 3. Personal interests 4. Personality profiles/styles 5. Praying for one another
III. Promote deeper personal sharing and understanding	1. What God's doing in my life currently 2. Personal burdens and visions 3. Fears and joys 4. Successes and failures 5. Strengths and weaknesses 6. Praying for one another
IV. Foster ministry sharing and networking as partners and fellow-workers for the Kingdom of God	1. Ministry vision / goals / ideas 2. Ministry problems/solutions 3. Ministry successes/success factors 4. Intra-church/inter-church issues 5. Confession and reconciliation 6. Team work exercises 7. Establish mutual support / network 8. Praying for one another
* <i>The topics will be selected and adjusted according to the following factors:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The amount of time available (1 to 3 days) 2. Whether or not the persons involved are from the same church/denomination/ backgrounds. 3. The degree of previous acquaintance and the number of people in the group, which may be one on one to a maximum of 10. 4. The primary purpose of the gathering 	

C. Personal Renewal	
Purpose	Topics / Content *
I. Personal devotion and worship	Songs, Scripture reading, meditation and prayers
II. Rest, recreation and exercise	An environment and facilities available for such purposes
III. Personal disciplines	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Solitude 2. Meditation 3. Silence 4. Personal Prayers 5. Personal Bible study 6. Fasting and/or dieting 7. Personal reading 8. Music appreciation 9. Reflection and evaluation on the vision and mission of one's personal life and ministry
<p><i>* The content and duration will be adjusted accordingly depending on the following factors:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The amount of time available (1 to 3 days) 2. The individual's specific purpose/goal of the retreat 	

Attachment A

CLRC Statement of Faith

1. We believe that the entire Bible in the original manuscripts, consisting of Old and New Testaments only, is verbally inspired by the Holy Spirit and therefore without errors. It is the highest authority for believer's faith and living.
2. We believe in the Holy Trinity of God who exists eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit; that the three persons of the triune God have the same nature and attributes.
3. We believe that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully Man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of Virgin Mary. He was sinless yet He died upon the cross for the sins of the world as a substitutionary sacrifice, arose bodily from death after three days, and ascended to heaven. He is now seated at the right hand of God as the interceding High Priest for believers and will come again personally and visibly to set up His kingdom and to judge the quick and the dead.
4. We believe that the Holy Spirit is God. He convicts sinners to repent and be born again. He indwells believers to move and to teach and is the source of power for believers' living and service.
5. We believe that man was created in the image and after the likeness of God; that sin entered the world and affected the whole of mankind through the transgression of the first man, Adam. Mankind has since been alienated from God and cannot save himself.
6. We believe that salvation is totally out of God's grace. It is only through the death of Jesus Christ and His resurrection that all those who believe in Him shall have their sins forgiven and be justified through faith.
7. We believe that the church is the body of Christ and that Christ is the Head of the church. The universal church is made up of all born again believers while the local church is for the gathering of believers in different localities for witness, worship, fellowship and service.
8. We believe that all the dead will be resurrected: believers will be resurrected with glorified bodies to enjoy eternal life with God, while the unsaved will be raised to everlasting punishment and separation from God.

Attachment B

A Personal History of the CLRC Vision

- **Brief Personal Background**

My spiritual journey started more than forty-five years ago when I received Christ in 1953 and was baptized in 1954 in Shanghai, China. As a young Christian in high school, my faith was severely tested under the constant bombardment of the atheistic, Marxist doctrines and persecutions of the Communist regime. However, under persecution, it was also a period of closeness to God. At the same time, I witnessed the courage and faithful testimonies of God's servants and leaders such as Wang Ming-Dao, Watchman Nee and Chia Yue-Ming. In 1956 God miraculously brought me out of China to HongKong, and later I finished high school at the Christian Academy in Japan. I was active in the local Chinese churches in various ministries during this period.

During my university years in the US from 1961 to 1967, under the influence of American culture and the liberal environment in the '60s, I went through a period of doubt and reflection upon my personal faith. God, however, not only had kept my faith but He strengthened it. In 1968, several of us founded the Chinese Bible Study Group in Poughkeepsie where I began my career with IBM. My motivation came largely from the personal experience during the previous period, which convinced me that proper understanding of the Word of God is foundational to a Christian's faith and life. The Bible Study Group later became the Mid-Hudson Chinese Christian Church, where I served actively as a lay leader until 1982. My ministry there included being a Bible study leader, Sunday worship service speaker, and a member of the governing board.

In 1982, my wife and I moved to Raleigh, NC, and joined a Baptist Chinese Mission. This mission became the Raleigh Chinese Christian Church in 1984. I have been with this church since then and served in various capacities such as Adult Sunday School teaching, discipleship training, Christian Education and Worship deacon, chairman of the Deacon Board, and an elder. In 1992, I took early retirement from IBM after 25 years of service. In 1994, I enrolled in the MA Ministry program of the Moody Bible Institute Graduate School in Chicago and graduated in December 1999.

- **History of the CLRC Vision**

In 1992, because of the IBM policy of encouraging early retirement, I began some serious thinking and asking God what I should do with the rest of my life. During a period of six months, I asked God for guidance and confirmations. I reflected on what God had been doing in my life -- my upbringing, my spiritual journey, gifts, and various kinds of training. As I looked back in my life, several events stood out: 1) the diverse and often adverse experiences of my life across drastically different circumstances; 2) my roots in China and the Chinese culture; 3) my long association with Chinese churches beginning in China and continued in the US, serving in different roles and working closely with full time God's servants. Through these experiences, I developed sensitivities to different cultures and the needs, issues and problems of the

Chinese churches; discovered my gifts in teaching, planning and a growing burden for the evangelization of the Chinese people. As I looked forward, I saw the tremendous need as well as potential of the Chinese churches worldwide.

One of the verses that God gave me at that time to guide me in making the “early retirement” decision was Jeremiah 18:2-4. God was saying to me that He wanted to “reshape” and use this vessel of His as it seemed best to Him. At that time, I still didn’t know what God had in store for me to do specifically. But providentially, God closed some “natural” doors and in 1994, He opened the “unexpected” door for me, which I had not thought of. That led me to be enrolled in the Moody graduate program in ministry.

The initial idea about CLRC came about during the first course I took at Moody, that is, the “Church Renewal Principles.” The basic question I asked was if God’s vision for the church is so glorious, why are so many local churches, in particular, Chinese churches in North America not living up to their potentials? Of course, there was no one, simple answer. But my interest in this subject became stronger as I continued taking various courses such as “Training of Leaders,” “Excellence in Leadership,” and “Biblical Theology of Ministry” over the next several years. I also gained valuable insights from sharing these thoughts with close friends, ministers and Moody professors. Meanwhile, God has continued to shape and teach me in the various areas of my Christian life and ministry. There were several “disruptive” events during this period, but each one made me better equipped and contributed to the maturing of the CLRC vision.

The other major factor in the formulation of the CLRC vision is a growing personal burden for leadership training as a result of over thirty years of serving in the Chinese churches. In particular, I have personally experienced and observed, due to leadership problems, the damage inflicted upon local churches, their leaders and congregations.

The current version of CLRC vision/mission, including its principles, rationale, and programming ideas, is the culmination of all that is described above. It is also the result of research done from over fifty books, articles and miscellaneous materials. As the idea became more mature, my wife and I started praying and searching for a potential site for such a ministry in 1995. Not until 1997, again, by providential guidance, a suitable site became available and God also provided the necessary resource for the purchase. It is a piece of raw land located on a scenic lake not far from Raleigh and close to a major Interstate highway. We took it as another confirmation of His guidance. In 1999, construction began on the first phase of building on the site, which was completed in December of 2000.

We recognize that many more difficult tasks still remain to be done. At the present time, our goal is to use the site to spread the vision and to create an *initial prototype* of the kind of ministry as described in the CLRC Vision/Mission and guiding Principles. It is our prayer that we will continue to follow the Lord’s will in whatever we do in the future with respect to the ministry. We dare not proceed without His clear guidance and confirmation every step of the way.

APPENDIX 3

CHINESE TRANSLATION OF THE CLRC MINISTRY PROPOSAL

I. 基督僕人更新中心的異象與使命

強而有力的屬靈領導是一個健全教會的至要關鍵，俾能完成神的大使命及祂建立教會的目的。這對進入廿一世紀的華人教會在面對空前未有的挑戰與機會時更顯其緊要性。基督僕人更新中心（簡稱 **CLRC**）之成立係專以協助華人教會培訓領袖，並使他們認知自身事奉之完全潛能為宗旨。中心將針對屬靈領袖最緊要的需求，提供三方面的事工項目：系統延伸教育、真誠自律的交流、及個人更新。

II. 基督僕人更新中心的目標

- I. 提供定期性的短期進深領袖訓練。講員均為精選資優的教師，班級為小班制。訓練內容專注於屬靈領袖必備的三方面：靈性塑造、聖經知識、領導技巧。中心特為教師與學員提供最新近的教學設備及各種以屬靈領導和教會成長為主的資料。
- II. 提供悉心設計的交流課程，使教會領袖們能開放且自律地分享彼此的負擔與事奉心得。來自相同或不同教會或宗派、有不同觀點及背景的領袖們在此聚集結識，一同禱告、互相建立與支持。目的是要培育聖經所教導門徒之間的合一及相愛，正如同主耶穌基督為眾聖徒所祈求、所命令的。
- III 提供有益的環境與設備，使教會領袖可以作短期隱退及自我鍛鍊：如禱告、默想、回顧，使身、心、靈得到恢復與更新。

III. 基督僕人更新中心的創建緣由

一、聖經、神學根據

1. 基督教會在神永恆計劃裏的中心地位〔太 28:19-20；弗 1:10-12, 22-23; 3:10-11；提前 3:15〕。
2. 好的屬靈領導在教會中的重要性〔弗 4:11-16；提前 3:1-12, 15；多 1:5-9〕。
3. 屬靈領袖需要持續的訓練與更新〔提前 4:7-8〕。
4. 同工之間需要真誠的交流〔羅 16:1-16, 21-24；弗 6:19；來 10:24-25〕。
5. 個人需要更新/安息〔創 2:1-3；出 20:8-11; 23:11-12；可 2:27；6:31, 46；路 4:42〕。

二、北美華人教會的目前現象⁶

1. 領導出現危機，根源於嚴重缺乏優秀的教牧者、牧者的工作過度、以及教會缺乏清楚的異象與“路線圖”。
2. 許多教會裏存在高度的內部分歧，造成許多不健康的分裂及對教會領袖、會眾與基督見證的嚴重傷害。
3. 在華人社區中缺乏有重要的影響力。

三、歷史文化與人為對此種現象的促成因素⁷

1. 一般多為小教會〔人數少於 100 人〕及其獨立性〔不屬任何宗派〕，使其常因人力物力與各種因素受限而缺乏有系統的領袖栽培。
2. 目前大部份的教會，前身為六十年代的華人查經班。許多這些教會的領袖缺乏平衡的神學與牧會訓練⁸，同時因為忙碌的工作和家庭生活，也不可能去接受長期全時間的培訓。
3. 北美華人教會有許多全職的牧者，他們是早一輩的海外牧師，由於各種因素，尚未適應北美的情況。
4. 教會中存在極度相異與複雜的多文化及次文化，為溝通與解決衝突帶來獨特的挑戰。加上在一個獨立教會中的不同宗派背景，產生對聖經了解及牧會的不同看法。

⁶ 此為對於北美許多華人教會具有某些不良特質之一般性描述，並非所有華人教會均具此特質。

⁷ 所列出之因素並不完全，僅為主要因素。

⁸ 僅於此指出北美華人查經班歷史根源之邊際效應。並非對查經班的一般批評。事實上，此歷史根源層產生出許多正面的影響。

5. 一般信徒要求牧者成為百般全能，服事所有會眾。
6. 許多牧者已經工作過度，並不認真地負起培訓領袖的責任。
7. 中國文化注重「顏面」、「家庭隱私」、「省籍觀念」，使得在多元性的教會中難有開放真誠的交流。
8. 大部份的教會成員，尤其是領袖，皆為高等學位的專業者，在美國文化及學識訓練的影響下，他們傾向於過度仰賴「世俗」的方法來運作教會事工，並且容易產生驕傲與自負。

四、其他目前重大趨勢

1. 中國大陸人口在美國的極度增長〔學生與移民〕、他們對福音開放的心以及華人教會在這一部份的會眾增長，帶來策略性的機會，也同時導致領袖栽培的急需。
2. 同樣地，在中國大陸本土基督徒急遽增長之現象以及對西方無可避免的繼續「開放」，代表著對全球華人教會另一個歷史性的機會。
3. 眼前緊迫的需要，是盼望前一輩的屬靈「長輩」，能夠在有生之日，將他們的寶貴心得與豐富經驗傳給新一代的屬靈領袖。

IV. 基督僕人更新中心之原則⁹

1. 基督僕人更新中心的董事及幹事必須為人正直、為聖靈所充滿、為神合宜的僕人；不需有財富及世上榮譽，不需完美，但須全然委身於神。
2. 基督僕人更新中心之教材與資源完全根基於聖經¹⁰。中心所有事工均以實踐聖經真理為依歸。
3. 基督僕人更新中心為培育健全的屬靈領袖，著重預防與適當之維護，以免他們將來成為需要特別關顧的“受害者”。
4. 我們知道人是靈、魂、心思、體的組成，健全的人不單是個體也是群體。基督僕人更新中心以均衡的全人事奉為出發點。系統延伸教育著重於理性層面；真誠自律的交流著重於情感與相互關係；個人更新著重於身體與靈、魂層面。
5. 鑒於領袖訓練之迫切需要，以及明瞭訓練實包含多方面並其過程乃一生之久，基督僕人更新中心短期領袖訓練講座及事工項目之目標，在於填補正式神學院與一般教會所提供栽培訓練之間的罅隙。基於此理念，整體內容著重於教導「概念」、「指引路圖」及至為有關之主題。課程中並包括聖經實例、實驗及個人實踐，以使學習更具體與實際。
6. 明瞭英語在連絡全球華人的重要性以及在美出生華人之增長，基督僕人更新中心亦致力於雙語事工以應其需要。
7. 明瞭新約信徒為祭司之教導以及動員全體信徒事奉神之重要性，基督僕人更新中心特別重視平信徒領袖之訓練與栽培。
8. 在所有事工項目係根基於聖經的大前提下，基督僕人更新中心致力於採用革新之教學法與研討方式，並求內容之適切性。結合新穎之教學法與學習原則以及最新科技之使用。內容考慮文化因素與目前多變之需要。
9. 基督僕人更新中心在擁有創新之教材以前，係運用目前可採用亦可改編之教材，以達成教學目標。
10. 基督僕人更新中心不能取代地方性教會之功能，但希望能協助地方教會從事定期的領袖訓練。地方教會本身也同時可成為中心的主要支持資源。
11. 基督僕人更新中心首重於服事華人教會領袖。

⁹ 此原則為引導基督僕人更新中心事工項目與運作之價值與信念。

¹⁰ 參見另文”基督僕人更新中心”。

V. 基督僕人更新中心事工項目

A. 系統延伸教育——領袖訓練講座	
目標	主題*
一、講座介紹	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 事奉理念 2. 領袖理念
二、明瞭靈性成熟是屬靈領袖及整個訓練過程的基礎	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 敬虔僕人的特性 2. 聖經對屬靈領袖所要求的資格/對人的衡量 3. 性格塑造/個人管理 4. 聖經人物實例 5. 個人整理/成熟型態 6. 行動計劃
三、學習基要聖經真理，以從事健全的屬靈領導	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 聖經/系統神學 2. 研經方法/釋經學 3. 教會歷史/中國文化與教會歷史 4. 舊約與新約概論 5. 靈性塑造 6. 教會成長原理 7. 異端與護教學 8. 聖經倫理學/當代神學爭議 9. 難題
四、發展必要之領導技巧	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 異象/使命/目標 2. 溝通 3. 人際關係技巧/解決衝突 4. 講道/教導/解經學 5. 時間管理技術 6. 策略計劃/行政管理 7. 個性剖析/領導風格 8. 團隊事奉 9. 佈道/門徒訓練/輔導/牧養 10. 聖經實例
五、結論	複習、摘要與總結
*課程主題視時間許可及係初級或進深班級而定	

B. 真誠自律的交流	
目標	主題
一、集合靈修/崇拜	詩歌、讀經、默想、禱告
二、相互認識/發展互信/打破隔閡	1. 簡短個人背景/生命歷史 2. 個人得救經過 3. 個人興趣 4. 個性剖析/風格 5. 彼此代禱
三、促進更深入的個人分享與瞭解	1. 目前神在我生命中的工作 2. 個人負擔與異象 3. 懼怕與喜樂 4. 成功與失敗 5. 長處與弱點 6. 彼此代禱
四、培育事工分享與連絡網，在主的國度裏成為夥伴與同工	1. 事工之異象/目標/構想 2. 事工之難題/解決方法 3. 事工之成功/成功因素 4. 教會內/教會間的問題討論 5. 認罪與調和 6. 團隊事奉練習 7. 建立相互支持/連絡網 8. 彼此代禱
注意上述各課程時間及主題視下列各因素而調整： <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 時間之允許〔一至三天〕 2. 學員是否來自相同教會、宗派、背景 3. 學員彼此熟稔程度及小組人數（一對一或可多至十人） 4. 主要聚集之目的 	

C. 個人更新	
目標	主題/內容
一、個人靈修/崇拜	詩歌、讀經、默想、禱告
二、休息、休閒活動、運動	提供為此目的之環境與設備
三、自我操鍊	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 孤獨/默想 2. 個人禱告/沈默 3. 個人研經 4. 禁食/節食 5. 個人閱讀/音樂欣賞 6. 回顧/評估個人生命與事工的異象與使命
注意上述各課程時間及主題視下列各因素而調整： <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 時間之允許〔一至三天〕 2. 個人參加退修會之目的 	

Attachment A (附件 A)

基督僕人更新中心信仰宣言

I.我們相信聖經(新舊約六十六卷)原稿的每字每句都是神所默示的，絕無錯誤，是信徒信仰與生活的最高權威。

II.我們相信聖父聖子聖靈乃三位一體的神，共同創造宇宙萬物，無始無終，永遠共存，有合一的屬性和同等的神格。

III.我們相信耶穌基督是神又是人，由聖靈感孕，從童貞女馬利亞而生；一生無罪，但為了世人的罪，被釘死在十字架上，三日後肉身復活，向門徒顯現後升天；現今坐在神的右邊為信徒代求，將來要帶著榮耀的身體再來。

IV.我們相信聖靈是神，使世人知罪悔改與重生，又內住信徒心中作感動和教導的工作，是信徒生活與事奉之能力的來源。

V.我們相信人是照著神的形像和樣式被造的，但始祖亞當犯罪，罪因此進入世界，普及全人類；世人從此陷入罪中，與神隔絕，無法自救。

VI.我們相信救贖全是出於神的恩典，只有藉著耶穌基督在十字架上的死與復活，叫凡相信的人，罪得赦免，因信被稱為義。

VII.我們相信教會是基督的身體，基督是教會的元首；普世性的教會乃由所有重生的信徒組成；地區性的教會則是信徒在不同地方的聚集，一同敬拜與事奉神，彼此相交，彼此相愛。

VIII.我們相信死人都要復活，信主的復活享永生，永遠與神同在；不信的復活受永刑，永遠與神隔絕。

Attachment B (附件 B)

基督僕人更新中心異象之歷史

* 個人背景簡介

我個人的屬靈旅程始於四十五年前，在共產黨的統治下，我在中國上海，於1953年信主，1954年受洗。在那段時期，由於中共當局反基督教的政策，我經過了很多的試煉，直到1956年，神奇妙地帶領我離開了中國，進入香港。然而，在這艱難迫害之中，也是我與神非常親近的時期。我心中被那些偉大的中國屬靈領袖，如王明道、倪柝聲及賈玉銘、及其著作為主所做的見證深深感動。在香港後我去了日本讀完中學（Christian Academy in Japan）也在當地華人教會有各種的服事。

1961-1967年我在美國大學和研究院求學時期，我的信仰遭受嚴重的考驗。在六十年代美國文化及自由主義的環境影響下，個人對信仰經過了一段懷疑和反思。但神不僅保守、且堅固了我的信心。1968年，我開始在IBM工作，在Poughkeepsie, NY，和幾位弟兄成立了中文查經班。我的動機主要來自早期個人的經驗，確信對神的話語有正確的瞭解，是一個基督徒信仰與生活的基礎。這個查經班後來成為赫德遜華人基督教會，我在其中，積極參與帶領查經、主日講道及同工會的事奉。

1982年我搬到Raleigh, NC，加入了一個浸信會的華人分會，後來在1984年成為洛麗華人基督教會。我一直在此教會中事奉，擔任成人主日學教導、門徒訓練、基督教教育與崇拜部執事、執事會主席、聘牧委員、遠程計劃委員等事工。1992年我從工作了25年的IBM提前退休，1994年進入Moody Bible Institute研究院進修教牧學碩士，於1999年完成學位。

* 基督僕人更新中心異象的歷史

1992年，由於IBM公司的政策鼓勵提前退休，我開始慎重思考並求問神應如何運用我的餘生。在六個月的時間中，我尋求神的帶領與印證。我回顧神在我生命中的作為——我的成長環境、屬靈生命旅程、恩賜與各樣的訓練。其中有幾項特別的事件突顯：(1)生命中幾度遭遇逆境、且歷經截然不同的生存環境，(2)出生及成長在中國，受到中國文化的影響，(3)從在中國起直到美國，我都一直在中國教會裏服事，與神的僕人一起同工。經由這些經驗，我對不同文化及其需要、以及華人教會裏的各種問題特別有所領悟。個人在教導、策劃、向華人佈道方面的恩賜也逐漸被發掘。我深深體念到全球華人教會極大的需要，也同時具有極深厚的潛能。

神引導我做出提前退休決定的經文是在耶利米書18:24。神對我說，祂要「用這泥另作別的器皿...祂看怎樣好，就怎樣作」。當時，我仍然不明白神要如何使用我。但神有祂的美意，祂關上一些“自然”的門，卻在1994年為我開了一扇“不期遇”的門，是我未曾想過的，就是祂引領我進入Moody神學院，進修教牧學碩士的課程。

在Moody神學院修習第一科「教會更新原則」時，心中開始有了基督僕人更新中心的初步構想。那時心中有一個基本的問題：若神對教會的目的是如此榮耀，何以眾多地方教會這般軟弱？緊接著幾年，在我修習「領袖訓練」、「卓越領導」、「聖經教牧神學」等課程時，這構想逐漸被琢磨，心中負擔也更加強。我向親近的朋友、牧者、神學院教授分享這構想時，也從他們那裏獲得許多寶貴的洞見。同時，神繼續在我的生命與事奉中，在多方面塑造、教導我。特別在這期間曾有一些似乎是「擾亂性」的事件發生，但這些都使我更為裝備，亦使基督僕人更新中心的異象更趨成熟。

另一個主要形成基督僕人更新中心的異象的因素，是我在華人教會中服事三十多年裏對領袖訓練的負擔的不斷增長。特別是我個人親身經驗並觀察到由於領導出現的問題，而加諸於地方教會、領袖與會眾的傷害。

基督僕人更新中心的異象與使命、原則、創建緣由及事工項目構想，是上述所有因素之凝聚點，也是研究五十多本書籍、文章、及多方面資料的心得結果。在1995時，當此構想愈趨成熟時，內人與我開始禱告並為中心尋找合適的地方。直到1997年，神再次引導，我們找到了一個相當合適的地方，神也預備了購買所需的資源。那是一片尚未開發的土地，位於洛麗市不遠的一個景緻美好的湖上，靠近主要的州際公路。我們認為這是祂引導的證實。

眼前仍有許多困難的工作需要克服。目前，我們的目標是以此用地來傳遞異象，並根據基督僕人更新中心之異象、使命與原則，為此事工創建一初步的型式。我們的禱告，求主使我們繼續按祂的旨意為此事工努力以赴。若無神清楚的指引與證實前途的每一步，我們不敢逕自前進。

APPENDIX 4

CLRC EVALUATION DATA

The number of responses were tabulated in the following tables (tables 1 through 5) corresponding to the five parts of the CLRC program. The rows are the responses to the forty-four questions in the five parts and the columns are the 5-point scale of agreement or disagreement. Each row is further divided into two categories, one representing the pastors (P) and the other representing the lay leaders (L).

Table 1 & 2. CLRC Vision/Mission & Objectives						
	P / L	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Vision/Mission	P				3	3
	L		1	1	9	7
Objectives I	P				3	3
	L			3	7	8
Objectives II	P				1	5
	L			3	11	4
Objectives III	P				3	3
	L			4	9	5

Table 3a. Rationale for CLRC (Biblical bases and Current Phenomena)						
	P / L	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
A1 (Biblical)	P				1	5
	L			2	4	12
A2	P				1	5
	L			2	8	8
A3	P				1	5
	L			2	7	9
A4	P					6
	L			2	7	9
A5	P				1	5
	L			2	5	11
B1 (Phenom- ena)	P			1	1	4
	L			4	5	9
B2	P				2	4
	L		1	4	7	6
B3	P				2	4
	L		3	1	7	7

Table 3b. Rationale for CLRC (Historical/cultural/human factors and current trends)

	P / L	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
C1 (Factors)	P				4	2
	L		1	4	8	5
C2	P			1	2	3
	L	1	2	3	10	2
C3	P			2	2	2
	L		2	6	9	1
C4	P				2	4
	L		1	2	10	5
C5	P			2	3	1
	L		2	9	6	1
C6	P		2		2	2
	L		2	5	8	3
C7	P		1		2	3
	L		2	2	10	4
C8	P				4	2
	L		1	4	11	2
D1 (Trends)	P			1		5
	L		1		9	8
D2	P			1		5
	L			1	9	8
D3	P			1	2	3
	L			1	14	3

Table 4. CLRC Principles

	P / L	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disa-	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I	P			1		5
	L			2	5	11
II	P			1		5
	L			1	6	11
III	P			1	2	3
	L			4	8	6
IV	P			1	4	1
	L			3	12	3
V	P		1	1		4
	L			3	13	2
VI	P			1		5
	L			2	14	2
VII	P			1		5
	L			1	12	5
VIII	P			1	1	4
	L			1	15	2
IX	P			1	1	4
	L			3	11	4
X	P			1		5
	L			2	11	5
XI	P			1	1	4
	L			5	9	4

Table 5. Ideas for CLRC Programming						
	P / L	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree (4)	Strong ly Agree
A. Systematic continuing education (consider topics in each category together)						
I. (Maturity)	P			1	1	4
	L			2	7	9
II. (Knowledge)	P			1	1	4
	L			2	7	9
III (Skills)	P			1	1	4
	L			2	7	9
B. Genuine disciplined fellowship (consider topics in each category as a whole)						
I (Worship)	P			1	4	1
	L			3	7	8
II (Getting Ac- quainted)	P			1	4	1
	L			4	7	7
III (Sharing)	P			1	2	3
	L			4	8	6
IV (Networking)	P			1	2	3
	L			5	6	7
C. Personal renewal (consider topics under each category as a whole)						
I (Worship)	P			1	3	2
	L			2	8	8
II (Rest/Recreation)	P			1	2	3
	L			4	10	4
III (Personal Dis- ciplines)	P			1	3	2
	L			3	8	7

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