

19 February 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I have been in the church life in Toronto since 1973, and I have treasured my years in the Lord's recovery. However, I am grieved that over the past year and a half (long before the quarantine of Titus Chu and long before the brothers came to minister to us the prayer and shepherding burden) some of our leaders began to exhibit a different attitude toward our own saints in Toronto, the rest of the churches and ministering brothers all over the earth.

I have never seen such bitterness and hostility in announcing a church business meeting as there was in the posting "Why have an early business meeting"? I could not believe that 77 of our own local saints were condemned by that writing simply for petitioning the elders with their concerns over the direction of the church. The extent to which some of the elders are willing to go to assert their own authority is shameful

Some of the elders demand that "outsiders" get permission before they can even talk to their own relatives in the church here. Since when are there "outsiders" in the Body of Christ? Since when do elders have that much authority? For years our church has not invited the co-workers to come and minister and instead have clung only to Titus Chu and those in his circle. Now when the co-workers come at the invitation of dear leading ones in neighboring churches to perfect the saints in prayer and shepherding, some of the elders in Toronto respond by threatening any saints who attend their training sessions.

These elders claim a mandate is necessary to avoid "remote control" by those outside of Toronto. Who has exercised any control in Toronto except these elders? And who is seeking to control who is recognized as a member of the church? Who has demanded that their directives be followed? Who has set up a camera in Hall 1 to monitor what is said in the meetings? Who has checked license plates at home meetings and entered uninvited into home meetings?

One elder told a visitor that David Wang and Ron MacVicar are not part of the real eldership any more. Who maneuvered to remove Ron as Secretary of the Board of Directors? And who is seeking to remove David from the Board of Directors? Perhaps more to the point—where in the Bible and the ministry of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee is there justification for such actions which clearly have as their goal the consolidation of the remaining elders' control over the church? In the church life, we have always been taught that authority is based upon the manifestation of resurrection life. Authority in the church is not something the elders assert; obedience is not something they demand.

The controlling ones say the by-laws need to be changed because those regulations are 14 years old. That is not true. The by-laws were revised in 2002. These brothers seem to be willing to step on any Biblical principle in pursuit of their goal. In their new requirements for membership, they determine who is a member based on their participation in church service and financial giving. What ever happened to hidden service and hidden giving? Many saints, particularly the elderly ones such as me, may be limited in terms of what service we can perform. Is not our service in prayer and shepherding of value? Those saints who desire anonymity now must have their giving monitored by the church if they want to be treated as members. Is that right?

I believe what the Toronto website says is true, “the church is under attack.” But it is not under attack from Living Stream Ministry. That ministry’s work has been blessed by the Lord, even over the last 9 years with much fruitfulness.

The attack is also not from the co-workers. No. This attack is from the enemy, who wants to sow dissension amongst the saints. The co-workers are honorable brothers in Christ who are serving the Lord with their whole lives.

The controlling elders say the co-workers and others are seeking to purge those that disagree with them. They say that if the co-workers have their way many in Toronto will be “kicked out” along with their families. Who has ever proposed such a thing? Can they name any church that has been cut off from fellowship because they receive the ministry of Titus Chu? Can they name any brother or sister who has been quarantined other than those who have been attacking the co-workers and the other churches, creating division in the Lord’s recovery? Even those who are quarantined are not excommunicated.

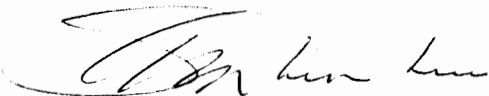
The current by-laws do not permit our directors or elders to kick families out of the Church. It is the new proposed by-law which would let them do this. Beware.

Sadly, it is Toronto’s controlling elders who seek to purge those who do not agree with them. They make oneness with them the ground of the church. Is this according to the truth? If the new by-laws are approved anyone who has a different feeling or a desire to receive the ministry that the churches throughout the earth are enjoying will be subject to discipline. Doesn’t that make us the church of a particular worker or group of workers? I have never heard of another local church that has such rules. The new by-laws would even give these elders the authority to choose their apostles. Can anyone imagine a scenario other than the controlling elders identifying Titus Chu as our apostle? What happened to “all are yours”?

The elders should serve the saints. They should not seek to entrench themselves and their own authority. They should not seek to exclude or purge their fellow elders. In the last year and a half, some of our elders have repeatedly abused their position. They have proven themselves unfaithful stewards of the authority that has already been committed to them. If we give them the powers they seek, all accountability will be lost.

Dear saints, I love the Lord’s recovery, I love His Body, and I love the church in Toronto. I do not write to you lightly. I am deeply concerned for the future of the church here if we give the controlling elders the authority they seek.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Soan-Lin Liu', written in a cursive style.

Soan-Lin Liu.