

April 2, 2009

Re: The Divisive Work of Dong Yu Lan and His Co-workers

To: The saints and churches in the Lord's recovery in Germany, Switzerland, and Italy

Dear Saints,

In the Lord's recovery we focus on positive matters such as God's full salvation, the divine life, the economy of God and the church as the Body of Christ. These are the matters that have brought the churches into existence in Europe and continue to richly nourish the saints. With these rich matters fully in view, we must now take some time to address a serious situation that has arisen among us and has been active in Europe for several years. This is the work of Dong Yu Lan and his co-workers.

As co-workers caring for the Lord's recovery in Germany, Italy, and Switzerland and as those responsible for the churches in this area, we have practiced forbearance concerning this work and its workers for years. We have desired to find some way that those workers could be blended into the one work in the Lord's recovery and participate in the practical fellowship of the Body of Christ. However, Brother Dong's work has remained an independent work using the name of the Lord's recovery to produce independent and isolated groups that do not take the oneness of the Body but their association with the work of Dong Yu Lan as their ground. In fact, both the work itself and its workers have become more independent and separate as the years have passed. The damage that Brother Dong's work has done has increased as his work has spread. Furthermore, Brother Dong's workers demonstrate no desire to join us in the fellowship and coordination that we treasure among the churches and in the work.

While we love all the brothers and are open to fellowship with all genuine believers in Christ, we must also honor the holy word of the Bible concerning those who cause divisions among us. In Romans 16:17, Paul tells us, *"Now I exhort you, brothers, to mark those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them."* This is a serious and sober matter. Consider the following footnote from the Recovery Version on the phrase *"turn away from them."*

In ch[apter] 14 Paul was liberal and gracious regarding the receiving of those who differ in doctrine or practice. Here, however, he is unyielding and resolute in saying that we must turn away from those who are dissenting, who make divisions, and who make causes of stumbling. The purpose in both cases is the preserving of the oneness of the Body of Christ that we may have the normal church life.

We do not and cannot afford to take this matter lightly.

Negative Speaking and Divisive Activity in Stuttgart, Germany, and Regensdorf, Switzerland

In 2006, Alex Kemmer, who was active in Stuttgart in promoting Brother Dong's work, was joined by his brother Robinson Kemmer, another of Brother Dong's workers. On August 6, 2006, Robinson spoke loudly and insistently several times during the Lord's table meeting in Regensdorf and attempted to direct the saints to sing the hymns in the way associated with Brother Dong's work. Robinson attempted to extend the singing into the prophesying meeting and had to be asked to stop. It was evident to the saints that he was promoting the practices of Dong Yu Lan's work by his speaking and his attitude. During the afternoon meeting when a video message was shown, Robinson sat at the back of the room and made loud comments in English indicating what he "could" and "could not take." His dissension and his actions bothered many of the saints and disrupted the church meetings.

In Stuttgart on November 26, 2006, both Alex and Robinson openly and publicly dissented against and contradicted the speaking of the brothers in the prophesying meeting, particularly matters related to the ministry of the age. Robinson strongly attacked the ministry of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee as "dead, dead, dead!" Up until that time Alex and Robinson had privately urged some of the leading ones in the church to include Brother Dong's *Daily Food* along with *The Holy Word for Morning Revival* for the saints' use, to stop ordering literature for the church from Living Stream Ministry, and to add postings of events related to Brother Dong's work to the church's prayer list notices. At the November 26 meeting, the Kemmers' strong and public dissent in opposition to the ministry of the age helped many saints in Stuttgart to realize that Alex and Robinson were promoting Brother Dong's work in rivalry to the general ministry received by the churches throughout the earth. Shortly after this the Kemmers withdrew from the fellowship of the church in Stuttgart.

Competing Meetings and a Divisive Work in Lörrach, Germany

On August 10, 2006, the church in Regensdorf e-mailed the saints in Germany and the German-speaking part of Switzerland inviting them to attend blending meetings starting on October 1, 2006. These were regularly scheduled, annual meetings that the German-speaking saints were accustomed to attend. On August 11, Alex Kemmer sent out a different invitation to the same group of saints for meetings in Lörrach that were scheduled in direct conflict with the Regensdorf meetings. This caused a great deal of confusion among the saints.

Brother Dong's workers began using Lörrach for their gatherings without fellowship with the churches or the co-workers in Europe. The brothers in Stuttgart raised this issue with Alex and Robinson in October 2006. Solomon Ma and Joao Antonelli, co-workers of Brother Dong, were also at this fellowship. The brothers in Stuttgart related the confusion and disturbance caused by the Lörrach meetings, and in response Solomon assured them that the meetings they had held in Lörrach would be the last they would hold there until such confusion was resolved. Contrary to Solomon's assurance, he and others in Brother Dong's work continued to hold conferences and meetings in Lörrach independently, without the fellowship of the churches and workers in Germany and Switzerland and despite the fact that the confusion and discomfort they had caused among the saints still remained.

Lörrach is now the center of Dong Yu Lan's work in Germany and has isolated itself from the churches in the area. It has become a gathering place for Brother Dong's co-workers and a base for their attempts to spread his work. Lörrach does not participate in the general fellowship of the churches in Germany and Switzerland. They do not participate in the blending conferences or in the work in Europe. Rather, they hold their own conferences, many times in conflict with established conferences in Europe. The gatherings in Lörrach now bear the distinct flavor of Dong Yu Lan's work with its peculiar teachings and practices.

An Independent Work in Italy

In 2001, at an international co-workers' fellowship at Engedi Camp and Conference Center in California, Miguel Ma, a co-worker of Brother Dong, and others involved in that work agreed that their work would withdraw from Europe. However, in 2002, Joao Antonelli, another of Brother Dong's co-workers, moved to Italy and began to promote Dong Yu Lan's work there despite the fact that there was already an ongoing work there in coordination with the European co-workers. None of the co-workers in Europe were aware of Joao's presence or work for some time. Joao has since been joined by his brother Cesar Antonelli. They, with Solomon Ma and others, have spread Dong Yu Lan's work to several localities in Italy. In some of these localities there were and still are groups of saints in the Lord's recovery gathering for home meetings and prayer meetings.

In May 2005, five brothers traveled to Mantova, Italy, to meet with Joao, to open to him a door of fellowship, and to invite him to participate in the existing conferences and gatherings in Italy. The brothers invited him to fellowship with the co-workers in Europe and to take the blended way of working. Joao did not accept these invitations. Instead, that year he and others with him held the first summer conference of their work in Sirmione, Italy.

The work of Dong Yu Lan has held additional conferences at Sirmione, a March 2007 conference in Rome with Solomon, Joao, and Cesar, a December 2007 CEAPE training in Mantova, and a late December 2007 conference in Milano. They also held an international conference in Italy in the summer of 2008 with additional co-workers of Brother Dong. They continue to hold other events until the present time. Despite being repeatedly invited to participate in conferences in coordination with the work in Europe, especially in Italy, Joao has chosen not to attend any conferences other than those of Dong Yu Lan's work.

The work of Dong Yu Lan in Italy has been carried out in an independent and concealed way. The result has been to cause confusion among the saints in Italy who are genuinely taking the way of the Lord's recovery.

A Purposely Hidden and Independent Work

In October 2006, after working several years in Italy and Germany, Solomon Ma and Joao Antonelli traveled to London to fellowship with Joe Davis, Tim Klimmek, Po-Yi Liu, and some of the other European co-workers. In that fellowship, Solomon told the brothers that he had intentionally postponed fellowship with them although he admitted that he had no reason to do so. Joe Davis and the other brothers expressed surprise at the independence and extent of Dong Yu Lan's work in Europe. Initially Solomon assured them that Benson Phillips was aware of Brother Dong's work there. However, later in the same fellowship, Solomon admitted that they had not told Benson that they were forming groups in Italy and other countries in Europe which were separate from the general fellowship of the recovery. Solomon criticized certain South American brothers who did not participate in Brother Dong's work. He also criticized the co-workers' stand for one publication work in the Lord's recovery and defended the dissemination of Dong Yu Lan's literature.

Despite the several invitations to participate in the blended work in Europe – by the five brothers who visited Joao in Italy; by Joe Davis, Tim Klimmek, Po-Yi Liu and others in the 2006 London meeting; by Joe Davis in a letter to Solomon and Joao dated October 19, 2006; and by other brothers at various times – Solomon and Joao continue to carry out their independent and divisive work. Wherever this work has gained a foothold – in various cities in Germany, Italy and Switzerland – the result has been isolation from the circulation of life in the Body of Christ.

“According to the truth of the Body, the Body is universally one. For this reason, the local churches should not be isolated from one another. Isolation is contrary to the truth concerning the oneness of the Body. Because each local church is part of the Body universally, no local church should be isolated from the others...How wrong it is for a church to try to be independent!...If we isolate ourselves from the other churches, we cut ourselves off both from the transfusion and from the circulation of life in the Body. Such a thing violates the law of the Body.” (*Witness Lee, Life-study of Ephesians, p.739*)

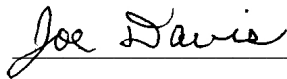
Despite the many times the co-workers and churches in Europe have invited those involved in Brother Dong's work to join in the blending work, they have chosen to go their own way. The result has consistently been confusion, isolation and division. The damage done to the churches and the saints in Germany, Italy and Switzerland clearly indicates that Dong Yu Lan's work is an independent and divisive work.

Although we cannot agree with this work, we should not be surprised when some whom we counted as sharing the vision of the Body of Christ with us behave in such a sectarian way and depart from us to do their own work. Paul warned the churches that such a thing would happen: *"And from among you yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverted things to draw away the disciples after them"* (Acts 20:30). This word has been fulfilled among us in the case of Brother Dong. Thus, it is our responsibility to warn all the saints and the churches concerning Dong Yu Lan and his divisive work.

We must, as Romans 16:17 instructs us, mark Dong Yu Lan and his fellow workers and turn away from them, and we must refuse sectarian workers in accordance with Titus 3:10: *"A factious man, after a first and second admonition, refuse."* A factious man is a "sectarian man who causes divisions by forming parties in the church according to his own opinions" (Footnote 1, Titus 3:10). "In order to maintain good order in the church, a factious, divisive person should be refused, rejected, after a first and second admonition. This is done to stop intercourse with a contagiously divisive person for the church's profit" (Footnote 2, Titus 3:10).

We must treasure the healthy one accord among the saints and the churches and exercise care to protect the oneness from any contagion. While we love all the brothers, our love should not be without boundaries. We should love others not foolishly but *"in full knowledge and all discernment"* (Philippians 1:9). The work of Dong Yu Lan requires us to exercise both knowledge and discernment concerning what it has wrought among us. Therefore, we all should soberly and prayerfully receive this warning against the sectarian and divisive work of Dong Yu Lan and stop any interaction with that work or with the workers who promote it. If any of the saints affected by that work contact you, we ask that you exercise caution in receiving them and do so only in fellowship with the leading brothers in your locality.

Your brothers in Christ for the churches and the work in Germany, Switzerland, and Italy,



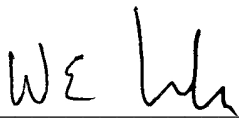
Joe Davis



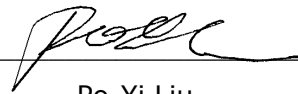
Ulrich Fontana



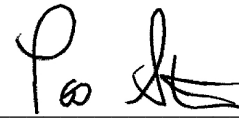
Tim Klimmek



Bill Lewallen



Po-Yi Liu



Pat Stocklin



Joe Xerri