

# In Touch

The Cathedral Magazine - Summer Edition

ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL HONG KONG

Diocese of Hong Kong Island Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui

香港聖公會聖約翰座堂



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## St John's Cathedral

4-8 Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong

Tel: (+852) 2523 4157

Fax: (+852) 2521 7830

Email: [general@stjohnscathedral.org.hk](mailto:general@stjohnscathedral.org.hk)

Website: [www.stjohnscathedral.org.hk](http://www.stjohnscathedral.org.hk)

## DEBBIE – A TEACHER IN TOUNGOO, MYANMAR



1. Discover Debbie McGowan's time in Myanmar and learn about her teaching experience on page 4 to 7.

## PILGRIMAGE TO MOTHER CHURCH



2. Windows on Faith, which took place on 18th March, was an opportunity for Christians from throughout the Diocese to learn more about their Cathedral. Read full report on page 8 to 10.

# In Touch

In the Lenten period which has taken up for much of our time since our last edition, the Cathedral has been going out into the world and bringing the world in. Our cover story in this edition features significant progress in one of St John's most far reaching missions in recent years. There has been mutual visiting between the Diocese of Toungoo in Myanmar and this Cathedral since our association was established, but Debbie McGowan's volunteer trip to Toungoo for a six week period as a resident English teacher has been a step out of the ordinary to a new level of commitment.

As she explains in her article, out of the heart of the congregation, a single member has shown something, felt her conscience stir, left her usual life here, and went to work in the hills of Burma. The story Debbie tells is of hard work, rapid adjustment, a dizzying spread of tuition across age groups, unfailing kindness and a wrench at leaving. It is also a story for the rest of us. There are others among us who could answer similar calls to our expertise, sense of adventure and willingness to give a bit more; to take temporary leave of our regular lives to do something completely different. Before 1949, the Diocese of Hong Kong was involved with medical and educational missions in Mainland China, and lay people, including members of this Cathedral, would take their skills and their energy up there and work on projects. Our daughter church St Stephen's has a relationship with a leper colony there still. There are precedents. With Debbie's trip, they are being continued.

On the back page, you will see a piece telling how St John's has been explaining itself to the wider world. The ViuTV programme was an opportunity on a new local TV channel to position the Cathedral in the minds of the wider public as

the church in the city. Doing this well, (where you have no direct production control), can be a hit and miss affair but this programme was definitely a hit. The article goes on to explain the regular and long standing involvement in radio broadcasts and talks that we have had with RTHK. When you consider the range of electronic media that can be utilised well, then the church in the city might ponder ways to catch the attention of the public by being, not only a preacher but also a facilitator of the spiritual.

An article on the 'St John's Pilgrimage' describes how people from other churches and the general public were drawn to come to us and discover more about the Church and the Easter Passion. Many were school students, and attendance was mostly through registration, which accounted for 120 of the visitors. However 150 showed up, meaning that 30 more people simply came in off the street.

The article on the youth retreat camp records a very significant step forward in getting people to come to us, or at least our way of thinking. The camp was deliberately pitched to clever young people, mostly graduate students who were enquiring, seeking, or already worshipping somewhere. The report is of a success. Cecil Hoo's reflection talks about a serene approach to a sense of renewal and restoration; no profound revelations, shocks, or exhaustion. These are people who, on intellectual grounds alone, are unlikely to be reached by the emphatic evangelicalism of many student Christian groups. Our story illustrates that there may be a surprisingly warm welcome amongst young intellectuals and in our universities in Hong Kong to a thoughtful, introspective approach to belief, which our Cathedral represents.

## THE DEAN'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

Soon we will be celebrating Pentecost in which we will commemorate God coming upon the early believers in the form of the Holy Spirit to bless, love and to empower them for God's kingdom. The church came alive that day.

One of the signs that occurred on Pentecost was that people from different parts of the world heard their own languages miraculously spoken. God made it possible for people of different races and origins to understand his teaching. The world filled with division and separation had now been made one under the love and power of God.

One of the things that makes me marvel at St John's Cathedral is how culturally diverse and international our community is. Every Sunday, we have visitors from other parts of the world joining our worship services, which are conducted in four languages. I am amazed by the number of countries of origin that make up our church family. We have parishioners from local Hong Kong, Mainland China, Japan, Korea, Switzerland, India, Malaysia, United States, Canada, the Philippines, Singapore, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Indonesia, Taiwan, South Africa, Australia, to name just some of them. There are so many who have lived and worked in places outside of their home countries as well. With the different paths we have been on, we all bring a slight variation of our cultures to our community. It is very moving for me when I administer the Holy Communion and see people of different colours and with different languages come forward, all as part of the family. Our clergy team consists of priests from five different countries, who have served in many parts of the world. This makes our community unique, dynamic, culturally rich, and interesting. We praise God for the many gifts people bring, with their heritage. One Lord, one faith and one baptism – St John's reflects the catholicity of the Church. One visiting bishop exclaimed, "You have the Pentecost right here in this cathedral!" However, if we are being truthful, the diverse background does make our common life complicated and confusing at times. There were moments we misunderstood people because of our lack of language skills. On occasion, we have misinterpreted someone's behaviour and perception of things and may even have projected some prejudice due to our false understanding of others. I regret to say that I am as guilty as others in this regard. Forgive our sins, O Lord!

When we enter the season of Pentecost, God calls us to be one in Him. Let's give praise to God for the diversity which has enriched our lives. Meanwhile, we are to humble ourselves before each other under God. We are all made in the image of God, and are brothers and sisters to each other. Regardless of where we are from or who we are, we all have much to contribute. Whenever we diminish one of the least, we diminish ourselves – which makes up the Church, the Body of Christ.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23) Be sure to assert these elements of the fruit in our interaction with others, especially with those who are from a different background.

Let's make fewer assumptions about others and make an effort to respect and learn about the different cultures and mindsets among us. God has given us each other so that we can love one another and be a blessing to all.

God bless you all.

Dean Matthias +



各位:

我們即將慶祝五旬節，在聖靈降臨日，整個教會充滿活力，上帝以聖靈充滿早期的使徒，祝福及愛他們，並以祂的靈澆灌他們，見證上帝的國。

聖靈降臨日其中一件奇事是當時各國的人聽見門徒以其家鄉語言說話，上帝讓不同種族及國籍的人都能明白祂的教導。藉上帝的愛及大能，充滿紛爭及撕裂的世界得以合一。

聖約翰座堂的教友來自不同國家及地區，包括香港、中國內地、日本、韓國、瑞士、印度、馬來西亞、美國、加拿大、菲律賓、新加坡、英國、新西蘭、印尼、台灣、南非及澳洲等；有許多人離鄉背井，在異地生活，連我們的聖品也來自五個國家，曾在多個國家事奉。每逢周日，聖約翰座堂都迎接世界各地的訪客及遊客，供他們參與英文、普通話、廣東話或菲律賓語的崇拜。

聖約翰座堂的群體國際化、文化多元化，總令我讚嘆，大小不一的足跡也為座堂交織出文化差異。每當我主禮聖餐時，常被眼前的情景觸動：信眾不分膚色、語言，均走到聖壇前領聖餐。這一切都令聖約翰座堂的群體獨特、滿有活力及豐富的文化，饒有趣味。我們為各人的文化傳統及恩賜讚美上帝。一主、一信、一洗 — 聖約翰座堂正正反映大公精神。一位到訪的主教不禁感嘆：「這所座堂時時刻刻也經歷聖靈降臨日！」

不過，坦白而言，迥然不同的背景，有時的確令人際間的日常相處變得複雜、讓人困惑。缺乏語言技巧令人與人之間產生誤會，不夠了解對方令人錯誤詮釋別人的行為及觀點，甚至帶來偏見。遺憾的是，在這方面我與許多人一樣有罪，願上帝原諒我們所犯的罪！

當我們踏入五旬節，上帝呼召教會與祂成為一體。多元的文化令我們的生命更豐盛，讓我們一起讚美神！與此同時，我們要在主及彼此面前謙卑下來，我們雖眾，仍屬一體，都根據上帝的形象而受造，無論我們來自哪裏、我們是誰，也可以為教會作出貢獻。當我們看輕兄弟姊妹中最小的一個，即是看輕我們自己，因為教會、基督的身體正是由你我組成。

聖靈所結的果子，就是仁愛、喜樂、和平、忍耐、恩慈、良善、信實、溫柔、節制（加拉太書 5：22 - 23）。在我們與他人交流時，尤其是文化背景不同的人時，謹記帶着聖靈的果子。

讓我們避免對他人有先入為主的印象，努力尊重及了解各自的文化及思維。上帝把你我放在彼此身邊，正是給予我們彼此相愛的機會，從而成為眾人的祝福。

願上帝祝福你。

座堂主任牧師  
謝子和 謹啟

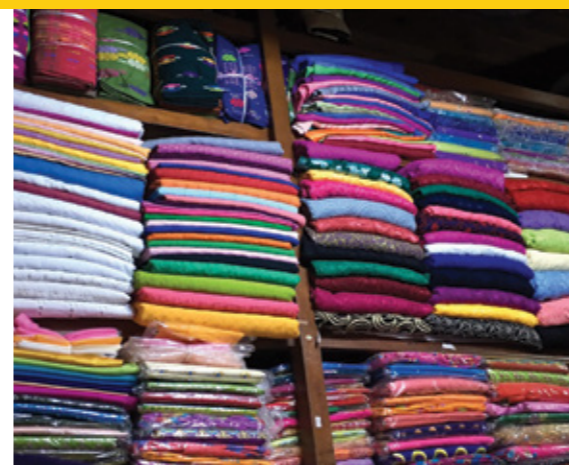
*St John's Cathedral is a place of God's grace, welcoming all, following Christ and changing lives in the heart of Hong Kong.*

Mission Statement, St John's Cathedral

# TURNING HOPES INTO REALITY.....

TEXT AND PHOTO BY / DEBBIE MCGOWAN

*Many people have asked me why I decided to go and teach English voluntarily in Myanmar for a few months. Well, here's the background.....*



At the end of last year, during one of our choir practices, when Fr Hugh was giving his usual homily, he posed three questions for us to think about.... The first one was ***“What three things do you enjoy doing?”*** Well, that’s not such a difficult question to answer really, is it? My three are travelling, singing and keeping active.

The second question was ***“What three things are you good at?”*** Now that is much more difficult to answer. I found one of my answers when I was in Myanmar last year with The Dean’s delegation. We visited many pre-schools, youth hostels, theological colleges and churches, and one of the key issues raised was the lack of English-speaking ability.

Near the end of our six-day trip, the Dean asked us how we could contribute to developing the partnership between Hong Kong and the Diocese of Toungoo. I did not have an immediate answer, but my subconscious was obviously working overtime and the next morning, it came to me.... One of the things I am good at is ‘speaking English’! If you add the ingredients of ‘speaking English’ and ‘availability of time’ to ‘the huge demand for learning English in Myanmar’, the result led to my decision to offer to teach English in Toungoo for six weeks.

And this decision also answered Fr Hugh’s third question in that homily last year, which was ***“How can you use your talents to give something back.....?”***

So having agreed in principle with The Dean and The Bishop of Toungoo, John Wilme (and my husband, Ken!) that this was a possibility, it was then a matter of ***turning this hope into reality.....***

The experience of my visit to Toungoo last year really helped me reach the decision to go back again. I had seen the school where I would be teaching, the



hotel I would be staying in and had met the key people who would be supporting me.

Having obtained a work visa, booked my flights and hotel, received a blessing and been commissioned by The Dean, I departed on 30th January 2017.

The Principal of the English Language Centre, Hilda, met me at Yangon International Airport and had arranged a driver to take us to Toungoo that evening. Toungoo is a busy highway town in the middle of nowhere, about a four-hour drive north of Yangon, just off the Yangon – Mandalay Expressway. I quickly settled into the Global Grace Hotel – the rooms were clean, with air conditioning and hot water, so no complaints there!

On my first day, Hilda arranged for her deputy, Thelma, to collect me. I was up bright and early – not a cloud in the sky and the temperature was about 30 degrees, with low humidity – perfect conditions! I heard the bell of the monks calling for alms around 7.30am, a daily routine. A quick breakfast in the dining room, and then I was ready for the off, excited with and anticipation.

The first thing that brought a smile to my face was when Thelma arrived to pick me up – she was on her motorbike and I was to ride on the back! It is not far from the hotel to the Centre, but unfortunately, Toungoo is plagued with wild dogs (they were often roaming in the hotel grounds and would howl away at night in packs), so they did not want me to walk anywhere on my own.



My daily schedule soon took shape. I joined the daily Circle Time singing every day (always sung in English!) and then spent time with each of the four classes (70 children aged between three to five years old). This was followed by a young adult class (eight to ten students), a session with the Diocesan Office (six to eight people) and an hour and a quarter with the twelve pre-school teachers. After lunch in the Bishop's house, I would usually have a couple of hours free time, before two (or occasionally three) adult classes, each lasting an hour and an half, with student numbers varying between six to twelve per class. On Friday afternoons, I had lessons with the 32 students at St Peter's Bible School, a couple of miles away, beyond the Sittoung River, just beyond St Paul's Cathedral, in a very remote location. This area of the country has only just opened up to visitors – until 3 years ago, special permits were needed just to cross the river!

Parents are so keen for their children to learn English that there is significant demand for holiday and weekend classes. My Saturday schedule comprised seven 30-minute lessons (with classes of around a dozen children, varying between five to ten years old) and a 90-minute Intermediate class to finish off the day!

Sunday was my 'day off'. Usually I would attend Sung Eucharist at St John The Baptist's Church, services starting at 7 am or 7.30am (too hot to have services much later in the day!). It is a very lively church led by The Rev Dr Saw Shee Sho. There is a Sunday School, Mother's Union, Father's Association and very vibrant Youth Association. Before the service starts, various groups sing music, accompanied by electric guitar and

drums – so rousing! I was surprised to learn that the services rotate between Burmese, Karen (the local ethnic group dialect) and English. For one of the English services, I even read the Old Testament Lesson and Intercessions. The services were usually well supported and there are many additional regular events, training sessions, competitions and gatherings held around the Diocese, for groups such as the Sunday School teachers, Mother's Union, and the Youth Association.

From our visit in 2016, we had already developed a link between our Sunday School here and the Sunday School at St Paul's Cathedral in Toungoo, thanks to Rita Chan and Grace O Mu Paw. In advance of my trip, the Hong Kong children made posters, gifts and wrote messages to the children in Toungoo, which they were thrilled to receive.

There are around 180 children in the St Paul's Cathedral Sunday School. They arrive at 7.30am for a blessing at the beginning of the Sunday Eucharist, then go to the hall for an hour of singing, stories and prayers. After they have been home for breakfast, they return at 10.30 am to the Cathedral itself for more activities, split into 3 classes. I used to attend Sunday School every week, and even had to teach the youngest class one week – not very easy when they do not speak much English! Each week, Rita and I would swap questions and answers between the two Sunday School groups (e.g. what are your favourite Bible stories, how many teachers do you have), as well as exchange weekly video greetings and songs, which we would show the children the following Sunday. It was a lot of fun and we hope that the close communication can continue going forward.

Surprisingly, after the first few days in Toungoo, the daily routine felt completely normal and I had dovetailed into the local environment fairly seamlessly.

Another relief was that I didn't succumb to any illnesses or injury whilst I was there. My emergency first aid kit remained unopened during my stay and it was obviously my reasonably strong British constitution that kept me feeling well the whole time!

The only real downside was the noise pollution. For a town in the middle of nowhere, Toungoo is a pretty noisy place! There are no restrictions on music being played and, fairly regularly, I was woken up in the middle of the night by blaring music, either from a local bar or even the adjacent Buddhist temple, celebrating yet another festival! Coupled with the howling wild dogs outside my hotel room meant I didn't always get my beauty sleep!

The end of the academic year in Myanmar is February so I was fortunate to be invited to three graduation ceremonies. Even the pre-schools have graduations and the children really looked so sweet in their purple gowns and mortar boards! It was very similar to any such ceremony in the West – words of wisdom from the Principal, songs and poems performed by the children, proud parents, presentation of certificates, lots of photo taking, then a celebration lunch. The St Peter's Bible School graduation was held on 14th March and was quite a formal occasion. The Principal, Fr Jimmy (who visited Hong Kong with the Toungoo delegation last October) was presiding and the ceremony included a message from Dean Matthias, which I read out in English (and which Fr Jimmy translated into Burmese).

When I was planning my trip, I thought about what I wanted to contribute to the local community, aside from English teaching. Toungoo Diocese is in the middle of a building programme, with youth hostels being a priority. Many villages are far away from the nearest high school, so some young teenagers are deprived of an education, forcing them to work on the land, destined to a life of near-poverty. Education is at the heart of a more hopeful future, so I was determined to try and raise some funds to assist with the building of a new hostel. With the significant help and support of Dean Matthias, St John's Cathedral, and many friends and family both here, in the UK, and around the world, over HKD 100,000 was raised before I left for Myanmar, which was an amazing sum and certainly exceeded my expectations. My grateful thanks, on behalf of the Diocese, to all those who contributed to this very worthy cause.

The funds arrived in Toungoo in February, so it meant work commenced almost straightaway. The site chosen was in the village of Leiktho, a two-hour drive away from Toungoo, which I visited. The existing building was a derelict house in the Church grounds, but it had been agreed that it was possible to renovate it, to accommodate 20 boys and girls (between the ages of 11 to 14). The new academic year commences in June and the local church committee, who are supervising the project, are confident it will be ready to welcome the children (and new warden) by mid-May. It was wonderful to see another example of turning hopes into reality. I am pleased and amazed that donations are continuing to be received (nearly HKD25,000 more), as there are many more villages that need educational support.

After a week's holiday to Inle Lake and Bagan with Ken, it was my final two weeks of teaching. The time was going very quickly and before I knew it, it was my last day at the Centre. Bidding farewell to all my students was pretty hard, as you can imagine! During the last lesson, I presented each pre-school child and Sunday School child with a St John's Cathedral bookmark. Additionally, I prepared Certificates of Achievement for all my adult students, together with small gifts (like lipsticks, chopsticks and packs of playing cards) – generously donated by my friends in St John's Cathedral Choir; particular thanks to Wendy Nesbitt and Rita Chan who co-ordinated everything. Before I travelled back to Yangon, I attended Sung Eucharist at St John The Baptist's Church and one final session of Sunday School, where I was showered with flowers, together with gifts for our Sunday School children and teachers. It was almost overwhelming to say goodbye!

What next? People are already asking me whether I plan to return to Toungoo next year – well, it is too early to make a decision at the moment. I had a truly wonderful experience, living and working with the locals and learning so much from them. I was welcomed into their community unreservedly! What happens next doesn't just depend on me. Other key people need to be involved (like Bishop John, Dean Matthias and, of course, my husband!). But rest assured, when we have agreed what might happen next, you'll be amongst the first to know!

**Turning hopes into reality.....  
Thanks to you!**

# WINDOWS ON FAITH – A LENTEN PRAYER WALK\* THROUGH ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL

TEXT BY / ANDREW ASHLEY PHOTO BY / MANDY WAN

*In his sermon on Mothering Sunday, the Fourth Sunday of Lent, Dean Matthias reminded us that a cathedral is the mother church of its diocese. It was very fitting, said the Dean, that St John's role as the mother church of the Diocese of Hong Kong Island had been highlighted the previous weekend by a Lenten Walk of Prayer through the Cathedral.*



Windows on Faith, which took place on Saturday 18th March, was an opportunity for Christians from throughout the Diocese to learn more about their Cathedral. However it was far more than an architectural or historical tour. As the introduction to the event stated, St John's 'is here because it is a living Church, not because it is a monument'. More than 150 pilgrims – mostly parishioners of churches in the Diocese, plus some visitors to the Cathedral – joined the prayer walk and learned how the stained glass windows tell the story of our salvation in Christ.

Starting at the West Door, prayer walk leaders took small groups of pilgrims through the Cathedral, where we stopped in front of each window to listen to a brief passage from scripture, contemplate and pray. Each reading related to the message illustrated by the stained glass.

At the window in the North Transept, with its powerful image of Jesus calming the storm in the Sea of Galilee, we reflected on the importance of the sea to Hong Kong, and prayed for this city that is our home. Crossing to the South Transept, we saw the birth, baptism and ascension of Jesus, and prayed for the unity and peace of His church throughout the world.

The next four stations were the very striking new windows, two in St Michael's Chapel and one in each transept. The first of these windows portrays the Tree of Life in the Book of Revelation, which bears leaves 'for the healing of the nations'. We prayed for all in need of healing, both nations and the individuals within them.

The second window in St Michael's Chapel has a potent image of a dove, the universal symbol of peace, and an ancient Christian representation of the Holy Spirit. After a reading from St Matthew's Gospel exhorting us to love our enemies, we prayed for an end to war and division between nations.

God's gift of grace to all humanity is the theme of the new window in the South Transept, shown as the rays of the sun bringing light to a darkened world. We gave thanks for the light that God's grace shines into our lives, and prayed for continuing guidance in our striving to follow Christ.

Back in the North Transept, we stood beneath the Love of God window, with its dramatic deep red image of God's love exploding outwards to touch us all. Our prayer was one of thankfulness for the pure love that God reveals to us, with a plea for the strength and inspiration to make that love the foundation of our daily lives.

The prayer walk ended beneath the Great East Window and its arresting depiction of Jesus on the cross, arms outstretched in blessing, surmounted by the rose window showing Christ in glory as the Lamb of God. After praying for the grace to take up our own cross and proclaim Christ's love, we received the blessing, marking the end of an inspiring and thought-provoking prayer walk.

It certainly gave me plenty to think about, not least the realisation of how little I knew about the Cathedral's stained glass



windows that combine striking beauty with an important teaching function. There was something deeply moving about standing beneath those windows, thinking about what they show, listening to the word of God and praying with my fellow Christians.

The prayer walk was a wonderful experience but the afternoon had more to offer. Other aspects of St John's work were on display, together with some of the lighter sides of church life.

The Cathedral's principal outreach ministries, the Counselling Service, HIV Education Centre, the Bookstore, Mission for Migrant Workers and HELP for Domestic Workers were all represented, publicising the sterling work they do for so many.

Clearly inspired by the theme of the prayer walk, Emmanuel Church had the bright idea of encouraging our younger visitors to design and make their own stained glass windows. Instead of glass, metallic salts and strips of lead, the materials included cardboard frames, a special stained glass paper to create the window effect, adhesive plastic, decorative shapes and a vast array of crayons and coloured pencils.

The numbers around the Emmanuel stall throughout the afternoon bore witness to the enthusiasm for creating contemporary stained glass, and the expressions on the faces of the young designers suggested some very serious artistic endeavours.

Also with youngsters in mind, Ming Hua Theological College devised an entertaining way to mark the 400th anniversary of Martin Luther nailing

his ninety five theses to the door of All Saints church in Wittenberg. Luther was challenging the widespread practice of selling indulgences, a challenge that was to change the course of history.

In Ming Hua's version of pin the tail on the donkey, children were invited to dress up as Martin Luther in a cap and cape and, wearing a blindfold, attach the 95 theses to a representation of the Wittenberg church door. The sounds of hilarity showed what fun the kids were having, but the game made a serious point about Luther's action that led to the reformation of the church. Also at the Ming Hua booth was a display of antique bibles, recalling the impact of Luther's translation of the Bible from Latin to German, to make it more widely accessible.

The Bell Tower Tour was very popular, even though only six people could join each tour, making a queue inevitable. But there was no shortage of people prepared to stand in line to climb the forty steps of the spiral staircase for some impressive views around the Cathedral.

The bookstore set up a stall in the Cathedral garden to showcase its wares. There were various representations of stained glass, together with a range of books, cards, games and toys. Their delicious looking Fairtrade biscuits and chocolate made me regret giving up sweet treats for Lent.

After a sumptuous tea in the Li Hall, the pilgrims returned to the Cathedral for Eucharist, returning the focus to what the day had been all about – our salvation in Christ. I don't think I'm alone in saying that it left a deep impression.



This November

# PILGRIMAGE TO JAPAN

4-11 November 2017

TEXT BY /Will Newman

**Join us on a pilgrimage to explore the remarkable story of Christianity in Japan, past and present.**



Our visit will include Nagasaki, where we will visit churches and sites associated with the Jesuit Mission to Japan in the 16th to early 17th centuries, the Christian martyrs whose story is told in the recent film 'Silence', based on Endo's book of the same name, and the 'Hidden Christians', who kept their faith alive over the next 250 years until the missionaries returned.

In Nagasaki and Hiroshima, where we will visit the Peace Park, we will remember the victims of the atom bombs that ended the Second World War, and reflect on themes of War and Peace that are as

relevant to the world today as they were 70 years ago.

We will also come up to date, learning about the relief work done by the Anglican Church in Kumamoto after last year's earthquake, and we will also include the Anglican Cathedral in Tokyo.

This is a unique opportunity to visit Japan, not for the cherry blossom or the autumn leaves or the shopping, but to explore the relationship between Japan and Christianity.

**More details from Will or Fr Robert.**

## HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT OUR PRISON MINISTRY

TEXT BY /Will Newman



**The articles in the last issue of 'In Touch' raised a great deal of interest in the Prison Ministry of the Cathedral and St Stephen's, Stanley.**

The articles in the last issue of 'In Touch' raised a great deal of interest in the Prison Ministry of the Cathedral and St Stephen's Chapel, Stanley. Now even those who can't join our prison visits on Friday mornings can support our work. Make a date on Saturday 23rd September for an evening of music at St John's Cathedral to raise funds for Prisoners' Education.

Performers will include Die Konzertisten, the Cathedral Choir, the Cathedral Children's Choir, and several other choirs and musicians, delivering a blend of both secular and sacred music. We hope to have short talks from a former

prisoner as well as a prison volunteer.

Many of the prisoners we know who are on long term and life sentences find that studying is a lifeline, keeping their minds active and inspiring hopes for a better future ahead. The Correctional Services Department (CSD) has only limited education funds, and the prisoners' own families often cannot help them. A strong fundraising effort will make a real difference to the lives of some of the most invisible people in Hong Kong. Please mark the date in your diary, and look out for details of tickets and how to donate to support our Prison Ministry.

# ADVANCING BY RETREAT

PHOTO BY / ADAM MOK

*'If we want to see things changed, it starts with prayer. It starts with a new spirit of prayer, using all the traditions, ancient and modern.'*

ARCHBISHOP JUSTIN WELBY



## WHAT IS A RETREAT?

ADAPTED FROM THE ASSOCIATION FOR PROMOTING RETREATS UK

Spending time in quiet meditation away from everyday life to deepen our relationship with God is also becoming an important part of Anglican spiritual life. But why is going on retreat so important for the life of prayer?

## IT'S WHAT JESUS DID

Three of the Gospels record that Jesus fasted and prayed for 40 days and nights in the Judean desert in preparation for his public ministry. It is this time of intensive retreat that is typically pointed to as the main Biblical basis for Jesus' followers to undertake retreat.

But there are many other examples within the Gospels of Jesus and his disciples taking themselves away from miracles and preaching to pray, reflect and refocus.

Jesus would go on overnight retreats: **"He departed to the mountain to pray, and he spent the night in prayer to God" (Luke 6:12).** And he would sometimes take his immediate followers with him: **"He said to them, 'Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.' People were coming and going in great numbers, and they had no opportunity even to eat. So they went off in the boat by themselves to a deserted place" (Mark 6: 30-32).**

Theologians have pointed to numerous other examples, from Jesus' visit to Mary and Martha, to his time in the Garden of Gethsemane.

## IT'S DEEP-ROOTED IN THE CHURCH'S TRADITION

Formal retreats became common within the Christian Church during the 16th and 17th centuries, championed by advocates like St Frances de Sales and St Vincent de Paul. In the Roman Catholic Church, retreat became a regular part of religious life for both clergy and lay people during the 19th century; while in the Church of England, and later in the wider Anglican Communion, it was the Oxford Movement which brought retreats into the mainstream of Anglican practice. Today, people from all Church traditions (and none) enjoy the benefits of retreat.

## IT'S SIMPLY GOOD FOR YOU

A retreat refreshes and revitalises, and presents an opportunity to spend 'quality time' in prayer and contemplation. Taking time out to recharge and reflect relieves stress, offering a fresh perspective on issues and concerns.

But leaving behind usual day-to-day distractions, and familiar people and places, can also place us in a better position to focus on our relationship with God and to engage more deeply in

'the ongoing conversion of heart that is critical to deepening faith'.

Recently at St John's we have held two well attended retreats:

## FROM HEAD TO HEART – A YOUTH RETREAT

TEXT BY / FR ROBERT MARTIN CMP

On the weekend 10th to 12th March our pastoral assistant, Adam, organised a retreat for 15 young people on the theme, 'From Head to Heart – using scripture in prayer'. The weekend retreat was held at the HSKH House of Prayer on Cheung Chau and was led by Dean Matthias and Fr Robert. The retreat was a blend of worship, sharing and looking at ways we can use the scriptures as an aid to prayer.

The Dean started the retreat with an exploration of the nature of Holy Scripture and its important place in the life of the Christian. Over the next two days Fr Robert introduced the retreatants to different ways of using scripture in our prayer. The retreat looked at the ancient method of spiritual reading called 'Lectio Divina' – the gentle and meditative reading of the scriptures to allow God to touch us through his word. This method is grounded in the Benedictine monastic tradition, but is becoming popular among Christians today as a way of making the scriptures live and breathe.

The retreat also took a look at the practice of the 'Daily Examen', an Ignatian method which uses a daily reflection on life to help us see where God has been working in and through us.

These explorations were framed by a round of daily worship in the Taizé style, periods of silence and opportunities for sharing our thoughts and reactions to the retreat.

It was a deeply moving time away, with much prayer, deep sharing and lots of laughter.

## TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCE

TEXT BY / CECIL HOO

This retreat was a transformative experience, which did not come in the form of a profound revelation or a heightened sense of spirituality. God did not come upon us in an abrupt and forceful manner, and I was not left in shock or exhausted after three days. It was rather serene and quiet. I was not given new senses to decipher the complexity and spontaneity of life, but I was made more aware of the senses that God bestowed on every one of us at birth, and how numb they have become. I felt a sense of renewal from within, a restoration process turning us back into the pristine creatures that we once were, beings that relish the presence of God and treasure our relationships with Him.

However much I would like to claim the opposite, this process of renewal is slow and difficult. Without a consistent regimen of prayer and worship, I am going to relapse into my old self. During the retreat, I learnt several ways to keep myself on track. Lectio Divina, an art of contemplative prayer combined with scripture reading, is one that I find particularly useful. I was surprised by the tranquility and stillness it gave me when I first practiced it. The prayer walk was also a treat. To be in the presence of God's creation is to be in the presence of God. While I was impressed by bridges and power plants in the distance, they were completely dwarfed by the intricacies and scale of God's creations. Walking amid the woods while tracing the Cheung Chau coastline with my gaze, I thanked God for all the beauty He revealed to us.

## BEAUTIFUL WORDS OF GOD

TEXT BY / JOHN LEUNG

"We keep Easter to manifest and deepen our prior share in resurrection. We observe Lent to manifest and deepen our share in the Cross". I bore this in mind when I went to the Lenten retreat this year, hoping to come closer to God through self-examination, prayer and meditation on His word. The retreat is first and foremost a reminder that just as the deer pants for the water brooks, we are to thirst for God's word which is **'sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit' (Heb 4:12).** Through the practice of lectio divina and guided meditation, I was able again to really

ponder upon, (with expectancy and reverence), the beautiful words of God, and to re-feel His divine breath in His love letter for us.

The retreat was an opportunity to use moments of quiet to reflect on our Christian pilgrimage and ourselves. It certainly helped me to appreciate the benefits of a more contemplative Christian lifestyle, as opposed to a predominantly intellectual approach to faith. I particularly enjoyed the walk on the Island as a time to admire God's most exquisite handiwork and give thanks for His majestic creation. The discipline of regular daily prayers and the use of Taizé chants inspired me to take up prayer and worship as an indispensable part of my everyday routine.

## BENEDICTINE ROOTS, IGNATIAN INSIGHTS

TEXT BY / JONATHAN TAY

It was a blessing to pray together, to share our thoughts on our faith, and to support each other in our spiritual pilgrimage.

Central to the retreat was learning Lectio Divina, reading Scripture more through the heart and less through the head. Coming from a Pentecostal background, this ancient technique similarly reminds me to be open to invite the Holy Spirit to illuminate us, to **"open my eyes that I may see the wonders of Your law." (Psalm 119:18).** It makes me appreciate again the Benedictine roots of Anglicanism in the daily reading of Scripture and prayer. It was truly a blessing to listen to how the Holy Spirit enlightens each of us in different ways after a round of reading the passage on the Annunciation. We read Scripture not individually but as a church growing together spiritually.

Being exposed to the spirituality of St Ignatius of Loyola also teaches me the value of silence before God in the daily examination of my conscience. When the world around us is silent, then we can begin to listen to the still small voice of God speaking to us and strengthening us through His Word.

Imaginative prayer teaches us that only by entering the narrative of Scripture and praying as one of the people in it we experience God in a new light. Imagine ourselves as the soldier who nailed Christ to the Cross. What would we learn about

the sacrificial love and selflessness of Christ in saying "Forgive them, Father, for they (us in this case) do not know what they are doing."?

Therefore, in our tumultuous world filled with grief and suffering, we must not be tossed to and fro by the waves of the fallen world, but trust in Christ who calms the storm and said to Peter **"Take heart. It is I. Do not be afraid." (Matthew 14:27).** We are to anchor ourselves in Scripture, which points to the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us, for we are called to be built not on a foundation of sand, but on a rock, which is Christ Himself.

## BUILDING THE KINGDOM – A PARISH DAY RETREAT

TEXT BY / FR ROBERT MARTIN CMP

Later in Lent, Saturday 25th March, the Emmanuel Church Committee organised a Parish Day Retreat for members of the congregation and friends. The day was held at the Carmelite Retreat House at Shek O and was again led by the Dean and Fr Robert. The theme was 'Building the Kingdom' and the Dean started the day with a bible workshop on what it means to be a disciple and our call to help build God's kingdom here and now. The morning included an exercise on team work where small teams were asked to build a tower out of drinking straws. It was both revealing and fun!

In the afternoon Fr Robert led an Ignatian style imaginative meditation on the 'Woman at the Well' in John 4, during which the retreatants were asked to place themselves within the story as one of the characters. This was quite a new experience for some and the sharing afterwards was very deep. During this time away with God, in the beautiful surroundings of Shek O, we ate, worshipped, laughed, shared and 'tried' to keep silence together. It was indeed a glimpse of the kingdom we are trying to build!





# ONE YEAR ON: THE BOOKSTORE MANAGER TAKES UP THE POST WITH A VISION

TEXT AND PHOTO BY / MAGGIE CHAN

*Sandy Villamil has been at St John's Cathedral as the Bookstore Manager for over a year. With fresh energy brought to it by this former club management professional, how is the Bookstore moving ahead with its new plans? In Touch talked to Sandy about her vision.*

As revealed in the Annual Church Report, sales at the Bookstore in 2016 reached the highest turnover since the Bookstore opened in 1979. Paraphernalia items contributed 72% of the overall sales, while books and refreshments were 24% and 4%.

When Sandy took up the post in May 2016, the vision she had was of embracing change in the Bookstore's sales and business strategies.

More publishers and suppliers have been engaged over the past year. Sandy said, **"For example, the Bookstore is now in collaboration with Wen Lin Publisher, also known as the Religious Education Resource Centre of Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui, to provide more Chinese translated books."**

Sandy is keen on seizing opportunities to offer a wider variety of books, cards and miscellaneous items in the Bookstore. Last October at the Charity Christmas Card and Handicrafts Fair organised by the Bookstore, she met a supplier of Bhutan handmade scarves, and she decided quickly that the beautiful and colourful scarves should be sold at the Bookstore as consignment goods.

It turns out that the Bhutan handmade scarves are among the bestsellers at the shop. **"Up to mid-April this year, over 60 scarves have been sold. This is a win-win situation for us, the social enterprise, and the Bhutanese women who make these scarves."** Sandy added.

To better serve local customers and customers worldwide, the Bookstore has extended its opening hours. Even during public holidays, customers can pick up what they need from the Bookstore and enjoy convenient shopping.

Sandy and her team also envisaged that the sales channels should include social



media platforms. After a trial period, the Bookstore formally launched its Facebook and Instagram accounts. **"We hope we can start our online shop and sales service in the near future to let customers shop freely regardless of location, time and weather. However, the plan has yet to be thought through."**

When summer begins, the Bookstore will be refurbished inside and out. The works are expected to begin in July and be completed in August. During the two months, the Bookstore will carry on business in the Li Hall.

**"We have to conduct the refurbishing project as termites have been repeatedly found in the Bookstore, and the ageing air conditioning system has cost us a lot every month. There is mould on the walls and the paint is coming off. It is necessary to carry out the project to avoid further deterioration."** Sandy noted, **"We will renovate the air conditioning system, the wooden floor, the walls, as well as the lighting system and the shelving of the Bookstore."**

The Bookstore has stood in the Cathedral grounds for decades, welcoming visitors, serving as an information centre, and nurturing the congregation and various people in the community. Amid the transition in strategy and look, Sandy sees no reason to adjust the positioning of the Bookstore.

**"The Bookstore is one of St John's outreach ministries. It is our pleasure to listen to people in need and reach out to the wider community. We are grateful for God's blessings and the unfailing support from the congregation throughout these years."** Sandy said. **"Last but not least, I am thankful for my team."**



# HELP REBRANDS TO BETTER REFLECT ITS MISSION AND CLIENTS

TEXT BY / MAGGIE CHAN PHOTO BY / HELP FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS

**Helpers for Domestic Helpers (HDH) has announced a rebrand and repositioning to HELP for Domestic Workers (HELP). HELP stands for help, empowerment and legal protection. The rebranding is a result of not only a board and staff who were open to change, but also a desire to empower, and more accurately represent the organisation's clients.**

International law firm Clifford Chance hosted the launch event on 22<sup>nd</sup> March to celebrate HELP's refreshed brand, to which Kimberley Cole, Head of Solutions Sales (Asia), Thomson Reuters, and former Hong Kong Legislative Council member Emily Lau, were invited as the Guests of Honour.

The launch event was a success and was well received by some 200 guests from various sectors, including VIP guests, journalists, clients, volunteers and donors.

Director of HELP Holly Allan talked to reporters from local and international media before the launch. "It is important to recognise that domestic workers don't simply provide help, but are employed to work, and are entitled to the same rights as any employee." She added that "workers should have reasonable working hours, fair wages and the right to a full day of rest each week. Sadly, for many, this is not reality".

The rebrand saw HELP recognising the International Labour Organisation's convention 189 on decent work for domestic workers, while continuing to educate both employers and workers on fair treatment in the workplace.

At the launch event, Kimberley Cole said, "They say it takes a village to raise a family. But many of us don't have access

to our village of family and friends when we move around the world. Our helpers therefore become part of the new village we need to form. The two domestic workers I have had the privilege of having as part of my support network, and family, have been key to my success and sanity!"

In her speech, Emily Lau said, "I think it is very important for us all to work together to find a win-win solution for foreign domestic workers and their employers. Their rights should be protected and Hong Kong must provide a safe and rewarding environment for the foreign domestic workers, who make a huge contribution to our society."

"We are delighted to host the official launch event for HELP and look forward to continuing to develop our relationship with this important NGO in the years ahead," said Rebecca Roth-Biester, Regional Head of Corporate Social Responsibility of Clifford Chance. "At Clifford Chance we recognise that acting in a socially responsible way is the right thing to do. We are committed to making a meaningful contribution to the communities in which we operate."



Along with the rebrand, HELP has a new logo and refreshed website designed by Hong Kong branding agency, Unison Creative. HELP also announced a code of conduct for employers.

Hong Kong is home to more than 343,000 domestic workers. In 2016, HELP responded to almost 3,000 requests for advice and assistance from foreign domestic workers in need, and assisted them to reclaim almost HKD 1 million.

Founded in 1989, HELP provides free advice and assistance on employment, immigration, and human rights issues to domestic workers in Hong Kong.



**FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS SEEKING ADVICE, PLEASE CONTACT**

TEL : +852 2523 4020  
 +852 5618 0689 (office hours only)/  
 +852 5493 4660 (Bahasa Indonesia)  
 Email : help@helpfordomesticworkers.org



# TEAM EFFORT SHOWN IN THE PEACEMAKERS' CULTURAL CELEBRATION

TEXT BY / ELIJAH FUNG, HIV EDUCATION CENTRE MANAGER  
 PHOTO BY HIV EDUCATION CENTRE

**The St John's Cathedral HIV Education Centre has been working alongside UNESCO Hong Kong Association (UNESCO) in many community projects since 2013. This year, the Centre participated in the 5th Peacemakers' Cultural Celebration presented in conjunction with UNESCO, HK.WeCare and the Rotary District 3450.**

The event took place on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2017 at the Hong Kong Science Park. Almost 6,000 people from all walks of life engaged in Actions for Peace at the Celebration, and the event reached out to nearly 50,000 people locally and internationally through the UNESCO network.

Today our world community faces many challenges, such as climate change, wars and conflicts, religious and cultural intolerance, the migrant and refugee crisis, population explosion, poverty and health issues. These challenges are complex and compelling, which call for collective and concerted efforts from all sections of the community.

The Peacemakers' Cultural Celebration aimed to ramp up efforts to involve all people in the community, particularly youth, in awareness of and support for the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out by the United Nations, which aim to bring lasting peace and prosperity for all.

The HIV Education Centre is a supporting organisation of the 5th Peacemakers' Cultural Celebration. Elijah and her deputy Debby were on the Organising Committee. At the Opening Ceremony, the whole team (more than 30 people including staff, interns and volunteers) of the Centre helped with the reception of VIPs and



guests, who included representatives from the offices of consulates general, faith communities, chambers and governmental sectors, while The Revd Desmond Cox and The Revd Catherine Graham represented St John's Cathedral.

The Centre also organised an HIV information and game booth, ran a series of art workshops and mounted the Artwall display. The Centre has expressed its heartfelt gratitude to Mrs Rita Chan and the Cathedral Sunday School students for their active participation and contributions.

For more photos of the day, please visit <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B-Htm20D8Xi7V25rUWtoLUNnRU0>



# PARENTS NEED TO DO THEIR HOMEWORK TOO

TEXT BY / MARK L GANDOLFI (DR MARK)



***The British Charity Action for Children reported in 2016 that parents today are finding it harder to get their children to do homework than it is to have their little darlings put down and turn off their laptops, tablets, cell phones and computer games. It wasn't too long after this report that research from Cambridge University reported that teens who spend too much time on electronic devices may possibly experience their grades falling by two grades overall. What I found more interesting about the Cambridge research is that even if a child spends too much time watching flat screens (we are still debating over what is 'too much time') and then tries to study even longer to offset the too much time on the gadget, their grades will still suffer.***



DR MARK

But if I may say, what one kid wrote on his blog captures the sign of the times: "study, a verb, is the act of texting, eating and watching TV with an open textbook nearby." My parents did not have to worry about this type of study back in the days when the dinosaurs roamed around. Their primary worry was me sneaking off to pay my older brother or sister to do my homework. If life were only that easy today for parents of the digital natives.

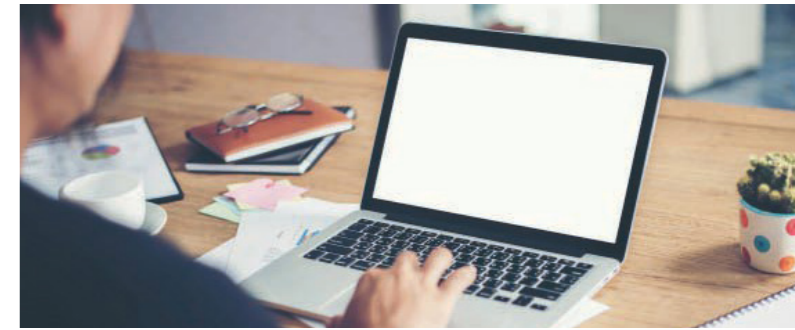
The statistics vary, but it is safe to say that over 75% of schools today (some say higher) integrate technology at primary and secondary schools in aspects ranging through homework assignments and submissions, teacher reports, school announcements, school schedules and teacher/student communication, and before I forget, student to student communication. We have seen how technology has helped lower the drop-out rate in some school districts, increase student interest in science, math and literature (and even psychology!), and expand the range of topics students can more deeply understand, with videos and shared presentations from around the world, among countless other benefits. Yet ...



The last time I purchased an android (sounds more techie doesn't it instead of cell phone?!) it did not come with an owner's manual with a list of cautions and warnings about exposure time and other risks. My new microwave did but not my android. The same applies when the student receives their first android or Apple device for school, save for those schools who develop a good "digital citizen" policy, which they issue with the device (interestingly enough, usually the school has the student/parent read the policy online). A quick Google search will give you over 123,000,000 links for some very good guidelines for a good digital citizen. Yet ...

The digital distractions remain, from Facebook updates, texts waiting to be read or sent, new downloads, internet gaming, online dating, and uploading a video on YouTube to get the followers and make the coin for several million more sources of distraction. The challenge for parents today is not the son seeking out his older sister to do his homework, it is how we can be sure that when he says he is doing his homework, he is not making his latest YouTube video with three of his classmates, three screens behind the maths homework which he just clicks to cover when you walk in the room. But how can we trust our little darlings that they will do their homework and academic learning properly, with a gadget that makes them feel good instantly and gives them a sense of being connected and liked?

A quote I often share from Ann Landers with parents when helping them develop a trusting relationship with the digital natives goes as follows, 'It is not what you do for your children, but what you have taught them to do for themselves, that will make them successful human beings'. In other words, I am advocating that if we teach our children the proper way of doing school work with the gadgets on their own, versus being monitored and policed by a parent at homework time, we will bring them one step closer to success and being a good digital citizen. But it needs to commence on day one with that first gadget. Thus, here are a few rules for setting boundaries and nurturing trust for our digital natives:



- A. For every 20 minutes of online schoolwork, have your child do an equal amount of time with a book related to that topic. This allows the child to see learning as more than online engagement (and encourages kids to read books more, (and dare I say), visit a library);
- B. Know your child's homework assignments, discuss what she is going to do, and then review it after she has completed it. In other words, show your children you have interest

in their learning, and they will respond to a parent who shows they care;

- C. Ensure your child has at least 30 minutes a day to play outdoors with some sort of physical activities (online games are not what we are talking about here). Physical play does a lot for a developing brain and allows a child to see how to play outside of the bedroom without a device;
- D. Allow your child no more than 30 minutes at a time with non-school related gadget activities (I can hear all the online gamers moaning). Adults take lunch breaks, coffee breaks, smoke breaks and tea breaks; kids need their gadget breaks as well for at least 10 minutes to sustain a healthy brain;
- E. Do not allow the gadgets in their bedroom at bedtime. This can become a source of multiple negative consequences ranging from sleep deprivation, internet addiction and countless other problems that will make you pay a visit to the doctor. Prevention is always more certain than the cure.

My previous article shared my view that technology can and does have a positive impact on child and teen development, but it can also be the primary source of many social, psychological and physical ailments in our children. We are still debating over how much time is "too much" for a person to use a gadget in a 24-hour period when the world we live in is primarily technology driven. I cannot recall the last time I called the operator for a person's telephone number, but boy, do I use my Google search on a regular, daily basis. I believe parents can never spend too much time learning about the benefits and risks of technology with their children in the play and academic worlds. It's time parents got back to doing some homework themselves on how our kids can be good digital citizens.

# NEW TRUSTEE AND COUNCIL MEMBERS ELECTED

TEXT BY / STAFF REPORTER

*St John's Cathedral welcomes new and returning Trustees and Council members. William Clay, Patrick Fung and Cheris Yuen have joined the Council in year 2017/18 as new members, and John Li was elected as a new Trustee of the Cathedral. Nearly 100 dedicated parishioners on the St John's Electoral Roll attended the Annual Church Meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> April and, with true Anglican diffidence, filled the Li Hall from the back.*

After serving as Trustee for five terms, Ron Lye decided to step down from his Trusteeship this year. Witnessing the election results, Ron gave his blessings to the new Trustee John Li. "With the new energy from John, the Cathedral will be well served. It is said that 'old soldiers never die, they just fade away'. I would like to continue serving the Cathedral on the Council and the Fabric and Furnishing Committee."

John Li was baptised and brought up in

the Cathedral. As a chartered accountant, a partner in PricewaterhouseCoopers, and the Chairman of the Board of the United Christian Hospital, John believes that he is well equipped to take on the important duties of a Trustee of the Cathedral. "I will work with the Dean and the Council to achieve a good balance of our spiritual and material well-being."

Martin Matsui was re-elected as a Trustee. Martin vowed to carry out the provisions of the Church of England Trust ordinance.

"In 2016, one of our important jobs was to ensure the stability of the senior leadership at St John's. I am pleased that working with my fellow trustee, we were able to renew Dean Matthias's contract." Martin said.

The three newly elected Council members filled seats on the 20-member board previously held by Roshan Colabella, Albert Goh and Vincent Leung. William Clay is an active Cathedral Server at weekday and weekend services. Patrick Fung attends the Saturday Anticipated Service and the Andrew Fellowship regularly, and Cheris Yuen is an intercessor at Emmanuel Church.

The Cathedral also took the opportunity to thank the three retiring 2016/17 Council members for their valuable contributions. Outstandingly, Roshan Colabella retired from the Council after 20 continuous years of service.



TEXT & PHOTO BY / STAFF REPORTER

**"Are you busy? No time for God in our schedules?" Dr Moses Cheng gave an inspiring talk at St John's Cathedral's Christian in Central in February. – Dr Cheng pointed out that being busy is a choice. It is a matter of good time management. In Touch captures some of the key messages from the talk.**

Are you too busy? The worship leader, speaker and author Scott Dannemiller said, "Busy is a sickness." In the age of absurdity, how can we lead a healthier life?

The American psychologist Frederick Herzberg asserted that the powerful motivator in our lives isn't money; it's the opportunity to learn, grow in responsibilities, contribute to others, and be recognised for achievements.

Busy is a choice. We work hard so that we would do well in our careers, but do we work hard at the expense of anything? Is there a time when you think if only you could spend more time with your family and friends?

So, what does the Bible tell us? "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph 5:16). "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Col 4:5). Choose what is right for you and behave wisely.

It is a matter of good time management: to keep a to-do list and prioritise the tasks. We are to take care of the



most important tasks first: Spend quality time with our families and friends. Care for them! Keeping in touch with them is essential. Talk to each other regularly and attend group activities and gatherings.

Furthermore, is there no time for God in our schedules? As Christians, we must seek the Lord in everything that we do. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt 6:33).

"As for me, I will call upon God; and the Lord shall save me. Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice" (Ps 55:16-17).

We should live out our faith in our daily life. If we can give time to social media such as Facebook and Twitter, we can give time to pray to God. In every part of our day, we should spend time with God and seek to do God's will. Let's pray for God to remove procrastination and idleness from our lives.

"And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:41-42). May we remind ourselves how we live our lives!

# COMMUNITY ADVICE BUREAU CHAIRMAN PRESENTS CHEQUE TO HELP

TEXT & PHOTO BY / STAFF REPORTER  
PHOTO BY HIV EDUCATION CENTRE

*The Community Advice Bureau (CAB), which started as an outreach ministry of St John's Cathedral and became independent later, has closed after serving expatriates and residents in Hong Kong for 40 years. A cheque covering the remaining funds of the CAB was recently presented to HELP for Domestic Workers (HELP) that they may give continuing support to the community.*

The cheque for HKD50,000 was presented by CAB Chairman John Davison to Director of HELP Holly Allan in mid-February 2017, witnessed by Dean Matthias, The Revd John Chynchen, The Revd Catherine Graham and Mary Wicks, a representative of the CAB.

Holly appreciated the generosity and goodwill of the CAB and John Davison, and affirmed that the donation would be used for the work of HELP.

The CAB started operations in 1974 and provided guideline information for English speaking Hong Kong residents in general and newly-arrived expatriates in particular. At its peak in the mid-1990s, the CAB handled 14,000 enquiries a year. The advice centre was closed in October 2014 as call and email numbers declined.

"The number of enquiries reduced to the point where we came to the conclusion that the resources we were using from our benefactors could be used for better purposes," John Davison said. He added that the CAB had fulfilled the need that was evident in the early 1970s and it was time to give over to the internet.

Over four decades, the CAB had helped newcomers from more than 30 countries to adapt themselves to life in Hong Kong. The enquiries were answered by volunteers with two or more years' experience living in Hong Kong.



(from left to right) Mary Wicks, John Chynchen, John Davison, Dean Matthias, Holly Allan, and Catherine Graham

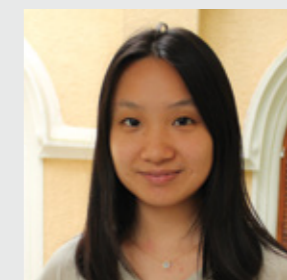
## STAFF NEWS



**The Revd James Buxton**  
The Revd James Buxton, Dean of Chapel at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, dedicated his term break to serving in St John's Cathedral as visiting chaplain at St Stephen's Chapel from March to April 2017.

Fr James was trained for the priesthood at Westcott House in Cambridge. He served his curacy in the Parish Church of St Mary, Portsea, Portsmouth (1997-2001), and then went on to be Succentor of Southwark Cathedral and Chaplain of King's College, London at Guy's Campus (2001-2007).

His interests include walking in mountainous and wild regions, art, architecture and music, and the practice of pilgrimage. He returned to Cambridge in mid-April.



**Johannie@MFMW**  
Johannie Tong joined the Mission For Migrant Workers in Apr 2017 as a full time Community Relations Officer.



**Karoline@MFMW**  
Karoline Dechant from Germany is serving with the Mission For Migrant Workers for five months as an intern from the Lutheran Church in Northern Germany.

# Forthcoming Services at St John's & Daughter Churches

## JUNE – AUGUST 2017



### St John's Cathedral

4-8 Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong  
Tel: 2523 4157  
www.stjohnscathedral.org.hk

#### 3rd June (Saturday): Eve of Pentecost

18.00 Baptism and Confirmation  
Eucharist (Cantonese)

#### 4th June (Sunday): Pentecost

9.00 'Worship for All' Eucharist  
18.00 Baptism and Confirmation  
Eucharist (English)

#### 11th June (Sunday): Trinity Sunday

11.45 Baptism & First Communion  
(Children)

#### 18th June (Sunday)

10.30 Hong Kong St John  
Ambulance Brigade  
Annual Service of  
Dedication

#### 29th June (Thursday)

19.30 Sung Eucharist:  
SS. Peter & Paul

#### 9th July (Sunday)

17.00 'Celebrating Hong Kong'  
A Service of Thanksgiving

#### 6th August (Sunday)

9.00 Sung Eucharist  
(RTHK broadcast)

#### 15th August (Saturday)

19.30 Sung Eucharist:  
The Blessed Virgin Mary

### Emmanuel Church Béthanie Chapel 139 Pok Fu Lam Road, Pokfulam

Further information Tel: 2523 4157  
www.emmanuel.org.hk



#### Every Sunday

10.15 Sung Eucharist

### St Stephen's Chapel 22 Tung Tau Wan Road, Stanley St Stephen's College

Further information Tel: 2813 0408  
www.ststephen.org.hk



#### Every Sunday

9.30 Sung Eucharist

#### Special Service 18th June (Sunday)

9.30 Confirmation Service (Celebrant & Preacher: Archbishop Paul)

### Discovery Bay Church SKH Wei Lun Primary School

Further information Tel: 2987 4210  
www.discoverybaychurch.org.hk



#### Every Sunday

10.00 Sung Eucharist

#### St John's Cathedral

4-8 Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong

Tel: (+852) 2523 4157

Fax: (+852) 2521 7830

Email: general@stjohnscathedral.org.hk

Website: www.stjohnscathedral.org.hk

#### Dean

The Very Revd Matthias Der

#### Cathedral Chaplains

The Revd Desmond Cox

The Revd Dwight dela Torre

The Revd Catherine Graham

The Revd Canon Peter Koon

The Revd Robert Martin  
(Chaplain and Priest-in-Charge of  
Emmanuel Church - Tel: 2523 4157)

The Revd Will Newman  
(Chaplain and Priest-in-Charge of  
St Stephen's Chapel - Tel: 2813 0408)

The Revd Mark Rogers  
(Chaplain and Priest-in-Charge of Discovery  
Bay Church - Tel: 2987 4210)

The Revd Wu Wai-ho

#### Cathedral Honorary Chaplains

The Revd John Chynchen

The Revd Hugh Phillipson

The Revd Jenny Wong Nam

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# ST JOHN'S ON AIR!



TEXT BY / STUART WOLFENDALE PHOTO BY / MAGGIE CHAN, ELIJAH FUNG

**ViuTV, Hong Kong's new terrestrial station, notable for its interest in the young, the hip and the colourful, showed another side of itself when it featured St John's Cathedral in a thirty-minute segment on 25th March, one in a series of programmes 'Art of Religious Architecture' on spiritual places in Hong Kong.**

Beautifully shot, creatively edited, with a thoughtful music track, the programme had no commentary. It was principally structured around the Dean, supported by Felix Yeung, Director of Music, speaking engagingly to the camera about the Cathedral's history, liturgy, spiritual role and influence on the community.

This was an unusual opportunity for St John's to introduce itself to a television audience, and one brought about by the new kid on the TV block doing something different. However, the Cathedral's long running and varied contribution to broadcasting over the years has been and continues to be on radio.

The first broadcast from St John's was in 1923 on ZBW, the station that preceded RTHK, through a transmitter on the Peak. Today, we are involved with five other Christian denominations and RTHK, through the Religious Broadcasting and Television Advisory Committee (RBTAC), in helping to provide English language religious broadcasting in one form or another, six days a week.

An important part of this effort, which has weathered social and political changes, are the three talks programmes which individual members of the clergy contribute to in cycles through the year. 'Minutes that Matter' is a nine-minute programme at 9.50 am on Radio 4, Monday to Friday, composed of a talk, music and a prayer. 'Reflections', also on Radio 4, is at three minutes before midnight on weekdays, to send you to

sleep thinking on a message of peace and hope. 'Thought for the Week', about a current faith issue, is on Radio 3 on Sundays at 8.25 am and one that many churchgoers are likely to miss, although a few clicks will find it in the RTHK archive.

Contributors to these three programmes are asked to go to RTHK in Broadcast Drive and record several broadcasts at once to cover their total contribution for a period of about a month. Anyone who has made scripted broadcasts will know that a great deal of effort over timing and pace has to go into preparing even three minutes on the microphone. To show up with half a dozen ready to go and to keep the controlled energy in the voice necessary for radio, recording one after the other, is professionally demanding.

None of our clergy who do it regularly, Desmond Cox, Robert Martin, Will Newman and Mark Rogers, seem particularly fazed by this. As you would expect, Fr Des, who is an Anglican representative on the RATBC, finds it positively exciting. He emphasises the importance of the director in the studio. "He helps you keep track, be precise and keep to time."

Fr Des believes the biggest demand in the process is preparing the script. "It has to be current," he says. "It has to fit in with Hong Kong society and it has to remember that the listener may not be a worshipper, even a Christian."

Do the broadcasts have any impact? He believes they do. "I get messages from diverse groups on Facebook telling me they listened. Sometimes you get letters from grateful listeners who have been helped in times of loss. It is heard in prisons, too. Still, the Committee is constantly looking for ways to improve its impact."

When asked about the effectiveness of religious broadcasting here, Fr Robert was

featuring in 'Reflections' that very night on how we matched up to Mary of Bethany in leaving a beautiful fragrance in our relationship with Jesus, and he had just recorded a piece on the murdered Copts for 'Thought for the Week'. He believes it is worth doing. "It draws people's attention," he said. "But the style must be reflective, not 'preachy'." He would like to see the scope widened, though. "I would like to see it include the festivals of the other major religions, to inform and to celebrate."

Eight times a year, the whole of the 9 am congregation at the Cathedral is involved in radio. RTHK makes a 'delayed live' broadcast of the service after the 11 am news. Three broadcasts a year are made from St Stephen's Stanley and two from Emmanuel, Pokfulam. The other denominations involved in the RBTAC do the same through the year. Every year, at Christmas, Midnight Mass is broadcast from St John's.

The Cathedral broadcast is a case of squeezing a quart into a pint pot. The service normally runs well over an hour. The broadcast time available is 54 minutes. The service is trimmed to the liturgical essentials and preachers are pleaded with to confine themselves to eight minutes. Then the Cathedral's volunteer commentator and the PCCW technician negotiate the final cut in the chancel.

We are clearly a long way from the 'Hour of Power' and made for television evangelism. According to Fr Des, who has looked into TV slots with the Committee, the prohibitive cost of just three minutes, even in Hong Kong, means we are not even going there.

