

# 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



June - August 2020

ISSUE 022

Quarterly

The Dean's Message 3

In Communion during the  
Pandemic — Online Services 4

SJC Broadcast Services during  
COVID-19 6

Fellowship in Time of Social  
Distancing 8

FOCUS ON SCRIPTURE: 12  
Finding Comfort, Hope and a  
Challenge in Difficult Times

Holy Week and Easter Services 14  
2020

Welcome Father Amos 16

## St John's Cathedral

4-8 Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong

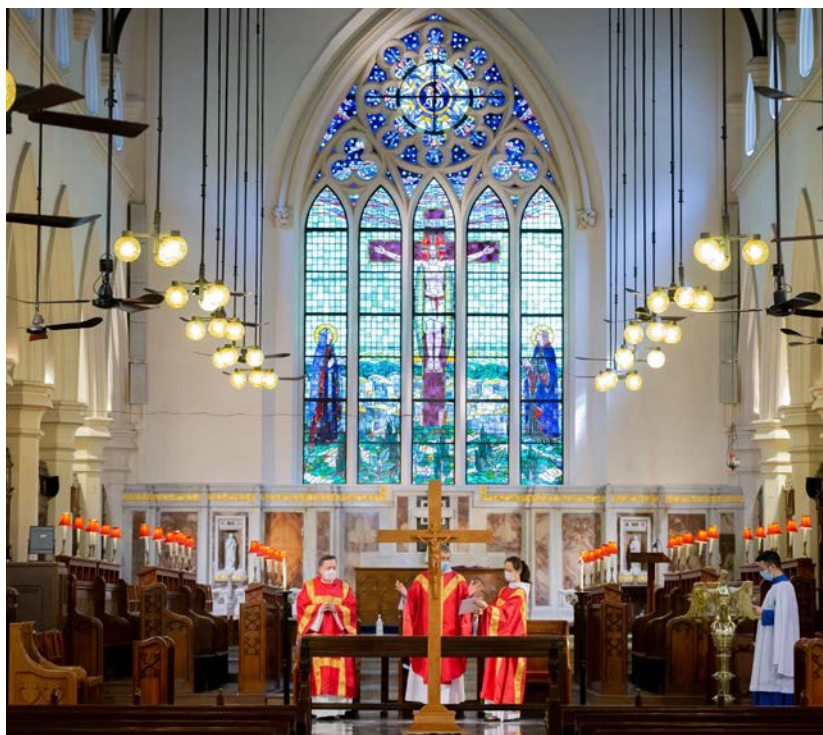
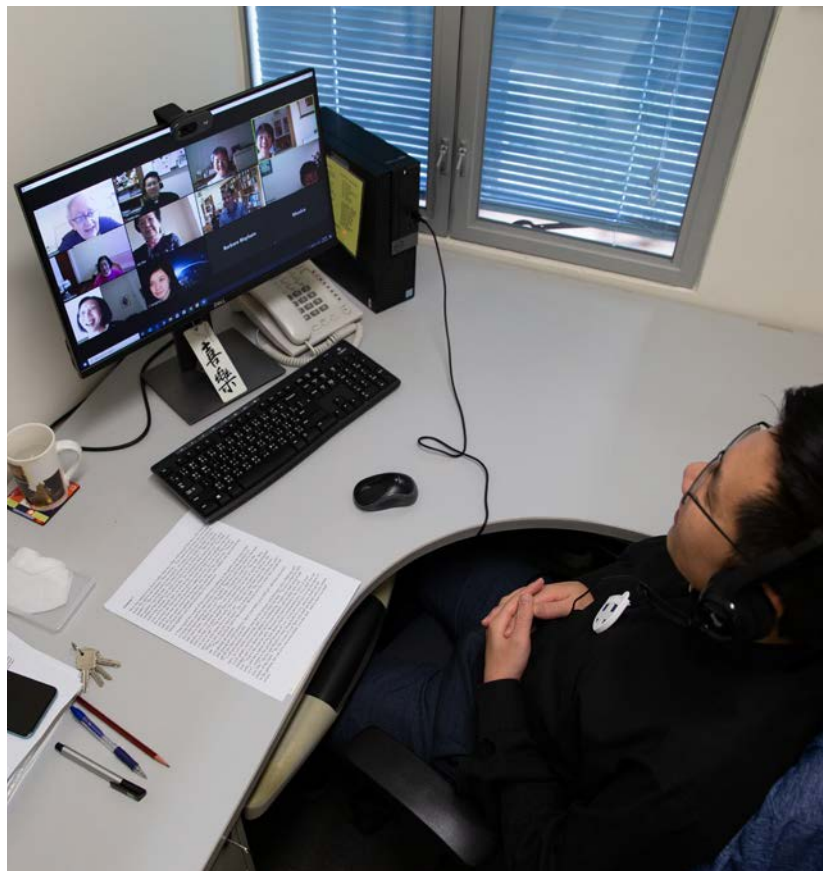
Tel: (+852) 2523 4157

Fax: (+852) 2521 7830

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

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

# TOGETHERNESS AMIDST PANDEMIC



Fr Frankie said, 'Although cyber-meeting was nowhere near gathering physically in person, it was still useful to meet online to pray together, to study together and to learn together.'

# In Touch

In this issue

Under the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic, public worship services at St John's Cathedral and many other local churches were suspended since February for the sake of social distancing.

With the concern about the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the congregation, the Cathedral and our daughter churches have been responding proactively to the situation by deploying existing resources to maintain communion with parishioners over the internet using YouTube and Zoom.

Our reporter talked to clergy and parishioners, collecting feedback and views from different perspectives, hoping to capture this special communal experience, which may shed some light on our church life in the post-pandemic era.

This year, our Holy Week and Easter services were conducted in a closed-door manner, the first time in the history of St John's. Yet, we managed to bless over 24,000 audiences locally and globally with the much needed messages for this

challenging time.

With thanks to all attending members of electoral roll and our congregation, the Annual Church Meeting was successfully held on 17th May. Congratulations to the newly elected Trustees and Council Members. We pray for their ministry in the coming year.

Continuing the success of our first article about 'A Sunday in the Life of...', in this issue, our reporter delves a little deeper into what is involved in being a Sidesman at the Cathedral. We often see them with their badges on, but what are their duties? Find out more!

Don't miss the special feature on the collaboration between the Anglican Diocese of Toungoo, Myanmar and The Amity Foundation. May we find comfort, hope and strength from the words of God in serving the needs of others - 'Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.' (Romans 12:11-12).

## Be Friends with the Environment

A little step by all of us can make a sea change to our environment. We invite our readers to join us in protecting the environment. There are two ways to get involved:

### 1. Pick up the magazine at the Cathedral

The Cathedral Office keeps a subscription list of In Touch, and mails hard copies of the magazine to readers and parishioners quarterly. If you choose to pick up the magazine at St John's Cathedral, fewer plastic bags will be used for delivery. Please inform us by filling out and returning the form below to the Cathedral Office if you would like to unsubscribe from the mailing list.

For those who wish to continue receiving In Touch by mail, we wish to assure you that the bags are 100% degradable.

### 2. Read the magazine online

In 2018, we started publishing In Touch on Issuu, an online digital publishing platform that provides readers with a more convenient reading experience, regardless of the mobile devices or computers they are using. The PDF version of In Touch is also available on the Cathedral website (<http://www.stjohnscathedral.org.hk/>). Scan the QR code to read our current and past issues on the Cathedral website.



## Unsubscribe from the Mailing List

To unsubscribe from the mailing list of In Touch, please fill in the form:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Return the form by email: [communications@stjohnscathedral.org.hk](mailto:communications@stjohnscathedral.org.hk) or by mail: St John's Cathedral, 4-8 Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong

# THE DEAN'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

As I write, the world continues to wrestle with the outbreak of COVID-19. Here in Hong Kong, thanks to the great effort of the entire community, we have now passed the critical stage. However, our thoughts and hearts go out to all those around the globe who suffer physically, emotionally, spiritually and economically at this time. God be with us all!

For the past few months, we have had to be creative, adaptable and resilient in our individual and church life. To our surprise, many have discovered we were more resourceful than we ever knew. Many hidden talents and unused skills rose to the occasion. This affirms our belief that God always provides. Allow me to share with you some observations.

When all public services were suspended, St John's Cathedral and all the parishes in the Province only had 3 days to get things ready. How could we avoid our worship life coming to a halt when people most needed God? I have to give credit to all those involved in our liturgy, music and technical support for producing good quality webcast services since February. With their creativity and dedication, through trial and error, our worship to God continues. Through this new mode, we are reaching more than 2,500 people weekly. More than 24,000 people locally and around the globe joined our worship services over Holy Week and Easter. Through this new means, God is reaching more people than before!

With all our gatherings suspended due to social distancing, how do we continue our pastoral, teaching, and fellowship ministry? With the help of many, we have discovered the power of digital means. Over Lent, close to 100 parishioners took part in our six-week Lent Course through Zoom. The cathedral clergy are offering videos entitled 'Message of Hope' weekly over YouTube. A new platform through WhatsApp has been launched to keep parishioners informed. The Life Enrichment Centre has produced many creative videos for youth. Yes, digital means of communication is not as personal as meeting in person. However, God has provided a new way for us to witness him.

In the early stage of the outbreak, there was a severe shortage of masks in Hong Kong. People lined up for hours and still couldn't get one. As a faith community, something needed to be done. We launched an appeal to ask parishioners to sacrifice one mask to help the vulnerable, elderly and needy in the community. To my surprise, within a short time, we received more than 2,000 masks. Later on, we received 5,000, 10,000 and now an excess of 25,000 masks. Out of a desperate situation, God had awakened our sense of love for the needy. God does provide through the generosity of you all!

Truly, God always provides in ways beyond our imagination. In times of crisis, naturally fear and anxiety occupy our hearts and minds. For Christians, it is through times like these, we are able to see more clearly the greatness of God and the steadfastness of his love. Our faith and hope are strengthened when we walk with Him.

Keep well and keep up our faith in Christ! God bless you!

Dean Matthias +



親愛的弟兄姊妹，

執筆之際，世界仍在努力控制新冠病毒的爆發。在香港，有賴於整個社會的竭力付出，我們渡過了最危急的階段。然而，此時全球仍有許多民眾正經歷身體、情緒、靈性以及經濟上的多重苦難，他們緊緊牽動著我們的思緒和心靈。願上帝與我們所有人同在！

過去數月，我們要充分發揮創意、應變及抗逆能力去調節個人和教會生活。出乎意料地，我們發現原來自己擁有比想象中更多的資源，許多隱藏的才幹、未知的技能亦得以發掘，以應付當下的處境。這使我們愈加堅信上帝的永恆供應。僅與大家分享我的一些發現。

當教省公佈暫停所有公開崇拜時，聖約翰座堂和其他牧區只有三天時間預備如何應對。在大家最需要上帝的時候，我們如何避免崇拜生活陷於停頓呢？我由衷感謝所有參與製作網上直播及轉播崇拜的弟兄姊妹，自二月以來，他們在禮儀、音樂和技術等方面提供協助，有賴他們的創意與努力，透過不斷地嘗試和改進，我們對上帝的敬拜得以繼續。藉著新的模式，每周參與我們網上崇拜的人數超過二千五百；全球逾二萬四千人參與了我們的聖周和復活節崇拜。通過新的媒介，上帝的信息擴展至更多人。

當減少社交接觸政策限制了我們的聚會，我們如何繼續牧養、教導和團契的事工呢？藉著眾人的幫助，我們見證了數碼媒體的力量。大齋期間，接近一百位教友通過Zoom參與了為期六周的大齋課程；座堂牧師們每周在YouTube上載短片「聖品良言」；座堂又建立了一個新的WhatsApp群組，向教友們發佈最新資訊；生命啟進中心為青年製作許多創意影片。誠然，數碼通訊渠道上的交流並不能取代面對面的會晤，但上帝為我們提供了一種新的方法來為他做見證。

在疫情爆發的初期，本港口罩供應一度緊缺，人們輪候多時仍一罩難求。作為信仰的群體，我們義不容辭。於是座堂呼籲教友奉獻口罩，援助社會上的老弱貧乏，並在短時間內收到超過二千個口罩，令我感到意外。之後，我們獲捐口罩數目逐步上升至五千個、一萬個，甚至二萬五千之多。在艱難的時刻，上帝喚醒了我們助人急難的愛心。上帝藉著你們的慷慨奉獻來供應眾人。

上帝的供應實在超越我們的想像。在危急的時候，人性的恐懼和焦慮佔據了我們的心思意念；但對基督徒而言，正是在困境中，我們能更清晰地看見上帝和他永遠長存的慈愛。當與他同行時，我們的信心和盼望就能剛強起來。

請保重身體，也保守我們在基督內的信心！願上帝賜福給你們！

座堂主任牧師  
謝子和 謹啟



TEXT BY / ANDREW ASHLEY

# In Communion during the Pandemic

## Online Services

**It feels as though no aspect of life remains unaffected by COVID-19. This is most apparent in our church life, where multiple devices have replaced buildings, and services have become a medley of live-streaming, chatrooms and YouTube videos. St John's and her daughter churches have responded magnificently to the challenge, providing worship and fellowship in ways that seemed impossible just a few months ago.**

As so often, there have been blessings among the difficulties. The Dean's sermon at the Chrism Eucharist on Maundy Thursday, when he spoke of 'our fragility as a community and as individuals in the face of the coronavirus', was perhaps made even more powerful by being delivered to an empty cathedral. Fr Robert's procurement of face masks the exact shade of the splendid gold vestments worn on the Feast of the Annunciation showed an impressive attention to detail.

But what is the reality of church in our current circumstances? The priests-in-charge of the daughter churches have given us an insight into the ups and downs of providing alternative forms of worship for their congregations.

### From A to Zoom

'It's been a steep learning curve.' Fr Mark, Fr Robert and Will use the same phrase to describe their experience of getting to grips with the technology required for remote worship. 'I was scared stiff when we started,' says Fr Mark — but it seems clear that the priests and people of all three churches have adapted very quickly.

Fr Robert refers to himself as an old dog having to learn new tricks. There were no mobile phones or computers when he was first ordained, and he bashed out his sermons on an ancient manual typewriter. Now he's producing mini-movies on his phone each week and sending them to his parishioners with a single click.

Fr Mark admits that, pre-COVID-19, he was unaware that people could plug their computers into their TVs. Now his congregation are following the services on huge TV screens. 'I'm worried I've become a televangelist,' he says.

The challenge has varied from church to church. St Stephen's has its own chapel, of course, and Discovery Bay is still able to use the Wei Lun school hall each Sunday, so both Fr Mark and Will can preside at their regular altars. Discovery Bay has been

running services in a Zoom chatroom since the beginning, while St Stephen's experimented with short services on YouTube for the first two or three weeks - 'a kind of abbreviated Eucharist,' as Will puts it.

He adds that Discovery Bay's experience of using Zoom showed that a chatroom service was the way to go so St Stephen's switched to Zoom, too. Now Will sounds very enthusiastic about the weekly online services. 'We've become much more relaxed,' he says. 'It's like chatting with friends, especially during the sermon and the peace. People are waving and greeting each other by name'.

The experience at Emmanuel has been quite different from that of the other daughter churches, which have been able to build online communities through Zoom. The chapel at Bethanie remains inaccessible so Emmanuel parishioners are following the live-streamed services from St John's. Fr Robert is also making excellent use of his newly acquired movie-making skills. He videos a six-minute homily every weekend and WhatsApps it, with links to all cathedral services, to his congregation and to Emmanuel Friends. There are also powerpoints and colouring worksheets for a 'mini Sunday school at home'.

### Ups...

The new forms of service are a necessary response to a difficult situation, but the experience has been far from wholly negative. Fr Mark, Fr Robert and Will agree that e-church has some good points.

Will's experience at St Stephen's is that Zoom services have energised people and attracted some who might not be habitual participants. When the regular members of the congregation tune in on Sunday mornings, they're joined by those who are physically unable to come to church, those who are attracted to a new way of worshipping and former members around the world. According to Will, 'Everyone says it's not the same as being in church but it's a really positive experience for many people'.

Fr Mark agrees that online services are attracting a wide range of worshippers. 'Our Zoom services have no boundaries,' he says. 'People log in from Thailand, Italy, the UK... even Stanley'. He also highlights the extensive possibilities for participation in chatroom services. People can read lessons, lead the intercessions and offer each other the peace. The form of the service is displayed on the screen and hymns are played from Spotify.

The loss of regular Sunday fellowship has encouraged the churches to make great efforts to keep in touch with their congregations. At Emmanuel, Fr Robert and the churchwardens try to ensure that every member of the congregation gets a phone call each week.

### ... and Downs

Fr Mark points out that there is a significant difference between church and other forms of social gathering. Going to church is not just about meeting friends but encountering God and, as the last few weeks have clearly shown, this can be done online.

Nonetheless, it's clear that remote services, live-streamed, in chatrooms or by video, cannot provide a complete substitute for actually being in church. The online communities developed by St John's and the daughter churches are doing tremendous work but they're not the real thing. As Will says, 'people miss receiving communion and they miss seeing their friends in person'.

This point is emphasised by Fr Robert, who notes that his congregation 'love the beautiful chapel at Bethanie and they desperately miss worshipping there. What we're doing now is working well but there is no substitute for gathering at the altar'. He adds that the loss of fellowship — with excellent cakes — after each Sunday's service is also keenly felt.

Fr Mark refers to the current situation as 'church at a minimum'. Services are taking place and people are gathering somehow, but in a different way. People like to be close to each other so the loss of physicality and nearness is a clear disadvantage. Even the conversation online can't be as deep as it is after 'real church'.

### Back to the Future

Will notes that when he asks his congregation about the future, there's a longing for things to go back to how they were. 'But I think that they won't, quite...'

There's a consensus that whatever happens after COVID-19, St John's and the daughter churches should assess what has been worthwhile and practical, and try to incorporate that into new ways of working.

Fr Robert insists that he doesn't want Emmanuel to be just a digital church - 'part of the point of the daughter churches is that they're smaller and more intimate, one can get to know people...' — but that some of the new initiatives are definitely worth keeping. He will continue to post his regular six-minute homilies and keep the link with Emmanuel Friends going.

Fr Mark suggests that what we're learning now could be very useful for churches like ours, with friends and former parishioners all over the world. Online services would be valuable for services such as baptisms and funerals where not everyone can be present, especially if travel becomes more difficult.

To sum up, Will says that we don't want to come to the end of this period and feel that any benefits have been lost. 'With the best of both worlds, we can have lots of people in church and reach others online'.



# SJC Broadcast Services during COVID-19

TEXT BY / STUART WOLFENDALE  
PHOTOS BY / MICHAEL LUU

It may sound trite to say that from bad times good things come yet COVID-19 brought out from St John's Cathedral a newly minted television production team. As the virus spread, Director of Music, Felix Yeung and The Dean met to consider what could be done in the event of services having to be suspended. They decided that the Cathedral should get ready to produce live webcasts on YouTube. A team was assembled by Felix, including Marques Ng cross carrier and subdeacon, and Vicky Li and Michael Luu (both from Holy Nativity Church), making it a diocesan effort. Extensive though their other talents may be, they were all total amateurs in television. Nevertheless, they prepared and learned.

Thanks to this foresight, when the House of Bishops suspended public services on the Thursday (13th February 2020), the Cathedral was ready to webcast the celebration of the Eucharist from the chancel that Sunday (16th February). Assisted in preparations by Thomas Li, Tim Wong, and Hoi Ho and the vergers, the team could stream the 9.00am service and, later, the Saturday Anticipated service in Cantonese live on YouTube. The Mandarin and Tagalog services were pre-recorded and webcast at 10.30am.

Initially, the services consisted of a reduced choir and a small team of servers but, as social distancing restrictions tightened, this was brought down to a celebrant, deacon/preacher, server and a cantor. At this point the production team also faced up to the challenge of Easter in an empty church by producing the entire Easter liturgy from Maundy Thursday to Easter Sunday.

The team began the project with some advantages. They had an existing system of cameras relaying images to the aisle screens. There was already a sound system. What was needed was an encoder which could convert the signal onto a computer which could then send it to YouTube. They went out and bought a computer for this. Very fortunately, the internet connection was already in place in the church; otherwise that would have been a considerable obstacle.

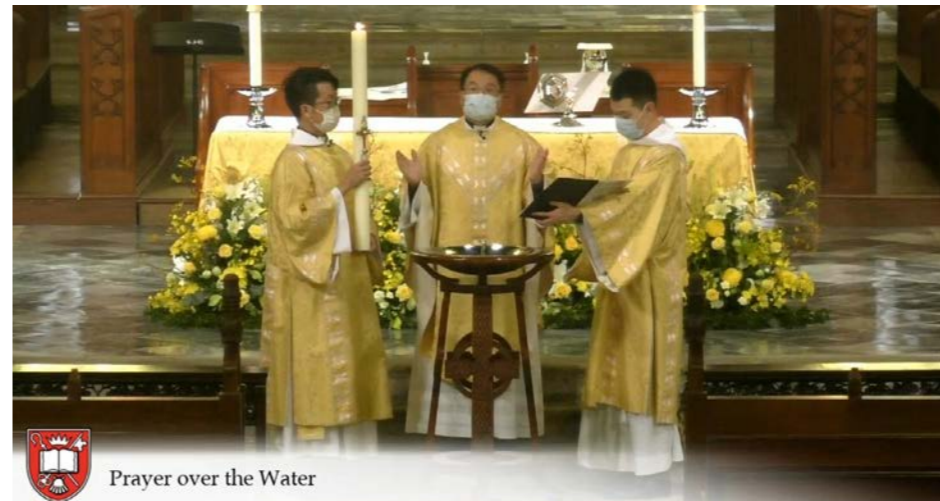
There were 3 cameras; one on top of the West Door and one at each pier pillar on the north and south side of the nave. When trying to plot shots, Marques thought up a lot of them, although Felix and Michael took turns in directing. Shots had to be planned two shots ahead and noted down in the order of service, although, as time went by, the team became more adept, and could develop the plot in their heads as they went.

It was a process of struggle and discovery. Michael found out how the system could pre-set shots. In a memorable moment at the beginning of the Easter Vigil, he set up a dramatic overhead shot in the porch vertically down on the deacon lighting the Easter flame. Felix realised that, because the South pillar camera covered the whole of the chancel area, an

aisle TV screen could be swung around to face the chancel. The cantor/reader at the lectern could then see what was happening behind. Hence the cantor's uncanny ability to move away just as the gospeller approached from the altar.

Gradually the team learned the potential of the system, and the small deceptions TV affords also revealed themselves. For the renewal of baptismal vows, the mobile font could magically appear and then disappear. A box of tissues which was featuring too prominently on the credence table could vanish during a reading, and a celebrant caught with a persistent irritation in his windpipe could go into the vestry and have a good cough when the camera was focused firmly on the preacher. All of these things would have been difficult under the eyes of a congregation.

According to Felix, an initial difficulty for the participants was to stop addressing an empty building and look at the real congregation through the camera lens. The Archbishop pointed out the sadness of speaking to an empty church in his Easter Sunday sermon, and that clip from the webcast was used in a terrestrial TV news bulletin the following day. How many people, exiled from the building, were in that electronic congregation?



Prayer over the Water

Services before and after Easter were being seen on an average of around 200 screens. At a conservative estimate, that might mean 300 people. Over the following few days they would each accumulate more than 1,000 views. At Easter itself, the figures were higher. The Maundy Thursday Eucharist had an amazing 6,000 views over a few days.

There was a decision that only some services could be recorded and transmitted live at their usual schedules because doing that meant the church had to be closed. This shut out individuals who wanted to come in and pray. So, the team also created webcasts for services like Morning Prayer and Evensong, which were composites, or 'cut and paste jobs' in their matter-of-fact description. Evensong, which attracts perhaps 90 people (including those in the chancel), got hundreds of views. Morning Prayer on Good Friday and Holy Saturday attracted 900 views on each day. The usual attendance is closer to 19.

Appreciation for the webcasts has been

widespread. A significant number of the viewers are former St John's members, now gone overseas, for whom the Cathedral still means a lot and for whom the sight and sound of that familiar place created calm and consolation in a time of trauma. Many churches have offered their own version of this online, and it has often been a deliberately simple one on a bare table in an unadorned room. St John's, on the other hand, had the resources, the innate skills and duty to carry through by streaming worship in full with music. There was a particular dedication by Felix's team to broadcasting the Easter liturgy in its entirety, no matter how stripped down and even lonely that may have seemed. Indeed the sung rendering of the Passion by three plaintive voices echoing through that large empty building on Good Friday afternoon was never more appropriate.

It was high quality broadcasting and a new ministry. Let us see where it goes from here.



## What do they say...

Faye Yee (St John's Cathedral):

*'Bible study on Zoom was certainly a great convenience in terms of the saving of travelling time for me. For the webcast services, I enjoyed seeing each participant performing their various duties within the whole liturgy. The perspective from the cameras was very impressive.'*

Peter Nixon (Discovery Bay Church):

*'While some people prefer in-person Bible study, this format and the readings which supplemented the Bible passages, encourage me to join more such sessions in the future. Thanks for being an early adopter of this new technology. The solution is in the dialogue.'*

Andrea Kan (Emmanuel Church):

*'Although it has been a challenge to worship online, with distractions of family and kids, I am thankful for the broadcasts and weekly thoughts, providing and conveying this sense of peace, while allowing ample space for quietness, self-reflection and personal prayers.'*

Alison Harada (St Stephen's Chapel):

*'With this experience, I realised that "church" is not just the sermon, hymns and the Eucharist, but also the passing of the peace and fellowship. I am grateful that we have the technology to meet each Sunday via Zoom, but I am very much looking forward to being together with my fellow parishioners, smiling at them and communally sharing the word of God again.'*

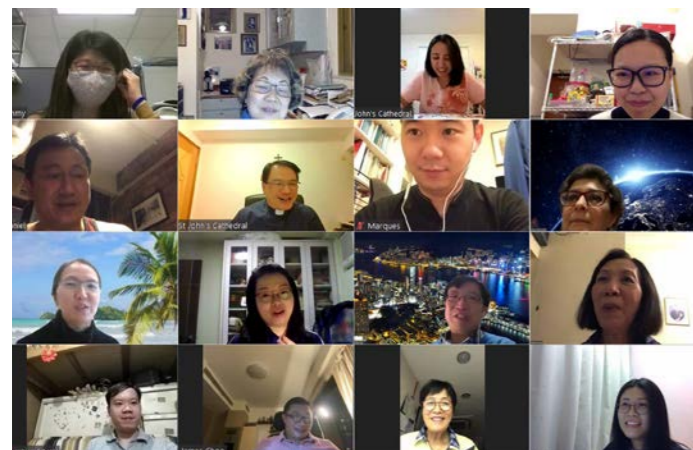
# Fellowship in Time of Social Distancing

TEXT BY / THE REVEREND FRANKLIN LEE

In response to the COVID-19 epidemic, not only were public acts of worship suspended, we were advised not to gather for fellowship and Bible study groups at the cathedral. However, with the use of the cyber-communication software, these cathedral groups were able to study a course on the Eucharist together online during Lent. While most of us had to worship via the Internet and we missed sharing the Communion together in church, the Lent Course provided a great platform for us to study the meaning and the importance of the Sacrament of the Eucharist. We had lively discussions and we shared our sadness of not being able to break bread on Sundays.

Although I had done online conferences before, this was the first time I used video communication software for Bible study and fellowship groups. It was challenging to start with as we learned together the different functions on the App before we could begin our studies. Yet over time, most of us have mastered the software. Although cyber-meeting was nowhere near gathering physically in person, it was still useful to meet online to pray together, to study together and to learn together.

One of the great advantages was that we were able to have friends from overseas joining our fellowship and Bible Study meetings, which would otherwise be impossible. During our Bible Study, we were able to catch up with friends who have immigrated overseas. Saving the travelling time, members of other Anglican parishes and Christians from other church denominations were also able to join us. As such, we were very blessed with the lively discussions in our fellowship and Bible Study gatherings. I am very grateful to



the teaching of the Revd Dr John Kater at the Friday Bible Fellowship the past few months. I would also like to express my thanks to the Revd Sharon Langbis for her support to both the Tuesday Bible Reading Fellowship and the Servers' Guild's Bible Study Group.

Online fellowship was certainly not as good as meeting in person, but this method was a relatively good alternative in the short term so that our fellowship life would not stop completely. These online platforms allowed us not only to continue our studies of the Bible but also to help deepen our Christian fellowship as we share our worries, our concerns, and our anxiety as well as our hope, our faith, and indeed our love for one another.



In his conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well, Jesus expressed that 'God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.' Although we were not allowed to gather in church to pray and worship together, in different places, we worship God in spirit. In fellowship, we prayed for one another with a sincere heart. In truth, we lived out our Christian vocation serving one another and offered our support to the needy. A friend in need is a friend indeed, as the saying goes. In a time of fear and anxiety, it is easy for us to think about ourselves and forget the others. These online meetings made it possible for us to keep each other updated and allowed us to pray for one another. Dietrich Bonhoeffer once wrote, 'A Christian fellowship lives and exists by the intercession of its members for one another, or it collapses.' At the writing of this article, we were still not allowed to gather in church and were advised to maintain social distancing from one another. I do hope we will no longer need to wear masks and will be able to see each other's happy faces. Most importantly, we can gather in church to worship God, to share peace and to break bread together.

*God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*  
1 Corinthians 1:9

# COVID-19 The Public Health and Self Care Perspective

TEXT BY / DR TK CHEUNG, SPECIALIST IN GASTROENTEROLOGY AND HEPATOLOGY

On 11th March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) formally announced the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak a global pandemic. COVID-19 refers to the cluster of viral pneumonia cases first occurring in Wuhan, Hubei Province since December 2019 caused by a novel coronavirus which may originate from wild animals.

Symptoms of the early diagnosed cases included fever, malaise, dry cough, and shortness of breath. Some cases were in serious condition, while some presented with other symptoms, such as diarrhoea. Now we know that older people or those having underlying multiple comorbidities, such as diabetes, cardiac diseases and poor immunity, are at higher risk of further deterioration to serious condition. The main mode of transmission of the virus includes respiratory droplets, while the virus can also be transmitted through contacts. Recently, a study by The University of Hong Kong has found that the eyes are an important route of infection for the new coronavirus to enter the body. The estimate of the incubation period ranges from 1 to 14 days, but most commonly it's around 5 days. At the moment, there is no vaccine available for prevention of this infectious disease. Since the advent of the disease, there has not been any definitive treatment regimen for the virus. Recently, we have found that the early triple combination of interferon beta-1b, lopinavir-ritonavir and ribavirin has proven to be safe and superior in alleviating symptoms and shortening the duration of viral shedding and hospital stay in patients with mild to moderate COVID-19.

Since January 2020, this viral infection has spread quickly and widely to every corner of the globe, affecting all countries and ethnicities, no matter whether you are rich or poor. Healthcare systems in some countries have been stretched to the limit, with many fatal cases. In order to combat the spread of the infection, most areas and countries around the world have adopted the policy of closing their borders and restricting the movement of people, together with vigorous testing and isolation of infected individuals. Furthermore, all governments around the world have adopted and issued regulations on social distancing, by putting restrictions on gatherings, and closure of certain facilities and businesses, including schools. The House of Bishops of the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui also decided to suspend all public services and group meetings in late February 2020. At St John's Cathedral, all on-site services and face-to-face meetings have been postponed, while services and pastoral care have

never been stopped. Instead, broadcast services were conducted by a minimal number of clergy or personnel with proper protection with surgical masks, and frequent hand sanitising during the Eucharist.

At an individual level, one should be encouraged to practise social distancing as much as possible, by maintaining a good distance between each other, staying home, and avoiding any unnecessary public gatherings. In particular, one should avoid crowds and close contact with any sick individuals. Diligent hand washing and use of hand sanitiser, wearing surgical masks, avoiding touching the face (in particular, eyes, nose, and mouth), frequent cleansing and disinfecting objects and surfaces that are frequently touched are of paramount importance.

At the time of writing in early May, the HKSAR government is gradually lifting the restrictions. However, we should continue to be vigilant with personal and public hygiene, especially when schools resume and the borders are reopened to mainland China and overseas travellers. We shall continue to combat COVID-19 with 'COVID':

**C**over and protect your face with masks and avoid touching the eyes, mouth and nose

**O**mit unnecessary face-to-face meetings, meal gatherings or mass events

**V**igilant and vigorous testing of suspected cases, those with recent travel history, or close contacts with suspected cases

**I**nfection control of the hands and environment: maintaining good personal and environmental hygiene

**D**iet, lifestyle, and exercise: maintain a healthy lifestyle

*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*

John 14:27



# Empowering Wellbeing during COVID-19

TEXT BY / DR ELDA CHAN, DIRECTOR OF SJCCS  
AND DR ALEX LI, LEAD PSYCHOLOGIST OF SJCCS

Since January 2020, people in Hong Kong have been on a roller coaster of emotions, with fears of catching the coronavirus and/or worries of economic downturn and job security. As we get closer to coming out of the situation in Hong Kong, we are beginning to see restrictions being gradually lifted. Life is set to begin to return to normal, we are actually at a more elevated risk of psychological stress, after having come through such a difficult time.

It is of utmost importance for us to acknowledge the difficulties that we have all experienced, and to normalise the negative emotions that are floating in our minds psychologically. It is not unusual to have experienced depression and anxiety in the last few months, and it is also not unusual that we are still worrying about the future. As a result, we might be hooked by unhelpful behaviours and actions that were led by anxiety, anger and/or frustration in the hope of suppressing or avoiding it.

We might also have given up on things that are important to us such as our faith, our work, our exercise, our self-care and our relationships.

At this critical junction, we need to maintain our priority towards psychological and physical wellbeing. Although they may not make our difficulties go away completely, they will give us the energy required to face the challenges ahead. Below are some suggestions:

### Self-compassion

Make room each day to do something such as a 15-minute mindfulness exercise to recognise and acknowledge your emotions (especially your negative emotions), so that they do not amplify and linger for longer than necessary due to avoidance and suppression.

### Stay focused

Spend time reflecting on what is in your control and what is not within your control, and choose to do at least one small thing each day towards managing something that is within your control.

### Receive your spiritual nutrition

Pray every day to our heavenly Father and ask that he supports us and gives us the strength to come through this crisis stronger than we were before.

### Keep your routine

Work on keeping your sleep and wake times regular. Do not stay up too late or stay in bed for too long in the morning.

### Stay healthy

Reduce the amount of processed snacks and unhealthy foods in the house to prevent comfort eating when anxious or bored.

### Stay active

Exercise at least 30 minutes a day, whether outside or inside. This could be going for a walk or doing an exercise routine on YouTube.

### Be creative with activities

Be creative with what you can do, other than going online, such as learning to cook a dish that you have never tried, engaging in craftwork, decorating your wall, organising your photo album, your wardrobe or your bookshelf, calling a friend that you haven't spoken with for a while, etc. You can make this period of time meaningful despite the restrictions.

### Stay connected

Speak to a friend or family member at least once a day regarding a topic not related to the current health crisis.



If you find yourself struggling during this challenging time, please know that St John's Cathedral Counselling Service (SJCCS) is ready to support you. Please contact us at: info@sjcshk.com or call 2525 7207 to speak to a counsellor.



## An ACM for our times

TEXT BY / MICHAEL SPENCER, HON. SECRETARY, ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL COUNCIL

Under the constraints to which we have all become accustomed since the COVID-19 outbreak, the Cathedral's Annual Church Meeting was held on 17th May 2020. Respecting the need for social distancing, the ACM was held in the Cathedral itself, which offers more space than the Li Hall. Three quarters of the seats were blocked off, and everyone wore a mask. Fortunately, everyone who came could be accommodated and, impressively, there were more people in attendance this year than last year.

It was important to hold this meeting, not just because it is required by the Church of England Trust Ordinance, but because it gives the congregation

a chance to review what goes on at the Cathedral during the year, and ask questions of those responsible.

In addition to the Dean's Report, there were 29 reports from the Council, daughter churches and congregations and all the outreach ministries in this year's Annual Report. It's not too late to get a soft copy, and you are encouraged to read it so that you are well informed about what goes on within the Cathedral community.

The Council has continued to meet during these months of social distancing. The Cathedral staff moved quickly to embrace video-conferencing after social distancing regulations

were introduced. After one Council 'meeting' was held by email to decide some urgent matters, meetings have been held by video since early March. Among the matters discussed were new electronics for the chiming mechanism for the Cathedral bells, and a report on strengthening the governance of the Cathedral's outreach organisations.

The 2020/21 Council was elected at the ACM with all members but one re-elected: Rita Chan stood down after many years' service and Koon G Chiu was elected. The Council will get back to work immediately with the first meeting on 4th June.

## 2020/21 St John's Cathedral Council

### Trustees

Mr Martin Matsui  
Mr John Li

### Council Members

Mr Thomas Bispham  
Mr John Breen  
Dr Joseph Chan  
Dr Ting-kin Cheung  
Mr Koon G Chiu  
Mr James Choo  
Ms Dolores Dayao  
Ms Julianne Doe  
Mr Patrick Fung  
Mrs Alison Harada

Mrs May Ho  
Mr Adrian King  
Ms Natalie Kwok  
Mrs June Li  
Mr Craig Lindsay  
Mr Ron Lye  
Mr Edward Ng  
Mr Martin Philip Rowe, JP  
Ms Margaret Sang  
Mr Michael Spencer

# FOCUS ON SCRIPTURE: Finding Comfort, Hope and a Challenge in Difficult Times

TEXT BY / THE REVEREND ROBERT MARTIN CMP

*All scripture is breathed by God, and it is useful for teaching, for rebuke, for improvement, for training in righteousness, so that people who belong to God may be complete, fitted out and ready for every good work.*

2 Timothy 3:16-17

I imagine most of us reading this will have been touched in some way by the COVID-19 pandemic. Perhaps you've felt that fear, confusion and distress of this challenging time and don't know what to think or believe. Maybe someone close to you; a relative, a friend or work colleague has been touched by this illness and even died. Perhaps you are worried about your job or your finances and how life may be different after the pandemic.

Whatever your personal circumstances you are not alone. Many people are finding it difficult to experience peace of mind in this crisis. Whether you're a Christian or not, upheaval in this world leads to stress and anxiety.

Perhaps part of the answer is that we need to re-focus our attention. I wonder where we get most of our information from. If it's the never-ending news cycle, it is likely to leave us troubled, confused, frustrated and scared. If we are 'addicted' to Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, we may be bombarded by other people's opinions and prejudices, and sometimes find it difficult to discern what is true and accurate from what is fake. We may just be tired of the negativity of what we read and long for some good news.

Simply put, focusing just on the constant news stream can pull us down spiritually and lead us into despair. But in the

midst of all this negative news God has Good News for us. He offers us words of comfort, hope and challenge.

The people who lived in biblical times also knew the reality of famine, war and disease. Perhaps, where we differ from them is that they had an intimate awareness of God's presence with them and his abiding love for them. For us our busyness and preoccupation with other things makes us overlook that presence. He comforted them, He gave them hope and He challenged them to move forward — and He can do the same for us. Maybe it's time to re-direct our attention. Rather than immersing ourselves in social media and news coverage, let's immerse ourselves in God's presence through scripture.

I'd like to share with you a few passages of Scripture that I have marked in my bible and go back to again and again. These verses have helped me to re-direct my thoughts and challenged me in the last few months.

## Words of Comfort

First, scripture can re-direct our hearts and minds again and again to the truth that God cares for us —

*Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you..*

1 Peter 5:7

It is easy in these times of isolation and social distancing to feel isolated and alone. But we are not abandoned and we are not alone. God doesn't want us to be continuously anxious and worried. He cares for us and is there for us. He doesn't promise that we won't endure trials and tribulations, but he does promise that we will not be overwhelmed. The prophet Isaiah, who also knew what it was to suffer, gives us these words.

*When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;  
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;  
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,  
and the flame shall not consume you.  
For I am the Lord your God,  
the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.  
I give Egypt as your ransom,  
Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.  
Because you are precious in my sight,  
and honoured, and I love you,  
I give people in return for you,  
nations in exchange for your life.*

Isaiah 43:2-4

## Words of Hope

Secondly, God provides us not only with 'comfortable words' but with words of hope. He wants to give us hope in Him and hope in the future. Jesus says,

*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*

John 14:27

These are words that we constantly need to hear in these troubled times. They are words that give us hope — hope that whatever the future holds, however this pandemic unfolds, Christ walks and suffers with us. It is the hope that we are not alone.

St Paul in his ministry knew the reality of suffering and he was also keenly aware that through all his tribulations Christ was with him. In his Letter to the Romans he reminds us that there is nothing that this world can throw at us that can separate us from Christ's love. When I'm tempted to make that universal cry of despair, 'Where are you, Lord, in all this mess!', I find great hope in Paul's words.

*No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Romans 8:37-39

## Words of Challenge

Finally, we also need to remember that scripture is not given just to comfort us but also to challenge us. We don't just read scripture to make us feel good. We also need to be challenged by it and to respond to it.

Perhaps, the greatest challenge of scripture to us in this time of pandemic is to love one another. I find John's words in his first epistle sum up how we are to live our lives together in the presence of God.

*Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world.*

1 John 4:11-14

Now, this is easier said than done. I understand that. We must be intentional about turning our focus from the values of this world and begin to see things through God's eyes. While I'm not suggesting that we ignore what's going on in the world around us, surely it's healthier for us to take our inspiration from the positive words of scripture. Love one another.

And finally, when you are feeling anxious or troubled, remember:

*Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 4:6-7

**May you find in your exploration of scripture your own words of comfort in these difficult times, your own words of hope to strengthen and inspire you, and your own words of challenge to drive you forward, knowing that Christ walks alongside you.**



Christ yesterday and today,  
the beginning and the end.

The light of Christ gives us  
hope and faith.



**Easter Day Service**

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and  
the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.  
Amen.



**Paschal Candle**

Jesus says 'I am the light of the world.  
Whoever follows me will not walk in  
darkness, but will have the light of life.'  
*John 8:12*



**Washing of Feet**

Jesus Christ says 'If you love me, keep my  
commandments.' 'Unless I wash you, you have  
no part in me.'

**Sprinkled with the Water of Life**

Christ gives the living water.

# Holy Week and Easter Services 2020

**Blessing of Oil**

We are called to be the sacramental sign  
of God, signify God's love, presence and  
transforming power in today's world.



**Words of Wisdom**

The Cathedral may be empty due to social  
distancing but Christ is here in our midst.

**Easter 2020 at St John's Cathedral**

Alleluia, Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia.







# Welcome Father Amos

TEXT BY / STUART WOLFENDALE

PHOTOS BY / MICHAEL LUU, AMOS POON

Father Amos Poon, the chaplain who has most recently joined St John's, has benefited from strong women in his life. When he told his mother he thought he might have a vocation for the priesthood, she told him it was good, but to get a job first! That led him to three invaluable years in full time fundraising with Hong Kong Christian Service and WWF. When he told his wife he had bought three Japanese 'Gundam' model kits to construct, she told him that was fine, but that was his ration for the year. He got through them in three months, leading his restless fingers to take up origami. Such is his expertise now that he has crafted almost a model a day on YouTube to interest homebound watchers during the virus restrictions.

Fr Amos comes from several generations of Anglicans and his great grandfather was a priest, but there was no inevitability in him becoming one. As a student, his bachelor's degree was in policy and administration studies and he seemed headed towards the civil service. That is, until he became a youth leader at a local parish church and his mother recommended 'Hand Me Another Brick' by Charles Swindoll to guide him in that. Before he was through the first chapter, he felt had a calling to be a priest.

His vicar turned out to be another decisive woman. She recommended that he spend three years at Divinity School of Chung Chi College of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. 'She felt I was mature enough to go there to equip myself with theology before going on to Ming Hua College. She was a prophet.' says Fr Amos. 'Two big events for me took place there. My father died, the hardest moment in my life. The community of students acted as a great support. I also met my wife at Chung Chi, where she had come to from Shanghai to study theology.'

He believes a basic understanding of theology is important. A priest when preaching needs to understand the Bible and its different versions. Theology is necessary to understand liturgy. 'As Anglican priests, liturgically we follow the book, as we say, but you need to know what is behind that, such as why we elevate the host, or why we adopt certain postures in invitation and in prayer.' Fr Amos also thinks it has a pastoral impact where you might not expect. 'Fundraising is an example.' he says. 'There is theology in that. How do you raise money in a Christian way?'

Fr Amos's first parish was St Paul's Church, where he began as an assistant and plain Mr Poon, and then went on to become a deacon and a priest. He was very much involved with that church's mentoring programme for senior pupils at St. Mark's School; making friends, inviting them to his home during New Year and being there for them in crises. Fr Amos's attitude to mission took shape. 'Building up a relationship with people by enjoying activities is the objective. Making them go to church is God's will, not our effort.'

The transition to the Cathedral chaplaincy was not difficult. He had initially been introduced to St John's by former trustee Eric Bohm, CEO of WWF, and became an intern from Chung Chi College along with Fr Frankie Lee. There are still many other familiar faces from that time at the cathedral. The differences in social patterns between St Paul's and St John's have struck Amos. 'At St Paul's, Cantonese is spoken and usually the bonding is quite tight. If I take my wife or mother there, the ladies will circle to talk to them. In St John's the congregation is different. They are friendly and say 'hello' but no circling! That is not a bad thing. Here you can come and sit and go if you want to. It gives people a certain freedom and space.'

Fr Amos's specialisation at St John's is the Chinese ministry. However, The Dean told him that he was a priest for the Cathedral as well. Therefore, he is rostered to officiate and preach at the English services, which pleases him. He believes that the English language liturgy of the Cathedral will and should continue. 'I, for one, really like the traditional liturgy and I usually enjoy (as they call it in English) the bells and smells and the major feast days. These are not only acts of worship but also have teaching behind them, so we not only enjoy the worship but learn something about faith.' Amos does not like to describe this liturgy as an English one, 'because we can all use it. I would prefer to describe it as a valuable tradition,' he says.

'In the Province, we have a new service booklet to authorise services, like the Easter Vigil and the Washing of the Feet at the Maundy Thursday service, so at least you can try them in your parish. It's interesting. I have talked to young people who want to experience new things, and when they want to experience new things they will come to St John's. But the new things are actually the old things.'

What can St John's do for secular Hong Kong?

Immediately, Fr Amos quotes Isaiah. 'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people,' which was a voice he heard searching for his vocation. 'But that kind of comfort and peace does not necessarily mean to just the mind and the heart. Sometimes it means taking action towards what is taking place. If you stay in Central you can think Hong Kong is a very great place. But Hong Kong has many difficulties, such as the poor, the marginalisation of people, and housing issues.'

Fr Amos believes we need to rethink this question. If God is present, what would He do to bring comfort to the people – even people in the business world who also have their problems?

'We not only need to evangelise people to believe in the Gospel, we need to take an active approach to bringing comfort and peace to those amongst us. That is how I see the direction and mission of the Church in the city.'

To illustrate his own mission, Amos went back to what is his primary recreation, running. He took it up on holiday in Japan, and found it relieved the tensions he was feeling as a new priest. He began by jogging around the Imperial

Palace grounds in Tokyo and then along Bowen Road. Now he runs in marathons.

'The way I encourage people to run is rather like spreading the Gospel,' he says. 'I run in a marathon and then put it all up on Facebook. I show people what you can do and how your life can be improved by running. Then you let people ask you how can they join in. You don't just tell them to.'



# Interview with Anthony Tong on the Collaboration between The Amity Foundation, Hong Kong and The Diocese of Toungoo

TEXT & PHOTOS BY / DEBBIE MCGOWAN



When Bishop John Wilme, the then Bishop of Toungoo in Myanmar, visited Hong Kong in October 2016, there was one particular member of our Mandarin congregation who listened very carefully to his presentation and was impressed. He wanted to find out more...

Anthony Tong is a Hong Konger through and through. He attended St Mark's School in Shau Kei Wan, where the Head Teacher was a British priest, The Revd Basil Moraes (himself a DBS boy). Revd Basil escaped to China during WWII, living among his war-time university Chinese friends, and became a fluent Mandarin speaker. He was commissioned to teach English to the Chinese pilots so they could communicate with western pilots in mid-air dog-fights.

Revd Basil was an inspiration to Anthony, both as a great English teacher and a devoted Christian. The family and their Christian values and principles all gave Anthony an excellent grounding and foundation for his future. He developed a life with meaning, an understanding that education is a powerful tool, and was fired up with a dream to help others.

Anthony became a Christian in 1965 and in 1977 he and his then fiancée started attending the 9.00am Sung Eucharist at St John's Cathedral. They were married in January 1978 at the Cathedral by The Revd Ian Lam, his HKU contemporary. When Anthony's career took off, he changed from the 9.00am service to the 8.00am service. Then in 2008, he became a regular member of the Mandarin congregation, partly to maintain his Mandarin-speaking, to work effectively with partners on the Mainland.



Kong (which has been in existence since 1985) and the wider Nanjing-based faith-based Amity Foundation was founded by Bishop Ting in the 1980s. It is one of the most accountable charities in China, and amongst other miraculous things, it has printed over 200m bibles (in various languages), supported work in leper colonies and funded many water projects in China. From the outset, it has been actively supported in Hong Kong by the Province of Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui. Indeed, The Revd Dr Philip Wickeri was the first overseas co-ordinator, and other workers have been seconded and financed by the Province.

Amity has also developed 'The Living Water Project', the name deriving from the biblical reference to mankind's quest to find the water which would quench the eternal thirst. To raise funds for the project, they hold an annual Walkathon in Hong Kong, 'Walk for Living Water' (this year it was held 'virtually' in April). The Province supported the first walk in 2010 (our current Archbishop undertook the walk) as did the Water Supplies Department and some Anglican schools. The objective is to raise awareness about the seriousness of a lack of water for everyday needs, which people so easily take for granted when our own water is literally 'on tap'! This year, an amazing HK\$460,000 was raised to support Amity's outreach initiatives.

So back to the initial meeting of Bishop John Wilme and Anthony in October 2016!

Anthony found out more about what was happening in Toungoo. During Bishop John's 25 years as leader, one of his key priorities was to improve the fresh water availability and sanitation conditions in over 110 villages, some of

which are in very far-flung, remote and almost inaccessible areas of the Diocese. Bishop John outlined their challenges and needs so well that Anthony started thinking about how Amity could help, particularly drawing upon their 35 years' experience in China.

After meeting with Bishop John, Anthony was able to persuade colleagues in Nanjing to support Myanmar (as they had been planning development work in other South-east Asian countries). Dean Matthais's advice and encouragement also provided impetus for Anthony to pursue the potential of serving the needy people in Toungoo.

Amity has a close connection with the Hong Kong Christian Council, who is a local partner here. Fortuitously, HKCC philanthropy workers were visiting Myanmar in April 2019, so Amity decided that one of their team, Ms Tong Su should join the trip and gain a clearer insight into how water projects could be implemented there. During that first visit, she was warmly welcomed by the Diocese of Toungoo. As part of the assessment, she visited various villages, held lengthy discussions with local villagers and priests, and built up the connectivity for future project engagement. She brought back favourable findings for colleagues to visualise more clearly how Amity's expertise might be applied to help the neediest communities.

Anthony joined Amity's follow-up visit to Toungoo in December 2019, both to assess the impact of some of the completed pilot projects, and discuss further co-operation with newly-consecrated Bishop Saw Shee Sho to ensure the projects' sustainability. He was impressed by their friendly disposition and willingness to share the little they had, together with a real desire to try and improve their own lives. Amity has provided US\$18,000 so far and are pleased with project progress and cost-effectiveness. Amongst other things, they have built 3 wells with electric compressor pipelines/taps in different villages, installed 6 pipelines, water tanks, toilets and undertaken a major upgrade of the sanitation facilities in the Diocesan compound.



Debbie McGowan with Bishop Saw Shee Sho



Indeed Debbie McGowan visited one of the newly-built water pumps when she was in Ywar Gyi village earlier this year – no mean feat, as it is about 150 metres above the water level and they had to drill through solid rock!

Monitoring arrangements are in place to track progress and budget of each project, and to help start transferring skills to the locals, enabling them to increase confidence and develop the ability to sustain, maintain and build more of their own facilities in future. It's important to encourage community development in villages, so ultimately they can sustain the existing facilities and also participate in the route to becoming independent; not just relying on the church or other charities to provide and pay for everything.

A key thing Anthony has learnt over the years is the benefit of having leaders (in more remote areas where support is needed) who can communicate effectively in English. This is so powerful in allowing them to interface with the outside world (e.g. individual organisations, NGOs, potential funders) when applying for assistance. Moreover this 'tool', in subsequent monitoring and reporting processes, will facilitate these remote communities developing a more pluralistic civil society that can fend for itself.

Amity see their involvement in Myanmar as a long-term commitment. Anthony is planning to go back to Toungoo again to help transfer skills to key people as well as enhancing their English ability. Based on his 16 years of volunteer English teaching on the Mainland (in which Cathedral members like Stuart Wolfendale have been involved), Anthony is considering an intensive 8-day course for 15-20 priests, pre-school teachers and key people who can share their learning and ability to connect more widely, an endeavour that even our Father Des is beginning to be interested in.

There has been close collaboration between Anthony and Tong Su from Amity and The Dean and others who have already visited Toungoo and were able to share useful information about how projects might best be delivered. At the heart of this collaboration has been the Church, in particular St John's Cathedral and the Diocese of Toungoo. This is just another example of where chance meetings open up opportunities and can help turn hope into reality.

## Bob Chilcott at St John's TEXT BY / THOMAS LI

The Cathedral Choir was honoured to sing under the direction of Mr Bob Chilcott at the 9.00am Sung Eucharist on Unity Sunday in January. Mr Chilcott had an illustrious musical upbringing as a chorister and choral scholar of the Choir of King's College, Cambridge. Later he was a member of the King's Singers, before embarking on his career as a full time composer and choral conductor. The commitment to singable and communicative music is reflected in his prolific choral compositions and arrangements. Several of his musical compositions have been performed at St John's before. These included: 'A Little Jazz Mass' as a service setting; 'If Ye Love Me', 'Were You There?' and 'Dear Lord and Father of Mankind' for anthems; and 'The Shepherd's Carol' at the Nine Lessons and Carols.



For Mr Chilcott's first visit to St John's, the choir sang his setting of Charles Wesley's hymn text 'Love Divine'. It was commissioned by his friends from a Presbyterian church in Dallas more than ten years ago. He admitted that the revisiting of this work had made

him take a few moments to recall and familiarise himself with it again. The Dean thanked him by presenting a Chinese calligraphy banner of Psalm 150 in the shape of a treble clef and the new choir album 'Faith in the City'.

## Outreach Highlights during COVID-19

### Feb-May

#### Life in COVID-19 Photo Album

Life Enrichment Centre (LEC) created an online photo-journal platform to foster positive attitudes and to bring some cheer to participants through the sharing of life moments and experiences during the COVID-19 outbreak.

### Apr

#### SJCBookstore on TikTok

Launched by St John's Cathedral Bookstore to promote and arouse public interest on the internet. [www.tiktok.com/@sjcbookstore](http://www.tiktok.com/@sjcbookstore)



### Feb-Apr

#### Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills Training Group

Face-to-face and online group activities organised by St John's Cathedral Counselling Service (SJCCS) for young adults with emotional issues.

### Apr

#### Online Promotion of SJC Bookstore

All orders through Facebook Messenger, email or telephone received a special 20% discount.

### 17 & 24 Apr, 8 May

#### Zoom sessions on Covid-19 Digital Cartoon Booklets

Interactive activities and discussions based on the cartoon booklet 'Sa Sa's Life During COVID-19' organised by LEC.



# Goodbye Hello!

TEXT BY / MICHAEL GIBB



Evelyn Chan



King Chan



Maggie Chan



The Revd Wu Wai Ho

With heavy hearts, we recently bid goodbye to two much-loved members of the St John's community - Maggie Chan and The Revd Wu Wai Ho.

As the Cathedral's communications officer for three and a half years, Maggie was deeply involved in publicising, marketing, photographing, designing and writing. She was our in-house expert on everything taking place at the Cathedral! A long-term parishioner, Maggie has moved on to pastures new, but she is still an enthusiastic member of our community.

Filling Maggie's impressive shoes is Evelyn Chan, our new communications expert. Evelyn is no stranger to St John's, either. She brings a wealth of experience in journalism, publicity and communications. Skills she once deployed in the commercial sector and at educational institutions will now assist her in keeping the people of Hong Kong up-to-date with events at St John's. Evelyn, active at our church for more than a decade, has been a leader for the Education for Ministry (EfM) adult education programme and for the annual Cursillo residential event. She also regularly serves at the altar on Sunday mornings.

'I am very grateful for the love of my fellow EfMers and Cursillistas, and I hope we continue supporting each other on our faith journey. I wish that our brothers and sisters can enjoy the fellowships at the Cathedral,' Evelyn says.

Meanwhile, Fr Wai Ho has started a new chapter in his ministry as vicar at the Crown of Thorns Church in Tsuen Wan, where he oversees the whole parish. He graduated from HKSKH Ming Hua Theological College in 2013 and served at St John's for six and a half years. He is the only deacon in St John's 170 years history, all other chaplains already having been ordained before they arrived!

At St John's, he looked after the Chinese ministry and developed his liturgy, worship, administration, and pastoral skills.

'I would like to thank The Dean and The Archbishop wholeheartedly for the opportunity to serve at St John's,' says Fr Wai Ho, adding that with God's grace the Crown of Thorns Church will thrive and prosper.

Music now, and we welcome King Chan to St John's as the music officer for the Cathedral.

King joined the cathedral team in October 2019 after graduating with a Master of Music in Choral Conducting from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire in July 2019. His main duty is to assist the Director of Music with the running of the Cathedral Choir and Children's Choir. He attends rehearsals and services, prepares musical materials, and rehearses with the choir.

'St John's is definitely a wonderful place for worship. We have good tradition with an elegant liturgy to help people worship the Lord,' King says.



Our appreciation goes to Lions Club of Hong Kong East for the donation of the UT Fever Scan. We continue to pray for the pandemic and all those affected. May God's grace and love be with us always.

# Forthcoming Services at St John's & Daughter Churches



## St John's Cathedral

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

### 6th September (Sunday)

9.00AM Sung Eucharist  
Commissioning of Servers & Music Ministry

### 13th September (Sunday)

9.00AM Worship for All  
Commissioning of Sunday School

### 14th September (Monday) Holy Cross Day

7.30PM Sung Eucharist

### 20th September (Sunday) St John's Cathedral Dedication Festival

9.00AM Sung Eucharist  
5.00PM Choral Evensong

### 29th June (Monday) St Peter & St Paul

7.30PM Thanksgiving Eucharist in honour of Mr Peter Yue for his faithful service as Cathedral Organist

### 6th August (Thursday) The Transfiguration of Our Lord

7.30PM Sung Eucharist

### 15th August (Saturday) The Blessed Virgin Mary

12.00NOON Sung Eucharist

### 27th September (Sunday) Outreach Sunday

All services

### 29th September (Tuesday) St Michael and All Angels

7.30PM Sung Eucharist  
Commissioning of Michaelmas Fair Committee

### 3rd October (Saturday)

3.00PM Consecration of Dean Matthias Der as Bishop Co-adjutor

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

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



#### Every Sunday

10.15AM 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

10.00AM Sung Eucharist

### Discovery Bay Church SKH Wei Lun Primary School, Lantau

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



#### Every Sunday

10.00AM 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 Canon Dwight dela Torre

The Revd Canon Peter Koon

The Revd Sharon Langbis

The Revd Franklin Lee

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 Amos Poon

### Cathedral Honorary Chaplain

The Revd Jenny Wong Nam  
The Revd Dr Philip Wickeri

### Executive Administrator

Viola Ip

### Director of Music

Felix Yeung

### Assistant Director of Music

Alan Tsang

### Organist

Peter Yue

### Sub-Organist

Jonathan Yip

### Communications Officer

Evelyn Chan

### Verger

Ho Tat Hoi

### Head Server

James Choo

### Head Sidesman

Roger Cole

### In Touch Editorial Team

Evelyn Chan - Editor

Stuart Wolfendale

John Twist

Wendy Nesbitt

Andrew Ashley

# A Sunday in the Life of..... Head Sidesman

## Roger Cole

DM: Debbie McGowan RC: Roger Cole

**DM** *How many Sidesmen are there at SJC?*

**RC** There are currently 43 ladies and gentlemen who are members of the Guild of Cathedral Sidesmen and we serve at all Sunday services, except the Mandarin and Filipino services.

**DM** *Please describe a typical Sunday for you*

**RC** We usually arrive 15-20 minutes before each service, knowing our individual responsibilities from the rota that I circulate. We greet the congregation at the doors, handing out the Order of Service. A warm welcome makes all the difference and we particularly look for visitors and newcomers. We collect the offertory, deliver the elements to the altar, deal with any occasional disruptions during the service (mobile phones, photographers, etc.) and generally be aware of any unexpected situations that might arise (medical etc.). At the end, we tidy the pews and help prepare for the next service, as well as count the collection in the Cathedral Office.

**DM** *How long have you been a Sidesman?*

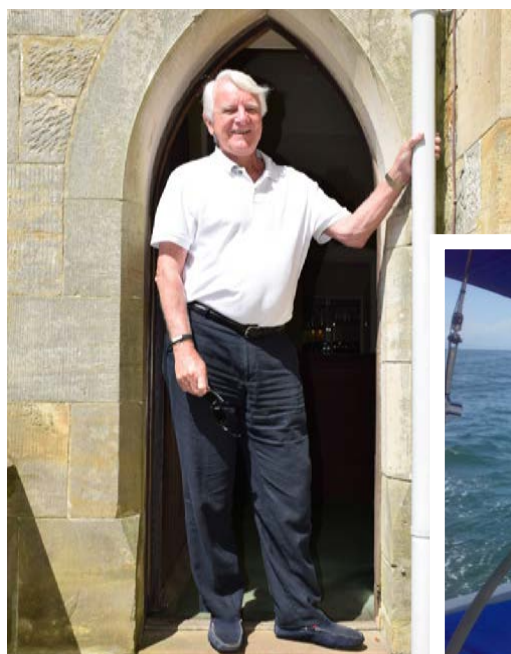
**RC** Probably too long! Vanda and I started coming to the Cathedral in 1973 when we arrived in Hong Kong. I wanted to be more involved in the services, so joined the Guild soon after. I eventually took over from David Kwok as Head Sidesman when he retired in 1986.

**DM** *How committed do you have to be as a Sidesman?*

**RC** A Sidesman's role is an important one in any service, and therefore one has to want to be involved. You also need to be confident, punctual, and attentive with ability to show leadership and direction to the congregation.

**DM** *What support and training do you receive?*

**RC** There is no formal training – most of it is done 'on the job' but there are 'General Notes to Sidesmen' which I send to all those who are interested. If a candidate confirms their interest and commitment to the Guild, their position will then be approved by The Dean.



**DM** *What is the best thing about being a Sidesman?*

**RC** Being part of a team of people who are dedicated to seeing that any service flows with dignity and that the clergy are assured there will be no undue disruptions.

**DM** *What would make life easier for you as a Sidesman?*

**RC** Over the past decade, life has become more demanding as the numbers of worshippers has grown, especially at the Sung Eucharist at 9.00am. Whilst this is good thing for the church, we do spend considerably more time organising people, finding them seats and having to exercise 'crowd control'. Some form of overflow arrangements in the Li Hall (as used at Christmas and Easter services) would ease the situation of people having to stand at the West and Transept Doors every week. The downside is that we are not always able to fully participate in the service and worship like everyone else.

**DM** *Any amusing anecdotes you are willing to share?*

**RC** Well, one moment does spring to mind immediately – at one Midnight Mass service, when the Cathedral was invariably packed with standing room only, there were a few young people who had obviously been celebrating beforehand. One gentleman, who was leaning on my shoulder listening to the sermon, suddenly shouted to the Preacher 'Give us a song, mate!' much to the amusement of the congregation. The Preacher was Father John Chynchen. He didn't miss a beat, just continued with his sermon without further interruption!

**DM** *What is your occupation?*

**RC** I run my own small engineering company, dealing mostly in water metering, water leak detection and pressure monitoring systems.

**DM** *What do you like doing in your spare time?*

**RC** I like to escape and sail on my boat in Port Shelter, just south of the Sai Kung Peninsula with friends.