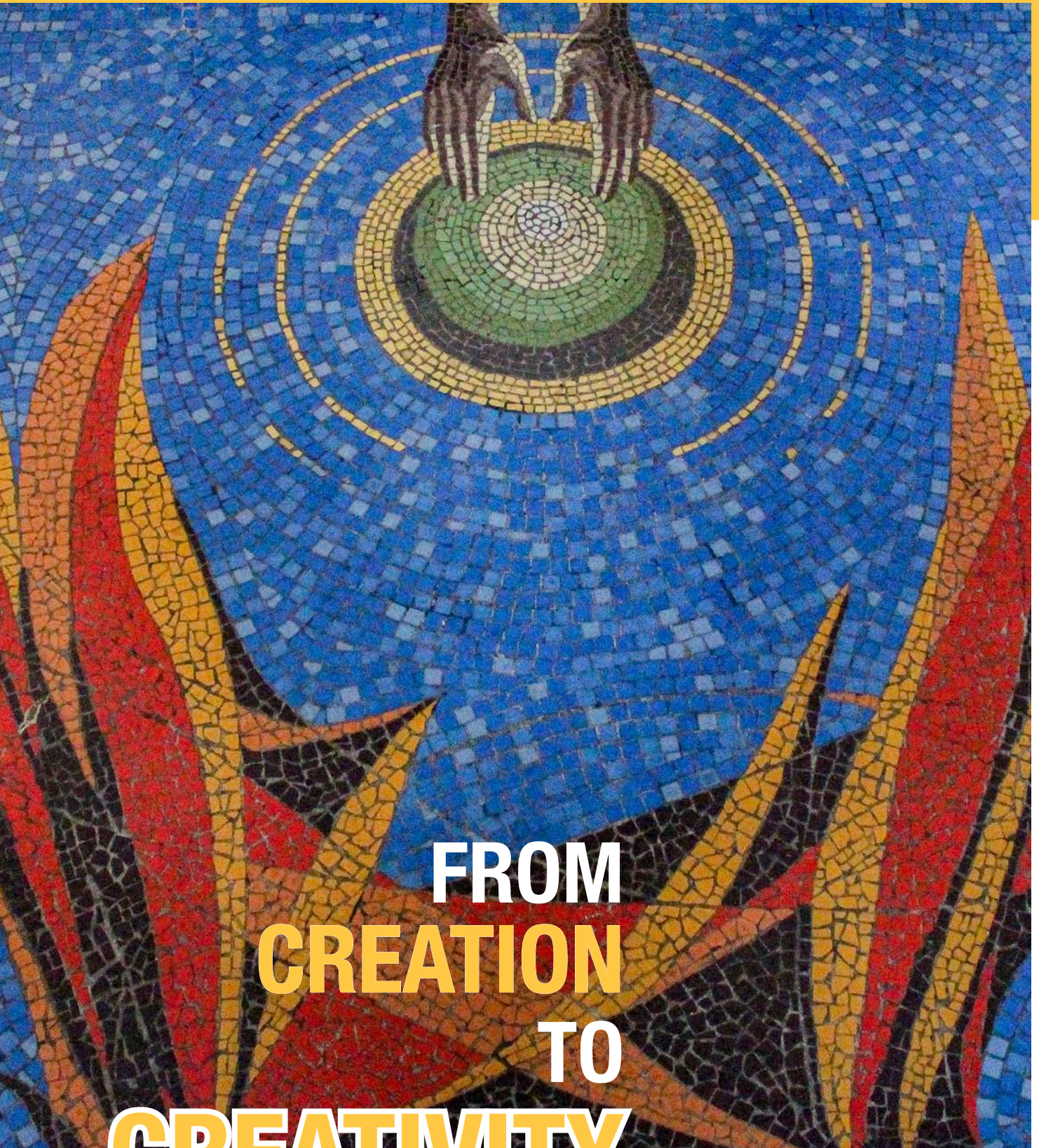


# In Touch

The Cathedral Magazine - Spring Edition 2022



FROM  
CREATION  
TO  
CREATIVITY



# In Touch

ISSUE 029

## Dean

The Very Revd Kwok-keung Chan

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The Revd Canon Peter Koon

The Revd Sharon Langbis

The Revd Robert Martin

(Chaplain and Priest-in-Charge of Emmanuel Church)

The Revd Will Newman

(Chaplain and Priest-in-Charge of St Stephen's Chapel)

The Revd Amos Poon

The Revd Mark Rogers

(Chaplain and Priest-in-Charge of Discovery Bay Church)

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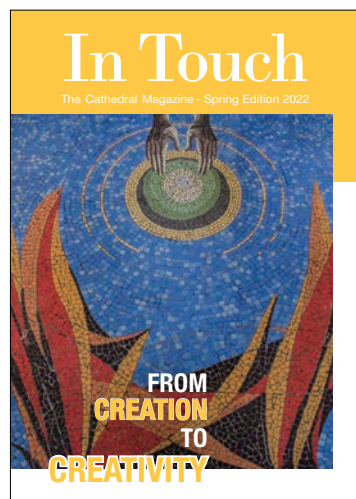
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## Dean's Message

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Peace be with you!

*'Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?'* (Romans 8.35)

During the severe fifth wave of the COVID outbreak in Hong Kong, we were saddened by the suspension of public worship in our Cathedral, as well as the three daughter churches. This is something we can't do much about, but what we can do is to continue praying for those suffering in Hong Kong and around the world.

Although we cannot return to the church to worship God physically, the live webcast from the Cathedral YouTube channel serves as a great support and spiritual anchor during this time of the pandemic. The clergy and staff members have rich experience in conducting the Eucharist online, and our parishioners are used to taking part in the virtual services and praying together in our own homes and space.

The love of Christ has been demonstrated through our various ministries in the past three months. I was deeply touched when I attended the Advent Carol Service, the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, the Christmas Eve Midnight Mass and the five Christmas Day Holy Communion services in which I preached. It was only my first Christmas here in St John's as your Dean, yet I feel deeply connected with the members of this community. All of you are just like my family members, sharing the warmth and shouldering the burden.

Such love given to us from the birth of Christ sustained us through Epiphany and Lent. The different liturgical seasons brought to us the diversity and fruitfulness of our Christian faith. During Epiphany, we learned of the revelation of God that expanded our horizon and helped us to understand him deeper and better. The Lenten season has been an ample preparation for the suffering and resurrection of Christ Jesus our Lord. These two liturgical seasons remind us to remember the love bestowed on all of us here in the family of St John's from the birth to the death and rising of Jesus Christ.

Paul says it perfectly, *'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 8.38-39)

Lovingly yours,



各位主內弟兄姊妹，平安！

「誰能使我們與基督的愛隔絕呢？難道是患難嗎？是困苦嗎？是迫害嗎？是飢餓嗎？是赤身露體嗎？是危險嗎？是刀劍嗎？」（羅馬書 8 章 35 節）

在新冠肺炎第五波疫情爆發之際，座堂及三間附屬教堂需暫停公開崇拜，我們為此感到難過。面對疫情，我們能夠做的實在不多。然而透過禱告，我們可以繼續記念在香港以至世界各地受影響的每一個人。

疫情下我們雖然未能親身回到聖堂內敬拜上帝，但藉着座堂的網上直播崇拜，仍可得到屬靈的牧養和支持。座堂聖品及同工對舉行網上崇拜有豐富經驗，教友亦漸漸習慣在家參與崇拜，同心祈禱。

過去三個月，基督的愛在我們事工中不斷彰顯。在參與各個將臨期及聖誕期崇拜的時候，我都深受感動。第一次在這裏以座堂主任牧師身分與大家同度聖誕，已讓我體會到彼此之間的密切連繫。你們每一位就像我的家人般，同喜同悲，甘苦與共。

藉基督降生而賦予我們的這份愛，將延續至顯現期及大齋期。不同的節期向我們展示基督信仰的多元及豐富特色。在顯現期我們因為看到上帝的啟示而得以擴闊視野，加深對祂的了解。而在大齋期我們為迎接基督的受難和復活作好準備。這兩個節期提醒我們，基督的愛透過祂的降生、受難，以至復活澆灌在我們座堂的大家庭。

使徒保羅明示：「因為我深信，無論是死，是活，是天使，是掌權的，是有權能的，是現在的事，是將來的事，是高處的，是深處的，是別的受造之物，都不能使我們與上帝的愛隔絕，這愛是在我們的主基督耶穌裏的。」（羅馬書 8 章 38-39 節）

願主的愛常與我們同在！

座堂主任牧師  
陳國強謹啟





# From Creation to Creativity

**I**n the beginning, God created the heavens and earth. After creating plants, wild animals and cattle, God created humankind in his image and according to his likeness. To some, this could therefore be interpreted as human beings having a sense of holiness. Thus, we could experience sacredness and always long to be united with God.

As St Augustine once said: 'You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.' Some see that in the later account of the creation story written in chapter two, God formed the world in a very humanly manner. God formed Adam from the dust of the ground, breathing into his nostrils the breath of life and making him a living being. When Adam and Eve committed the Sin by eating of the fruit from the forbidden tree, the Lord God walked in the garden, calling to the man, asking 'where are you?' These actions describe God in the form of a human being, showing that we were created in his image.

To me, one of the main characteristics of God is creativity, and his work is to create. Analytical philosophers have sometimes undermined God's creativeness by claiming that God is 'omniscience' (all-knowing). What we define as omniscience is the ability to know everything. But if 'everything' is something able to be known, it means there is a boundary for everything. For God to be the creator, God has to have the ability to create something out of nothing, which expands this boundary. Therefore, omniscience should be understood as having the ability to create knowledge. As God has created us in his own image, God has also given humankind this power to create; this sense of creativeness.

Artists, musicians, composers, inventors, writers or even fundraisers; all these require a high degree of creativeness. One might without doubt also agree that as priests, we are constantly involving in creation in our ministry. From the dictionary, 'creativity' could be

By the Revd Amos Poon

defined as the use of imagination or original ideas to build something, and to be creative is to have a good imagination. God certainly is very creative, and chapter two of Genesis reminds us how God uses his ability to create in his care for Adam.

After God formed Adam, God said, '*it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.*' Then God formed every animal and bird out of the ground and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. Through this process of naming the animals, God was trying to find Adam a suitable helper as his partner. This process finally ended with no result. Yet God did not force Adam to make a choice within this boundary. God was willing to take a step further by creating an extra choice for him. Causing him to fall into a deep sleep, God created a woman from his rib. When the man saw her, he was able to take her as his partner. He said '*This at last is the bone of my bones and the flesh of my flesh.*' We see in this story that God has given Adam freedom to choose, and even when he could not make a choice, God created something extra outside of this boundary.

As priests, we certainly do not have this power of creation. But through the creativity which God has given us, we can use it to connect different ideas. In the end this could create a space for people to experience the divine. This is not an easy task for finite human beings to manifest the infinite.

Creativity is certainly an important aspect in our services. Last year was the first Christmas with public service since I started serving at St John's. The Nativity play by the Sunday school was certainly full of creativity. I still remember Joseph was not only accompanied by Mary, but also by a donkey. This fun touch, through the innocence of the Sunday school children, allowed everyone to have

a deeper thought on how we should understand Jesus being born as a baby, and his teaching about entering the kingdom of God as a little child.

Homilies during the service also need a high degree of creativeness. I was to preach on St Stephen's Day, which is on 26<sup>th</sup> December. In the sermon, there were many aspects I needed to consider. Stephen was the first martyr of the Church. An important message had to be about being a witness for Christ, and even willing to sacrifice yourself for the sake of faith. However, as it was only a day after Christmas and Christmastide should be a joyous period. The festivity would be ruined if the message was based too much on martyrdom. Finally, I decided to focus on how we should respond to the gift God gave us. 26<sup>th</sup> December is also Boxing Day, thus this theme was suitable.

At the end of the sermon, I shared a story about Sunday school students being asked by their teacher what gifts they would give to the baby Jesus. One said he would give him a blanket, and another said he would give Jesus a gingerbread cookie. Sitting in the corner was a student who came from a poor family. He thought, 'if I were a shepherd I could bring a lamb, and if I were a wise man I could bring him gold', but he was neither of them. When the teacher asked him, he replied, 'as I have nothing, I will give Jesus my heart.' This story is fitting as it connected the theme of having a grateful heart and the theme of Christmas. Not everyone of us is called to be a martyr, but all of us are called to offer our hearts to God in response to this greatest gift God has given us, Jesus Christ. The story is a product of creation. This is not a true story, but something I decided to use after reflecting on the last verse of the famous Christmas carol, '*In the Bleak Midwinter.*'

Lately, one of the main projects of the Cathedral was the launching of our Youth Ministry. To connect with the young

people certainly needs creativity! The youth fellowship, which meets every Friday evening, is called 'Among Us'. At first we picked this name because it is a name of a popular mobile game. The name itself could attract the attention of young people. Later, we found out that this phrase 'among us' is also quite catchy. We could promote the fellowship by saying, 'the youth fellowship is Among Us,' 'happiness is Among Us,' 'love is Among Us.' This phrase also reflected a biblical aspect, as the famous verse in the gospel of John reads '*And the Word became flesh and lived among us.*' A seemingly very simple decision on the name of the fellowship required a sense of creativeness. Through it, we could create something that connected the aspect of whether the name attracts young people, the aspect on promoting the fellowship, and the aspect of faith.

Last but not least, creativity is also an important ingredient in pastoral care. When I was studying for my theological degree, one of my professors gave me a book, and in the inner cover page, he had written 'A person full of kindness always needs creativity to express.'

This is a very good reminder to me. Sometimes the right way of expressing the kindness of the love of God is not the direct and easy way.

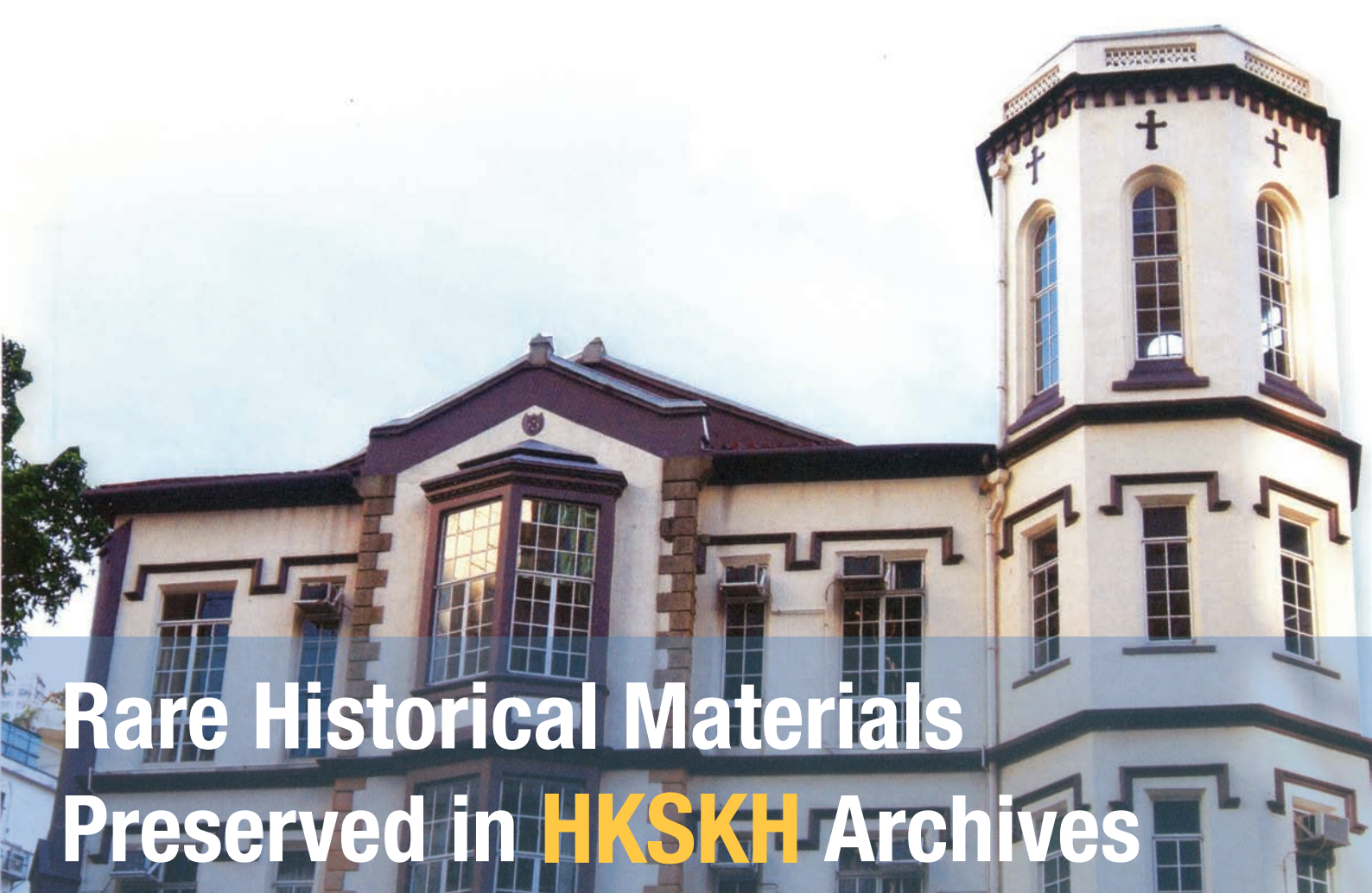
When I was serving in another parish, I met a mother telling me that she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Through our sharing, I knew that she did not want to undergo any treatments, and just wanted to wait for the cancer to become terminal. As she was a mother of three children, I asked how I help could her. She told me her parents were buried in a Christian cemetery, so all she wanted was to be baptised before she died. I was in a dilemma. If I granted her wish, I was afraid that she might harm herself after she had been baptised. However, it was very heart aching for me to listen to her without doing anything. This was one of the most difficult moments in my ministry. I prayed many times to God for him to grant me wisdom. In the end, God gave me wisdom and lots of patience to meet with her. Responding to her request, I did not immediately grant her wish and baptise her, but whenever she told me that her treatment was too painful, I told her that I would always be with her. If she was on the edge of ending her life, I would be there to baptise her. I asked her to call me when she was in that situation. Eventually, she went through all the treatments. Her family also joined our baptismal class. They were all baptised and became regular members of the parish.

God has created all of us in his likeness, and has given us, through his creation, this precious gift of inventiveness, so we have the ability to express the love of God, as well as being able to fashion spaces for people to experience the divine. May God continually nurture such creativeness in our hearts!



Nativity play by the Sunday school





# Rare Historical Materials Preserved in **HKSKH** Archives

**T**he book was relatively plain, but its historical significance enormous. It was a copy of a handwritten Chinese translation of the New Testament dating back to the Cultural Revolution, a time when possessing such a publication could land you in trouble.

A Chinese pastor had given the book to the Revd Professor Philip L. Wickeri when he was ordained as a priest in Nanjing in 1991. 'Never forget where this book has come from,' the pastor had told Fr Wickeri.

This incredibly rare publication is just one of many treasures in Fr Wickeri's office in Bishop's House, home to the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui (HKSKH) Archives.

Fr Wickeri has served as the primary archivist for the HKSKH Province and Advisor to the Archbishop on Historical and Theological studies since 2010 when former Archbishop Paul Kwong founded the Archives.

The HKSKH Archives are kept at Bishop's House, located in Bishop's Hill on Lower Albert Road, opposite the Foreign Correspondents' Club.

'The Archives are not just for the Church; they are for all of Hong Kong,' says Fr Wickeri, whose team comprises Michelle Lin, Dr Ruiwen Chen, Tiffany Kong, plus volunteers Rosanna Mak, Martin Ellison and Naomi He. Around 30 interns have chipped in over the years, too.

*By Michael Gibb*

'The materials are of interest to historians in general, legal scholars, and researchers from different fields. They serve as a repository for the historical records of the Church in Hong Kong and the region,' says Fr Wickeri.

The multi-level mission of the HKSKH Archives is to acquire, collect, organise and index any materials relevant to the HKSKH Province, and to provide information and research services, assist scholars in their studies, and champion the need for archival preservation.

'We have almost 140,000 pages of documentary material, most of which are stored in the basement of the building,' says Fr Wickeri, adding that climate-controlled conditions are essential for conservation purposes.

Items include registers, constitutions and canons, legal documents, land deeds, financial records, minute books, letters, reports, writings, statements, photos, maps, souvenirs and other historical artifacts.

Rarer items include: Robert Morrison's four-volume Chinese Dictionary (1815 – 1822), the Royal Letters Patent (1849), which provided the legal foundations for the establishment of the Diocese of Victoria in Hong Kong, and a collection of early editions of the Book of Common Prayer (in Chinese) dating back to the mid-nineteenth century.

Other items include a nearly complete set of HKSKH publications in Chinese and English, 6,000 digitised photos, and original photos from the nineteenth century. Some of these photos are exhibited in the large reception room on the ground floor of Bishop's house.

The Archives contain more than just Hong Kong-related items. 'We also have historical materials on Anglican Christianity in Greater China and related areas,' says Fr Philip Wickeri, who has worked in mainland China and Taiwan.

Archival work is more than indexing, though. Outreach is also a key part of the team's work through school visits, open days, online exhibitions and exchanges. An oral history project is planned, too, and the team has published a number of historical works in English and Chinese on the history of the HKSKH.

Perhaps one of the most complex areas of archival work is conservation. Over time, the state of historical materials often deteriorates and urgent repairs are called for. Specialist workshops on book preservation have provided the team with vital techniques aimed at thwarting wear and tear.

For example, any metallic clips or binders found among materials waiting to be sorted through and indexed have to be removed since rusting metal tends to stain and destroy paper.

Bishop's House itself is as historically important as the Archives stored within its walls. The story of this three-storey structure, the second oldest Western-style building in Hong Kong, dates back to 1843 when plans were set in motion for a school for Chinese boys. That institution was St Paul's College, now located on Bonham Rd, Mid-Levels, while the original Land Deed for Bishop's House is dated 1850.

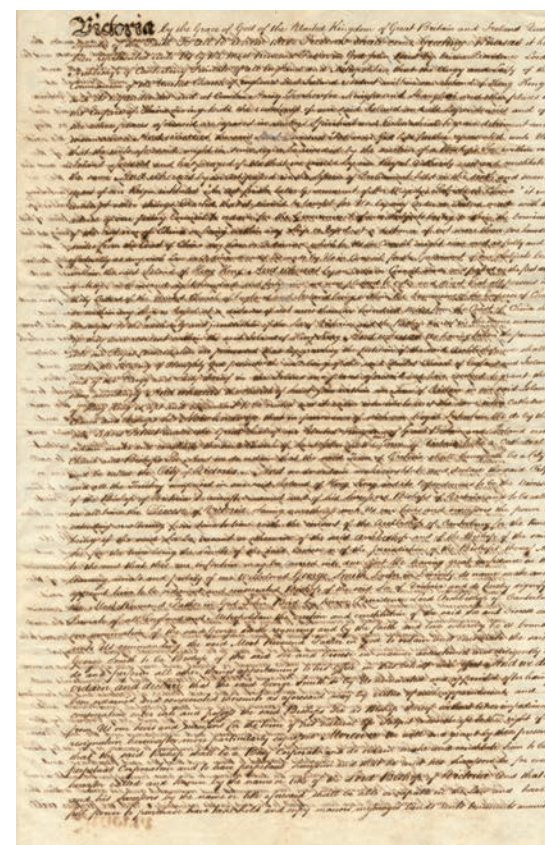
Bishop's Hill itself is a treasure trove of architectural wonders. In addition to Bishop's House, this well-preserved site for the history of religious education, welfare, and healthcare includes St Paul's Church and Ming Hua Theological College, among other fine examples.

Surrounded by such historical buildings, as well as the lush foliage and banyan trees in the gardens of Bishop's House, the Archives testify to the strength of Christianity in Hong Kong and the 'eternally immutable love of God'.

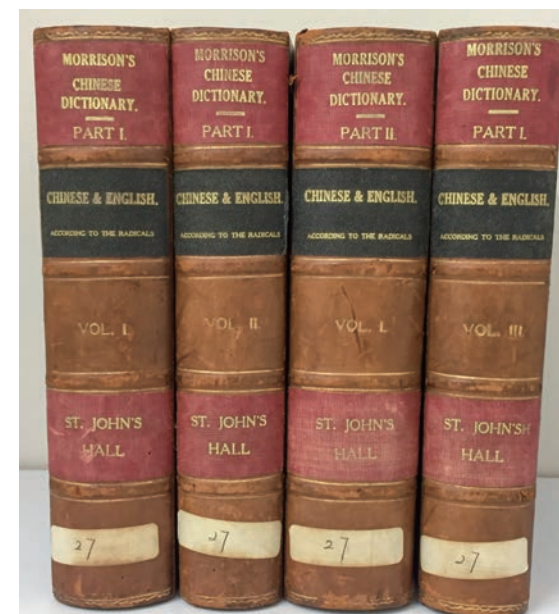
For more on the Archives, please visit <http://archives.hkskh.org>



Early editions of the Book of Common Prayer in Chinese



The Royal Letters Patent (1849)



Robert Morrison's Chinese Dictionary





wide variety of events possible.

I am also grateful for the continued support of Dr Elda Chan of our Counselling Service whose experience has been invaluable in making sure that our goals and aims are focused and purposeful for our mission. Fr Amos has also provided support both in his pastoral care of those who are working for LEC and our young people, as well as always being at our events for moral support! He also heads up a running group which attracts those who are fit and who love a good work out! We appreciate the fellowship which all these events foster.

Our team also enjoys the commitment of Jacquelyn Tryde who joined in 2021 and also Kelly Hsuan, Kanu Fung and Seraph Wong. We are grateful that we have so much talent at LEC, not to mention the joy that they bring with their energy and team spirit!

None of this is possible without the support of our Cathedral family. Thank you for Dean KK for his interest and participation at our events and to the Cathedral staff for helping us so much of the logistics for our activities. Together with my LEC Advisory Board members, I feel so blessed to be a part of this ministry and I thank members for their opinions and suggestions as we have travelled this incredible journey.

Do look out for the next time we have our mentorship programme mentor recruitment drive – we would love to welcome you!

# Abundant Blessings and Life Enrichment



By Julianne Doe  
Chairperson of Advisory Board, Life Enrichment Centre

**L**ife Enrichment Centre (LEC) has been in operation for several years. From feeling our way in the beginning and establishing our mission and vision, we have managed, during some very difficult times with the COVID pandemic, to carry out many activities with great determination. Hand in hand with our Youth Ministry (YM), we have served young people in Hong Kong, utilising the time and talents of our Cathedral personnel and congregation. We can be rightly proud of what we have done.

from St Paul's College, who were trained in sailing, with theory lessons and practical coaching. Then in August 2021, our confident sailors sailed in two groups to different islands, and had a four-day camp accompanied by our Service Coordinator Vanice Chan, with opportunities to share cooking and self-care skills, as well as learning in special sessions of personal sharing, and an extra special visit from Father Amos Poon!

First, some statistics for 2021:

- 2,625 total person times (not including YM services)
- Number of students (primary & secondary) served by our life education talks: 1,241
- Number of talks delivered: 7
- Number of people served by our programmes: 1,288
- Number of people served by our trainings: 96

To give you some idea of how impressive these numbers are: in one Zoom school talk, we reached 490 students over three secondary school years. In another school talk, we reached 277 students. Despite the challenges of COVID, we managed to have a virtual walkathon, and we delivered expressive arts social worker training to over ten social workers.

We continued our mentorship programme and had mentor meetings in June and August. We made use of recess times at school to meet and interact with our mentee students. Small group gatherings were organised with special activities, including origami and trying new coffee flavours with a demonstration by a coffee barista!

'To the Depth of Water' (開到水深之處) was our ambitious sailing project, which was carried out over the period July to October. This was a project which involved 19 students

Calling our guides! Our ongoing programme aims to recruit young people over 17 as guides to take visitors around the Cathedral. We managed to recruit 11 volunteers and carried out volunteer training in June 2021. This is a valuable skill set for young people to acquire in the beautiful setting of our Cathedral. Many young people have only seen our Cathedral for the first time and marvel at how magnificent it is.

The end of year saw our young people at Midnight Mass, as well as attendance at the Christmas Day morning service and the Watchnight service before the New Year. Thank you to our LEC and Youth Ministry efforts in bringing our young friends to a close time with our God at this very special holy season.

We are also excited to present to you our new look in our cozy room in the Cathedral. We made some renovations and now we have a wonderful seating area, complete with sofa and plush toys, to make our LEC a cool place to hang out for our young people.

All of the above are wonderful events, and we can only give thanks to God for making it all possible. We have been supported by volunteers from within our Cathedral family, and these volunteers have really been the

backbone of our events. They have contributed their time and talents and have spent weekdays and weekends with our young mentees, taking it upon themselves to be mentors and to provide support and caring words and advice for our young friends.

We are truly blessed to have our LEC Service Coordinator Vanice Chan, who is dedicated and resourceful, and never seems to run out of ideas for getting in more young friends to our Cathedral, our LEC events and our Youth Ministry gatherings. Vanice has a keen understanding of how to communicate with young people and how to make our events attractive, with gorgeous visuals – posters, social media postings, etc., and even more importantly, with innovative ideas for programmes and events. Vanice has also made incredible use of her network of contacts in the social work discipline for ideas and support to make a

## New Staff



Hello!  
I am  
Kanu Fung

### About Me

'I'm Kanu, currently working part time at Life Enrichment Centre. I mostly participate in organising the Expressive Arts Teens Drama Project which we have only launched the drama group very recently. It's an exciting project for me because I'm passionate in performing and arts and working with teenagers. I'm already feeling home here at St John's Cathedral and I'm looking forward to be serving in different meaningful projects.'

Hi!  
I am  
Seraph Wong



### About Me

'Hello all, this is Seraph, the newest part time at the Life Enrichment Centre and also the one who ate the most snacks in the LEC. I am also a local football lover. I will mainly work on the Mentorship programme with St. Paul's Co-educational College and other youth programmes. It's my pleasure to participate in this meaningful programme. And I love the environment of the Cathedral and the LEC. I am so grateful to be part of it.'





# Thanksgiving and Dedication Service 2022

One hesitates to attribute it to divine inspiration, but the New Year's Thanksgiving and Dedication Service was particularly well-timed. It took place immediately after the New Year, on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> January, just five days before the imposition of strict measures forbidding worship in church and most other public activities.

This was an important event for our Diocese of Hong Kong Island. Members of the various congregations around the diocese came together at St John's, the mother church, to thank God for the blessings of the past year, and to re-dedicate themselves to his call to mission and ministry in the coming year.

We are very fortunate in our live-streamed worship at St John's. It is smooth, seamless and moving. But there is nothing quite like a glorious service in the Cathedral, with priests and people coming together and the choir and organ weaving their musical splendour into the worship. It was wonderful that everyone could gather together in person for this service, rather than virtually.

A central part of the service was the renewal of our covenant with God and with one another. Dean KK reminded his brothers and sisters of the meaning of the promise they were renewing. As Christians, we have been admitted into the covenant of Christ. By renewing the covenant, we are pledging to give ourselves to him, and to live our lives redeemed from sin and consecrated to God.

*By Andrew Ashley*  
Bishop Matthias then led the congregation in the Covenant Prayer, in which we promised to take Christ as 'my Way, my Truth and my Life' and 'to strive to order my whole life' on that basis. This was followed by the Bishop's Prayer for 2022, a prayer of thanksgiving and dedication that was said by all. It provides guidance for the year ahead, with exhortations about what we must do if we are to fulfil our renewed covenant. Always, of course, through the grace of God.

In his sermon, Bishop Matthias looked back at the past year and noted, that although it had been very challenging and difficult, we could see this as positive. 'Our characters have grown stronger and our faith in God has grown deeper', he said.

Bishop Matthias focused on the renewal aspect of the service, looking forward with a sense of anticipation and hope to the coming year. He prayed that God would grant us a fulfilling 2022, in which we would see his grace in a special way, and further his kingdom through the deeper understanding of the calling that we have received.

On a personal note, Bishop Matthias quoted a motto that has been important to him since he was in his teens. It will be valuable counsel as we seek to put our renewed covenant into practice this year. 'What you are is God's gift to you. What you make of yourself is your gift to God.'

# Youth Ministry – Among Us

Philip said, 'Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.' Jesus answered, 'Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time?'  
(John 14.8-9)

To most of us, these are two familiar bible verses which may have resonated with you at some point in your spiritual path. They certainly have for me.

- 'Why?'
- 'Now is not the time.'
- 'We had that before, but it did not work.'
- 'You can try.'

At the time before it all began, the idea of setting up a youth ministry felt unsupported, remote and an impossibility.

You may call it stubbornness, or discernment for a nicer word, but the preposterousness stuck. What followed after was the exact same question Philip posed, but probably in a much more unforgiving tone. Repeatedly.

When nothing seemed forthcoming, one came along. Then more joined the journey. There was company. Things started to take form, eventually headed a direction. Who are they? Simply from around. Putting matters in perspective, **Among Us** is by no means a random coincidence. The name by itself is clearly part of the meticulous plan of God. He has answered loudly, perhaps also rudely in response, 'Don't you know me, even if I have been among you for such a long time?'

It is really I who was ignorant.

I thank all those who have chosen to walk the journey with me. Yes, you. Be it a light tap on the shoulder, a quick reminder of faith, or going all out to pave the way. Thank you for attesting that God is spiritually present as much as physically **Among Us**.

**Jason Wong** (Council Member)

## How do you feel about **Among Us**?

It has been such a joy joining **Among Us**. Having grown up at St John's Cathedral, it is very nice to finally have a youth community here where we can come together to worship and learn more about God outside the usual services. I cannot wait to see **Among Us** to continue to grow as a place for spreading the good news of God among us young people.

**Gabriel Chan** (one of the worship team leaders)



## What do we do at **Among Us**?

**Among Us** gathers every Friday. A few days before the gathering we usually have a committee meeting with agenda items on how to increase our participants and to brainstorm some new activities.

At the gathering, we start with praying and worshipping. Then we hold different activities, such as bible studying, sport days and handicraft making. We end with a closing prayer and debriefing. In between gatherings, we also send spiritual quotes in our chat group.

Our activities are always the climax of the gatherings. We see how all the participants enjoy their time. I feel this is the purpose of **Among Us** and that we have God with us.

**Kammuri Lee** (Recreational and Caring youth leader)

## How do you feel about **Among Us**?

The joining of a fellowship is to create a bond between diversified people and to walk together in faith. This is challenging and difficult in the present world and in an established Cathedral with a long history. To create an NGO that impacts our home with millennials requires leadership, openness and hard work for officers and pastors. Although still new and a small group, I am very lucky to join **Among Us**. It is the care and willfulness of the people here that make the fellowship grow.

**Jimmy Wu** (Creative and Ideas youth leader)



# Healing a Fragmented World Starts with Healing Our Faith

By John Tanner, Discovery Bay Church

As we enter 2022, society seems more divided than ever – not just in Hong Kong, but around the world. As a US citizen who has lived in Hong Kong for over 25 years, I feel the weight of that division perhaps more acutely than some – the US is at its most socio-politically polarised at a time when Hong Kong is similarly divided. Of course, both the US and China are also divided over issues such as Hong Kong's political direction. Sometimes I feel like a kid whose parents are fighting, and reconciliation seems like a distant dream.

Perhaps that's why the book *From Fragmentation To Wholeness In The Realm Of Life* by Father Thomas Kwan seemed like such a perfect book to study for Advent. The book tackles the issues of political, social and economic divisions in human society, and how we might heal them. Whether the book achieves that particular goal depends on whom you ask, of course. Personally, the experience of studying the book together with fellow parishioners was an epiphany in itself, that fragmentation can be overcome through God's love and grace.

Fr Kwan begins by observing that despite all the talk about this era of globalisation, the world is more fragmented than ever, and that fragmentation permeates all the way down to the local level. There are various reasons for this, but the end result is that helplessness, anxiety and resentment are pulling us apart, and humanist philosophies and advanced technologies do little to soothe or comfort us. Ironically, this is fuelling a desire for a spiritual reawakening, as people seek answers beyond what the media and government leaders can provide. However, not many are turning to the church, which they perceive as being part of the problem.

Indeed, Fr Kwan writes, Christians are not immune to these divisions, and not just in terms of the usual

sectarian lines. Too often, Christians are part of the problem, either actively or passively. Even when we're not actively sowing division, we're not doing enough to heal existing divisions.

On a macro level, the entire point of the incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus is to heal and restore the ultimate division – the relationship between God and humanity. Our mission as followers of Christ is to heal not only the divisions between God and humans, but also between humans and other humans. Over 2,000 years into that mission, Christianity doesn't appear to be accomplishing very much, despite accounting for almost a third of the global population. In the last 100 years alone we've witnessed two major world wars and numerous instances of genocide, to name but a few horrors. Ultimately, humanity continues to be plagued by violence, injustice, greed, poverty and more. What are we getting wrong?

Fr Kwan argues that a big part of the problem is that too many Christians are of the 'lukewarm' type – they have faith, but they don't do much with it. That matters because there's a big difference between doing good and simply not doing evil.

This is partly because our own faith is fragmented as well, Fr Kwan writes. For many Christians, their faith is



of issues – their view MUST prevail for the good of society, and compromise is regarded as no different from defeat. And while there are certainly some moral issues on which we shouldn't compromise, a dualistic approach prohibits the process of reconciliation that is necessary to end the cycle of mistrust, resentments and injustices that contribute to division.

So how do we overcome this dualistic fragmentation and become whole?

That of course is the big question, and one that is as old as Creation itself. Fr Kwan recommends that we start by actively embracing Christian spiritual traditions. There are several to choose from, and Fr Kwan recommends three: Benedictine-Cistercian spirituality, Ignatian spirituality and Franciscan spirituality. This doesn't mean we all have to go join monasteries; we can practice each spirituality in our daily lives. Doing so will provide 'a roadmap for the heart to find peace of mind' and help you to discover your calling whilst listening to your inner voice, the voice of God and the voice of the suffering.

As the saying goes, that's easy to type but harder to do. Still, Christian living has never been the easy path for all who walk it.

During the study sessions, I couldn't help noting the irony that the book itself is potentially divisive, as Fr Kwan raises several points and cites examples that some discussion group participants found controversial, apocryphal or just plain wrong.

Yet at the same time, the various disagreements and criticisms regarding the book's content didn't result in heated arguments, or people quitting the group in anger. It was as if the very act of gathering together to study the book as a miniature Christian community was a testament that unity is always possible even when disagreements occur, as long as the grace of God is at work in our hearts.

Personally, I find that even more inspiring than the book itself. Nonetheless, Fr Kwan's overall point stands: lukewarm Christians can't fix a broken world, and we can only bring glory to God by seeing the world with compassion, transforming our faith into action so that God can work through us, and trusting God when he invites us out of our comfort zones.

focused too often on improving their own lives and not on helping the world. It is not enough to simply believe in God – we need to know, feel and live our faith. These three aspects of faith need to be integrated if Christians hope to make a difference in this fragmented world. Likewise, our spirit must be wholly integrated into the other basic aspects of our humanity – body, mind, soul and emotion.

Put simply, we can't restore the world to wholeness while we ourselves are fragmented.

The challenge, of course, is how to do this in a time where we seem to be increasingly locked in the trap of dualistic thinking that divides our worldviews into mutually exclusive 'us vs them' mindset, in which 'my' side is always right and 'your' side is always wrong. We have already seen where this dualistic thinking can lead. In his book *Not In God's Name*, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks writes that religious violence is partly the product of pathological dualism, in which the other side is deemed morally and irrevocably evil, for which no action to oppose them is too extreme.

While most of us thankfully aren't willing to take our socio-political disagreements to the extreme of violence, the same basic dualistic attitudes are at the root of our current discourse. More and more people find it impossible to 'agree to disagree' on a growing number



# The History of **HELP** and Beyond

By Avril Rodrigues

Head of Communications and Community Engagement, HELP for Domestic Workers

**I**t is tough to find a silver lining to the COVID-19 pandemic. But if there was ever one, it would be that it has made people kinder and more aware of the importance of relationships. None could be stronger, and closer, than the symbiotic relationship HELP for Domestic Workers has with St John's Cathedral.

## An illustrious beginning

We were founded as an outreach programme of St John's Cathedral by Barrister James Collins in March 1989. A worshipping member of the Cathedral, James Collins founded Helpers for Domestic Helpers (HDH) to respond to an acute need for migrant domestic workers receiving advice, assistance, and access to justice.

Given the central role played by the Cathedral in creating a safe haven for domestic workers, it was natural that the space and the resources provided to HDH grew in lockstep with the exponential growth in the demand for our services.

An important development in nomenclature came with the International Labour Organisation's definition of 'work performed in or for a household or households' as domestic work. This helped us to better define the role of migrant domestic workers and make sure their contribution to Hong Kong's society was recognised.

A formalisation of our structure came through in 2017 when we rebranded our name to HELP for Domestic Workers. Two years later, we celebrated 30 years of serving the domestic worker community. An independent review examined our operations, processes and the ability to function in the long term, culminating in the establishment of HELP Ltd as an independent charity in 2021.

## Our continuing journey

With the transition out of St John's Cathedral patronage, we look forward to retaining and strengthening our close ties with the Cathedral. HELP is grateful for the opportunity to have been involved in the development of the outreach definition and is committed to its principles.

For more than decades we have strived to deliver on James Collins' initial vision of a strong and prosperous society in Hong Kong; a society where everyone, including domestic migrant workers, are treated fairly, their legal rights protected, and most importantly, their contribution is respected and valued.

An organisation is only as important as its mission. An



unequivocal North Star is ensuring migrant domestic workers have access to their basic rights under the laws of Hong Kong. We try to deliver on that by committing to work with both the workers and their employers in an empathetic and fair way.

We have been prioritising the needs of the community we serve, while concurrently augmenting our resources for the ongoing increase in demand.

The number of domestic workers is expected to increase exponentially through 2066 from the 370,000 currently, (according to data from the Immigration Department) and projections about Hong Kong's population by the Census and Statistics Department.

There is an acute need for awareness and counselling on both sides of the employer-employee relationship when it comes to domestic workers. While we have made strides in educating employees, a lot of employers in Hong Kong need to be made aware of our empathy-led negotiation services, as well as their obligations. We must also continue to make domestic workers cognizant of their rights in Hong Kong. This is imperative for the long-term sustainable change that we seek.

To meet these challenges and be ready for the expected increase in demand from the domestic worker community, we are adapting to the new normal through a series of developments.

## The new normal

We transitioned smoothly to a hybrid-working model. This allowed us to support our beneficiaries with uninterrupted services and programmes, while ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers. Despite this change, we were able to see a 50% year-on-year increase in the number of beneficiaries supported with one-on-one advice and assistance. There was a two-fold increase in our

beneficiary reach through online and in-person education programmes. An overwhelming majority (99.3%) of our beneficiaries say that after coming to HELP they are more confident to speak up for their rights and support other domestic workers seeking help.

We are investing further time and resources in strengthening and developing beneficiary programmes, technology and infrastructure, and personnel capacity, to better serve the needs of the community. We are partnering with institutions like Linklaters, Clifford Chance Foundation, American Women's Association, and the HSBC Community Partnership Programme.

We stepped up our volunteer and intern programme related to case work, projects, communications, and fundraising, further integrating into the Hong Kong community to improve and augment the challenges faced by domestic workers. As a validation, over 70% of our volunteers gained a better understanding of the domestic workers' community and their challenges post their volunteering period.

Our mission to cater to the domestic workers' community despite the resource crunch has been yielding dividends. In 2021:

- Over 1,400 domestic workers and employers were provided advice and assistance.
- We reached out to more than 40,000 domestic workers and employers through online and in-person programmes.
- HK\$930,000 was recovered on behalf of domestic workers with 93% of the cases settled out of court.

To deliver and augment our Advice and Assistance services, we have the HELpline, the HELP clinic, a project to assist victims of illegal money lending and money laundering scams, and assistance to victims of illegal agencies. We continue to provide emergency shelter services for at-risk domestic workers facing a crisis.

Our Community LeaPS (Community leadership & peer-support programme) identifies and trains community leaders to provide peer support to domestic workers while



helping expand our services to other at-risk communities. Through our outreach activities, we reach out to a large number of domestic workers, introduce our services and distribute goodie bags.

With the new wave of COVID-19 upon us, we need to step up and augment our resources to better serve the domestic worker community, which remains one of the most vulnerable to the pandemic.

We are already witnessing a greater demand for mental health support among the community as the pandemic extends. We are striving to address the gap between the needs of the community and available resources, despite the step up in our commitment to provide one-on-one counselling services to migrant domestic workers.

Despite the resource crunch, HELP launched the 'MeHeal - Mind-Body Healing' program to offer a broad range of services, including access to one-on-one counselling, referral to long-term mental healthcare, and education on mental and physical wellbeing activities. As a result, HELP was able to provide over 280 hours of free mental-health counselling services for vulnerable migrant domestic workers. This resulted in over 80% of the beneficiaries feeling that these services helped them understand and find ways to address and cope with their problems.

To better raise awareness and garner resources, our Executive Director, Manisha Wijesinghe spoke to the World News service of BBC and RTHK on International Domestic Workers' Day, discussing the challenges faced by migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong. This helped make them a part of the broader conversation surrounding fair and equal treatment for all workers. Our beneficiary cases were also featured in the South China Morning Post, The Standard, Hong Kong Free Press, China Daily Hong Kong, and other press outlets.

Our spirit of service remains as strong as it was when we were part of the community. With the support of St John's Cathedral, HELP strives to be in the forefront, serving migrant domestic workers and employers, while addressing their unique challenges.

### Notes from the editor:

To support the work of HELP for Domestic Workers, please contact the team by one of the following -

**Address:** Room 606, 299QRC, 287-299 Queen's Road Central, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong

**Phone:** +852 2523 4020

**WhatsApp:** +852 5936 3780

**Email:** [info@helpfordomesticworkers.org](mailto:info@helpfordomesticworkers.org)

**Website:** [www.helpfordomesticworkers.org](http://www.helpfordomesticworkers.org)



# A Look Back in Time

By Michael Gibb

In the last issue of *In Touch* magazine, we looked backed at the life of the much beloved Revd Canon Stephen Sidebotham, who passed away last summer. He first came to Hong Kong in 1964. What was happening at St John's 58 years ago? Past copies of the *St John's Review* reveal all.

## January

Parishioners discovered that the *Review* was now free. To meet the needs of the 'fast moving, rapidly changing congregation,' subscriptions were dropped, though you could donate \$15 per annum if you wished to help cover production costs. This month also saw a warm welcome for the new dean, the Revd John Foster, appointed by the Trustees of the Church of England in Hong Kong. He would stay in Hong Kong for a decade, leaving in 1973 to take up a position in Yorkshire, UK.

## April

Stephen and his wife Peggy arrived and took up residence in Ridley House on Upper Albert Road. Their first official meet-and-greet would be at the Annual Meeting on 6 May. As the Sidebothams were setting up in Hong Kong, Sir Robert and Lady Black were departing. The Governor expressed his deep affection for St John's before he returned to England. 'We shall take away with us the warmest and most grateful recollections of the Cathedral of St John's', he wrote.

## July

Schools dominated discussions this month. Dean John Foster laid to rest speculation that St John's was planning to establish a prep school for expats. With 'tours of duty for expatriates commonly becoming shorter and children's passages more generous', he wrote, any urgency for such schools had abated. However, rumours that St John's planned to open a 'Grant-Aided Co-educational Comprehensive Secondary School for English-speaking children' persisted, prompting the Dean to state emphatically, 'This is not so.'

## September

The holiday season over, St John's was bustling once more. There were reports on secondary school tours of the Cathedral, and Cathedral visits to schools in Kowloon and in the 'new industrial area of Tsuen Wan', plus school visits to St James' Settlement, where 'refreshments, which were laid on by Mrs June Li, were very much appreciated'. We can imagine how good those refreshments were!

Plans were being mooted for setting up a self-help group for families whose children had mental disabilities, and an interesting group called 'Sunday at 7.30 P.M.' was

promoting their projects. Meeting every Sunday after Evensong, members drank tea, ate cucumber sandwiches, and planned activities, such as trying to get the grass to grow in a small nearby garden, proposals for the Michaelmas Fair, and excavating some patches of ground around the Cathedral. While doing this, they discovered part of a concrete road, the top of a well, and some gas pipes.

## November

The weather was troubling the Dean in this issue. Tropical Storm Georgia had been threatening to wash out the Michaelmas Fair, and this issue of the *Review* had gone to press before the Fair had taken place. No doubt parishioners at the time were wary. Dozens of people in Hong Kong had died in the wake of Typhoon Ruby just weeks before. High winds of over 160mph had killed at least 38 people in Hong Kong alone and 14 were unaccounted for. Georgia subsided and the Fair went ahead, with Lady Trench, the wife of the new Governor, Sir David Trench, as the guest of honour.

Meanwhile, CLARES held its second Annual General Meeting, and extracts from its report for the year highlighted the extensive good work undertaken: helping at the 'Red Cross godown', raising money at a Halloween Dance and Clothing sale for children's homes and various relief funds, making clothes and blankets for children in need and offering English classes. Volunteers were always needed, members said.

## December

Bishop R. O. Hall expressed his regret that he was stuck on a boat and would not reach Hong Kong until after Christmas. Calls went out for new recruits to join the choirs. Mrs Kwok, the then Choir Mistress, would be 'delighted' to hear from interested parties, we are told. Dean John Foster reminded readers that presents and parties would be 'forgotten almost before the decorations have faded' and focusing on the real message behind the Christmas story would have a 'permanent effect on your own life and your family life'. As well, the Children's Toy Service was announced, a regular event before 25 December, when children from families at St John's were invited to donate some of their own toys to children in hostels, settlements and homes to be opened on Christmas Day.

## Ready, Set, Find - Easter Story, Traditional Chinese/English, Board book

*Easter Story - Ready, Set, Find (board book) @\$48*  
In Ready, Set, Find Easter, get ready to follow Jesus as he enters Jerusalem, shares the Last Supper with his friends, and walks in the garden of Gethsemane. This tabbed board book is perfect for young children, who will love finding the 48 hidden objects throughout the pages while reading the classic story of Easter.

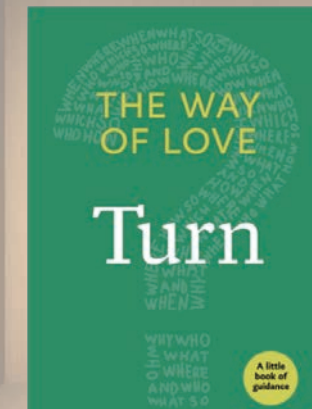
*Ready, Set, Find - set of 6, Chinese/English, Board book @280 (with Traditional and Simplified Chinese versions)*

復活節大搜尋 @\$48  
準備好去跟上耶穌的腳步吧！耶穌進入耶路撒冷，與他的朋友吃最後一頓晚餐，然後又走進客西馬尼園。耶穌在路上看見很多小東西，你需要多少時間把它們找出來？現在就看看：各就各位 — 預備 — 找！

「大搜尋六兄弟」6本套裝 @\$280 (備有繁體及簡體中文版)



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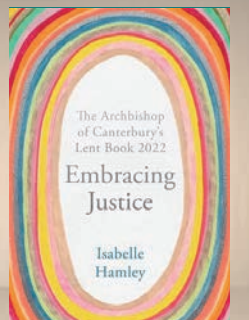
## The Way of Love: Turn @\$99

Jesus teaches us to come before God with humble hearts, boldly offering our thanksgiving and concerns to God, or simply listening for God's voice in our lives and in the world. Whether in thought, word or deed, individually or corporately, when we pray we invite and dwell in God's loving presence. Jesus often removed himself from the crowds to quiet himself and commune with God. He gave us examples of how to pray, including the Lord's Prayer. 'Will you continue in the prayers?' 'I will with God's help.'

此書中文版《愛的道路：轉向：》是2022年大齋期靈修之旅讀本，於座堂書店有售，定價 \$48。

## Embracing Justice - The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2022 @\$187

Full of practical encouragement, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book for 2022 brilliantly weaves together biblical texts, diverse voices, contemporary stories, and personal and group meditations to reveal liberating and imaginative ways in which we may grow in discipleship – and more fully reflect the justice, mercy and compassion of Christ in our lives.



## 2022年大齋期靈修手冊 @\$50

2022年大齋期（或稱預苦期、四旬期）將於三月二日開始。這節期為期四十天，背後其中一個重要意義，是要信徒學效耶穌基督在曠野禁食禱告，面對魔鬼試探的四十日。在這個嚴肅的節期，信徒要透過讀經、祈禱、禁食、克己、節制和悔罪，多作自省，放下私慾，體驗基督的受難與受死，並在復活日與基督一同復活過來，靈性生命得以更新成長。

本手冊提供的四十篇靈修材料，信徒可於每週一至六作靈修之用；而每個主日是紀念基督的復活的「小復活日」，則毋須使用此靈修資料。每一天藉着經文閱讀、經文淺釋、反思問題、每日禱文、行道指引，祈盼在聖靈的引導下，讀者能善度這重要的節期，與主耶穌同行受苦之路，切實悔罪，放下自我，活出基督，並接受上主的引領，在世為主作美好的見證。



# Major Services

## at St John's & Daughter Churches

### St John's Cathedral

4-8 Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong  
Tel: 2523 4157  
URL: [www.stjohnscathedral.org.hk](http://www.stjohnscathedral.org.hk)

- |                  |   |                  |  |
|------------------|---|------------------|--|
| <b>25</b><br>MAR | <b>The Annunciation of our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary</b><br>7.30pm Sung Eucharist   | <b>17</b><br>APR | <b>Easter Day</b><br>9.00am Sung Eucharist<br>5.00pm Festal Evensong of Easter Day |
| <b>10</b><br>APR | <b>Palm Sunday</b><br>9.30am Sung Eucharist (Bilingual)<br>5.00pm Tenebrae Service  | <b>15</b><br>MAY | <b>Outreach Sunday/The Fifth Sunday of Easter</b><br>9.00am Sung Eucharist         |
| <b>14</b><br>APR | <b>Maundy Thursday</b><br>10.00am Chrism Eucharist<br>8.00pm The Eucharist of Maundy Thursday with the Washing of Feet & Watch until Midnight | <b>26</b><br>MAY | <b>Ascension Day</b><br>7.30pm Sung Eucharist                                      |
| <b>15</b><br>APR | <b>Good Friday</b><br>1.30pm The Liturgy of Good Friday   | <b>31</b><br>MAY | <b>Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth</b><br>7.30pm Sung Eucharist |
| <b>16</b><br>APR | <b>Holy Saturday</b><br>8.00pm Easter Vigil   |                  |  |

### Emmanuel Church

Béthanie Chapel  
139 Pok Fu Lam Road, Pok Fu Lam  
Tel: 2523 4157  
URL: [www.emmanuel.org.hk](http://www.emmanuel.org.hk)

- |                  |  |                  |   |
|------------------|--|------------------|---|
| <b>10</b><br>APR | <b>Palm Sunday</b><br>10.15am Blessing of Palms & Sung Eucharist | <b>17</b><br>APR | <b>Easter Day</b><br>10.15am Sung Eucharist of the Resurrection |
| <b>15</b><br>APR | <b>Good Friday</b><br>10.15am The Liturgy of Good Friday         |                  |   |

### St Stephen's Chapel

St Stephen's College  
22 Tung Tau Wan Road, Stanley  
Tel: 2813 0408  
URL: [www.ststephen.org.hk](http://www.ststephen.org.hk)

- |                  |   |                  |  |
|------------------|---|------------------|--|
| <b>14</b><br>APR | <b>Maundy Thursday</b><br>8.00pm Commemoration of the Last Supper, with Eucharist and Footwashing | <b>17</b><br>APR | <b>Easter Day</b><br>10.00am Easter Service celebrating the Resurrection |
| <b>15</b><br>APR | <b>Good Friday</b><br>9.00am Reading the Passion Narrative from Luke's Gospel                     |                  |  |

### Discovery Bay Church

SKH Wei Lun Primary School  
Lantau  
Tel: 2987 4210  
URL: [www.discoverybaychurch.org.hk](http://www.discoverybaychurch.org.hk)

- |                  |   |                  |  |
|------------------|---|------------------|--|
| <b>10</b><br>APR | <b>Palm Sunday</b><br>10.00am Eucharist with Blessing of Palms                    | <b>17</b><br>APR | <b>Easter Day</b><br>10.00am Eucharist of the Resurrection in Wei Lun School |
| <b>15</b><br>APR | <b>Good Friday</b><br>11.00am Walk to Stations of the Cross at Trappist Monastery |                  |  |

*The Cathedral is closely monitoring the pandemic situation. Please visit our websites for the latest updates about service arrangements.*





ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL  
聖公會聖約翰座堂

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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 (<https://www.stjohnscathedral.org.hk/>). Please scan the QR code to read our current and past issues.



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