

In Touch

The Cathedral Magazine - Summer Edition 2022

Intergenerational Differences



In Touch

ISSUE 030

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In This Issue



03

Dean's Message

04

Intergenerational Differences

07

Our Way Forward

10

Let's Build a Safe Church for Everyone!

12

We are all Jonah: Reflections from within the Belly of the Whale Fish

14

Life Enrichment Tips from LEC

16

The Initiation of Expressive Arts Teens Drama Project

17

Benefits of Playing Bible Story Puzzles

18

A Sunday in the Life of ...

19

Major Services at St John's & Daughter Churches

Dean's Message

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Peace be with you!

The past quarter has passed in the blink of an eye. Lent, the Holy Week and Easter were all accomplished through the richness of our Cathedral liturgy, though all of them within an empty church. However, our Cathedral family was still able to join the services through live webcast on YouTube. Different online groups have completed studying the Lent Book 2022, entitled 'The Way of Love: Turn' and I am most thankful to my dear clergy colleagues who led the groups, and to our Cathedral members who actively took part in reading and discussing the Lent Book. Easter was the last Sunday we worshipped through webcast in the fifth wave of COVID-19. On Sunday 24th April, we resumed our Sunday Eucharists in public at the Cathedral church, as well as the three daughter churches.

By the grace of God, we were able to resume our public worship services and religious group activities starting from Thursday 21st April. Thanks be to God! Cathedral members were all thrilled to be able to come back to pray, sing, share and meet up, even though we were still requested to observe all the requirements to combat the Coronavirus Disease. The new policy of checking the vaccine pass in all religious venues is also in place. We're now adapting to this new normal, preparing to come back to services and gatherings slightly earlier, getting our mobile phones or printed records of vaccination ready.

The Annual Church Meeting (ACM) 2022 was held on the first Sunday after the resumption of our public worship services. We managed to organise an in-person ACM, where we elected the two lay trustees and twenty lay members of the Cathedral Council, the Auditor and the Sidesmen, and received the annual reports from different committees, groups and ministries.

The joy and hope of Eastertide is a booster for the spirituality of our Cathedral community. Although the stormy days in our society are still touching our lives, both by the pandemic and by the war in Ukraine, we still keep our faith in the God of Trinity, that he will lead and guide us through these difficult times.

St Paul says, '*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)

Lovingly yours,

K. K. Chan



各位主內弟兄姊妹，平安！

上一個季度，轉眼間便過去了。值得感恩的是，大齋期、聖周及復活期的崇拜在座堂傳統禮儀下得以圓滿舉行。縱使這些崇拜都是在空無一人的聖堂內進行，大家仍可透過 YouTube 的網上直播參與其中。另外，弟兄姊妹們亦以網上小組形式一同研讀 2022 年大齋期書籍：《愛的道路：轉向》。我衷心感謝各位帶領小組的聖品同工，以及積極參與的教友。今年的復活主日是我們於第五波疫情下最後一個只能透過網上直播參與崇拜的主日；而到了 4 月 24 日，座堂及三個附屬教堂終於恢復公開主日崇拜。

承蒙上帝的恩惠，我們的公開崇拜及團體活動由 4 月 21 日起恢復。感謝上主！雖然要按規定遵行所有防疫措施，但對於可以回到座堂禱告、唱詩、會面交流，座堂的教友都非常雀躍。新的疫苗通行證措施已於所有宗教場所實施；我們正逐漸適應這種新常態，提早一點返回座堂參與崇拜和聚會，並備妥手提電話內或列印好的疫苗接種紀錄。

今年的座堂周年大會已於恢復公開崇拜後的第一個主日順利舉行。在實體會議的形式下，我們選出座堂議會的兩位信託人及二十位堂議員，又選出核數師及接待員團隊成員。此外，各委員會、團契小組和事工的年度報告，亦悉數通過。

復活節期洋溢的喜樂和盼望，是推動我們靈命成長的催化劑。儘管我們仍然活在風雨飄搖的日子當中，不論是疫情還是烏克蘭的戰禍，都震撼我們的心靈。然而，仰賴那三位一體上帝，我們必能在祂帶領下度過這些艱難時期。

使徒保羅說：「應當一無掛慮，只要凡事藉著禱告、祈求和感謝，將你們所要的告訴上帝。上帝所賜那超越人所能了解的平安，必在基督耶穌裏，保守你們的心懷意念。」（腓立比書 4 章 6-7 節）

願主的愛常與我們同在！

座堂主任牧師
陳國強謹啟



Intergenerational Differences

‘For youthe and elde is often at debaat.’

By Andrew Ashley

Geoffrey Chaucer, known as the father of English literature, wrote those words in his great work, *The Canterbury Tales*, more than 600 years ago. The mediaeval English looks a little strange to us now, but the idea that young people frequently disagree with their elders still has a contemporary ring to it. We often hear of significant differences between the generations in their approach to the important areas of life.

Are intergenerational differences an issue at St John's Cathedral? *In Touch* invited three representatives of our younger generation, Vanice Chan, James Yim and Jimmy Wu to sit down with the Very Revd Kwok-keung Chan and the Revd Amos Poon and chat about what church means to them and about their needs and aspirations.

As we see all too often in the media, reporting thrives on discord, which tends to make for more exciting stories than agreement. There was little disagreement here. The tone was overwhelmingly positive, though some youthful radicalism was revealed. As, all too obviously, a member

of the older generation myself, I found the enthusiasm, thoughtfulness and commitment of our young people inspiring.

Dean KK kicked off the discussion – almost literally – with reminiscences of playing football inside the church at his boyhood parish, the Good Shepherd in To Kwa Wan. After Saturday afternoon fellowship, the vicar would let the boys put the chairs away and get the football out. It was great fun, recalled the Dean, but he had a serious point to make. Those teenagers playing football felt at home in the church, which became a central part of their lives. It provided study rooms so students could work for their HKCEE and A-level examinations.

An even more powerful memory for the Dean was being given keys to the church. ‘I really want to thank the vicar for showing trust in me. I felt a sense of empowerment when I was given that responsibility.’ This struck a chord. Taking responsibility for church activities is clearly very

important to our young people. Form 5 student James started volunteering with the Life Enrichment Centre and was quickly elected to a leadership role. ‘This was my first experience of leadership and it was very positive. It was really valuable to learn how to communicate with so many different people.’

Vanice, a social worker who was baptised and confirmed at the same time as James, took up this theme of involvement and responsibility. Many young people do not simply want to ‘go to church’ but to take responsibility for making things happen. Whether it is serving at the eucharist, sharing spirituality, running prayer groups and bible studies or hosting other activities, Vanice, Jimmy, James and their contemporaries are determined to get involved. What made this even more encouraging was the sense that our young people are taking the initiative and doing things themselves, without waiting for the clergy to lead them.

We talked about how people first came to St John's and how their views changed as they became more involved in Cathedral life. Recent graduate Jimmy, now practising as a lawyer, started coming in 2019, encouraged by his mentor, an active member of the congregation. St John's seemed ‘like a tourist attraction - prestigious and historical’. James's initial reaction was similar: ‘Oh my God, it's so beautiful!’, while Vanice added ‘I thought the church was very attractive’.

At first the beauty seemed little more than skin deep. ‘I couldn't see any real links between the people in church,’ said Jimmy. ‘It seemed like a collection of small, separate groups. And most of the people were old!’ As time went

by, however, he realised that St John's fostered very strong relationships between people from all sorts of backgrounds, including some of the marginalised. ‘St John's changed from a tourist spot to a living church where I feel at home.’ Vanice had taken a similar journey: ‘I noticed that it was no longer just about the place but about the connections I was making with church members.’

Talk of relationships and connections led on to the importance of fellowship. Fr Amos told us of his experience. He was taken to church from an early age and attended Sunday school but for a long time he didn't really feel as though he belonged to a community. It was only at his boys' secondary school – ‘I was still afraid of girls!’ said Fr Amos – that he became involved in fellowship and felt a strong sense of belonging.

St John's launched *Among Us*, a new initiative in youth fellowship and ministry in May 2021. Aimed at 17-25 year olds, with meetings every Friday evening, it has grown – and is growing impressively fast. Attendance has doubled in the last six months and around 500 people have now taken part in *Among Us* activities.

‘I don't have any tips!’ said Vanice modestly, when asked about this amazing growth. But she noted that young people found the open, non-judgmental atmosphere very attractive and liked St John's approach of providing opportunities for people of all ages.

There was no unbridgeable chasm between our older and younger representatives. But as the discussion turned to the extraordinary times we've been experiencing, where civil disturbance and the pandemic have turned our lives upside down, the tone became a little more radical. There were strong feelings about how churches should respond.

Jimmy was particularly trenchant when he recalled other churches with which he'd been involved. 'Even in difficult times, they would just say, "Stay in church! Hallelujah!"', he argued. 'That put a lot of pressure on young people and some people left because they didn't find peace in church. It's not just about religion. It should also be about us.'

The radicalism was not of an overtly political nature. No one was advocating active involvement in political issues. But there was definite agreement that the church should be a force for reconciliation and that it should help people to find inner peace.

Vanice mentioned the many complicated issues that we cannot hope to solve. 'But we should help people to become stronger to serve society.' This led back to the theme of responsibility and young people's desire to be engaged in the work of the church. 'It's not just about daily worship by the clergy,' said Jimmy.

There was just a hint of militancy when both James and Jimmy talked about the need for young people to be encouraged to break out of their comfort zone. 'We shouldn't just listen to our mums and dads' said Jimmy. 'We want to develop our own role in society.' James concurred with this. 'The younger generation aren't just blindly following their parents. They are trying to find themselves.'

As a snapshot of what our young people are thinking and doing, this conversation was highly encouraging. It's clear that the future of St John's is in good hands.



Taking responsibility for church activities is important to young people, particularly in fostering their sense of belonging.



Our Way Forward

By the grace of God, members of our Cathedral family were back in church for an in-person Annual Church Meeting (ACM) on 24th April 2022, the first Sunday after the relaxation of social distancing restrictions since the fifth wave of COVID-19.

By Staff Reporter

Chairing the meeting for the first time at St John's, the Very Revd Kwok-keung Chan extended a warm welcome to brothers and sisters for joining this important event for the Cathedral. He also expressed his gratitude to the serving members of Cathedral Council, as well as to all who have been involved in leading, supporting and participating in our ministries during these hard times of the pandemic.

Before going through the reports from different ministries and groups, two representatives were elected to the Board of Trustees of the Church of England in the Province of Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui by the 84 qualified electors who attended the meeting in the Cathedral. The two lay trustees for the year 2022-2023 are John Li and Martin Matsui. Meanwhile, the nomination of 20 Council members was also passed during the meeting.



St John's Cathedral Council Members 2022-23

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

Mr Adrian King
Ms Natalie Kwok
Mr John Li
Mrs June Li
Mr Craig Lindsay
Mr Martin Matsui
Ms Margaret Sang
Mr Michael Spencer
Mr Jason Wong
Ms Andrea Kan (Co-opted)
Mr Julian Lyden (Co-opted)

With the new Council on-board, *In Touch* invited our trustees to share their views on the ministries of St John's at the beginning of the new term of service.

Talking about the challenges faced by the Cathedral, Martin Matsui divided them into short-term and long-term ones. 'Our parishes are in Hong Kong, so we must face the same problems that our city is confronting,' he said. Among those problems, a notable one would be the loss of congregation members who have chosen to migrate to cities abroad. He believes that those who have left or plan to leave have taken a view of living with COVID rather than trying to eradicate it, as we have been trying to do here. 'Hong Kong has always been an international city. For our city and us to thrive, I think we have to re-open to the world.' He also cited the Revd Will Newman's remarks at the ACM about the hopeful signs that his parish (St Stephen's Chapel) is eager to experience in-person worship. It's encouraging to see an unexpectedly strong rebound in church attendance. 'May this trend long continue!' Martin said.

For a longer term, one of our major challenges is to continue to proclaim the Good News to new generations of Christians, whatever their age. As well, it is equally important for us to demonstrate that our faith continues to answer the needs of people in Hong Kong. As presented in the Dean's report to the ACM, 20 children were baptised while an additional 37 parishioners were baptised or confirmed in this past year. 'These are encouraging signs that God's message (for which we are only his messengers) is getting through. We face challenges in retaining these new believers and showing them how our faith is relevant. We try to nurture them through a welcoming community, attentive pastoral care, opportunities for further Bible study, our youth outreach programmes, our wonderful music ministry, and of course our foundation in the liturgy of the Eucharist and daily prayer.' Martin summed up the ways to fulfil our missions.



target is not only the young Christians in the church, but also the youth in Hong Kong,' said John. Highlighting our youth services, he feels proud that the Cathedral has been granted the Beat Drug Fund for organising education programmes to help young people stay away from drugs.

Apart from the younger generations, the Cathedral remains dedicated to providing everyone a safe and peaceful place for worship and fellowship. To this end, on-going maintenance and enhancement of facilities have been scheduled to suit the requirements of different groups and activities. For example, our congregation now enjoys better sound and visual quality from both online and in-person worship inside the church, after the replacement of the AV system in the Cathedral last year. John added that 'the AV systems in the Harold Smyth Room and Li Hall will also be upgraded in the second half of this year.'

As chairman of the Fabric & Furnishing Committee, John also mentioned that office space in the administrative building is being re-deployed to strengthen our support for various ministries. Renovation is underway to refurbish the Music Department, which will take over the upper room outside their original office. People who used to gather in the upper room for fellowship will have more privacy and space in the new dedicated facility, which is now the

office of the Life Enrichment Centre (LEC). LEC will move to their new place in the basement previously occupied by the HELP for Domestic Workers.

With many works planned to nourish the spiritual life of the Cathedral community, the Dean is grateful to all clergy, staff, trustees and council members, and our congregation members. He feels particularly thankful to God that we could gather in the Cathedral church for the ACM 2022 on Sunday 24th April. 'It is an indication that our sole reliance on digital format of liturgies has now been transformed to a new phase of blending both analogue and digital forms. As we are slowly recovering from the fifth wave of the pandemic, such a hybrid mode of conducting our Cathedral ministries, including the three daughter churches, can be foreseen as a new normal.' he said.

As far as conventional practices are concerned, the Dean highly recommends our congregation to return to face-to-face gatherings. However, he feels more and more overseas parishioners are joining our online services, bible study fellowships, and group gatherings through digital means. 'I suppose this is an unexpected by-product after the investment of higher quality cameras, microphones and related audio-visual equipment.' said the Dean.

Looking back on his first year of ministry at St John's, the Dean gave thanks to God for a relatively young team of co-workers. 'Many of them are actually energising and revitalising me in terms of all the different ministries of the Cathedral community by and large,' he said. 'We should definitely continue focusing on the traditional strong work of our liturgy with the role of being the mother church in the diocese.' Riding on the good start of the youth ministry, the Dean had high hopes that with their rapid growth, we may confidently anticipate a higher creativity in our Cathedral community, thinking outside the usual boxes, and bringing new aspects of church lives to our Cathedral members of different age groups as well as the wider community.



Echoing Martin's notes, John Li emphasised the importance of supporting young people in St John's and in the community. St John's is not the spiritual home of our Cathedral family only. As reflected in our mission statement, this is '*a place of God's grace, welcoming all, following Christ and changing lives in the heart of Hong Kong.*' We are here for the needs of the society, too.

To foster the growth and development of young people, we launched our youth ministry in April 2021. About a month later, the youth fellowship *Among Us* was formed and has become one of the most fast-growing ministries at St John's. 'We are keen to cater for the needs of youth through their early adulthood. However, our



Let's Build a Safe Church for Everyone!

The Church is the body of Christ, and all members are parts of this body. It has a mission to spread the gospel and manifest the love of God with a safe, caring and respectful culture, where lives and faith can grow and be nurtured.

St John's Cathedral shoulders the mission; to nurture members, to cultivate a peaceful, respectful, caring, safe and secure environment for all those to whom we engage in the life of the church.

To honour this noble calling, the Cathedral has adopted and implemented the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Safeguarding Policy that was endorsed by the Standing Committee of the General Synod on 21st April 2021, and was officially launched on 30th April 2022. The Policy became our guideline relating to the care and safety of everyone, and our pastoral ministry and church discipline specifically to children and the vulnerable.

We encourage you to visit our Safeguarding Policy website at <https://safeguard.hkskh.org/en/home.html>. It provides an overview of the Hong Kong Sheung Kung Hui Safeguarding Policy in video form, or you could choose to download the full text of the document.



The Most Revd Andrew Chan, Archbishop and Primate of Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui, emphasises that the policy document should not be regarded as a series of 'regulations', 'appendix canon', or 'ecclesiastical rules'. Instead it is an instrument for us to ensure the safety and well-being of all who take up and participate in our pastoral, nurturing and mission ministries, while aiming to achieve a healthy and positive vision.

The Very Revd Kwok-keung Chan, Dean of St John's Cathedral, reminds us that peace does not come easily without the grace of God. To safeguard this peace that belongs to ourselves, our families, the society, and the Church – especially the children and the vulnerable among us – is the responsibility of each and every one of us!

We therefore would like to invite you to join us and build this alliance! Please read the policy document, as it also contains reminders on the behaviours to avoid and examples of best practices. In the coming months, the HKSKH Safeguarding Policy Committee will introduce a number of workshops with guest speakers from professional bodies on how to safeguard children and the vulnerable.

If you have any questions or suggestions, you can contact any member of our clergy, or our Safeguarding Officer, Saki Tsoi, at saki.tsoi@sjccs.hk.

Safe guarding Best Practices

Best practices listed in section 7.6 of the HKSKH Safeguarding Policy document cover the following areas:

- 7.6.1. Promotion and education
- 7.6.2. Prevention
- 7.6.3. Visibility
- 7.6.4. Minimizing one-on-one situations
- 7.6.5. Appropriate and inappropriate touch
- 7.6.6. Appropriate and inappropriate speech
- 7.6.7. Misconduct, inappropriate relationships, and bullying
- 7.6.8. Information technology and communication media
- 7.6.9. Rules specific to ministry with children and vulnerable adults

It also stipulates that:

- 7.6.10. If any staff or volunteer is convicted by a court of law of any sexual criminal offence, his/her employment or involvement in ministry, as the case may be, shall be terminated immediately.

- 7.6.11. If any staff or volunteer is found to have
 - i. abused any child or vulnerable adult;
 - ii. convicted in a court of law of any inappropriate conduct towards any child or vulnerable adult;
 - iii. been warned or cautioned in relation to any inappropriate conduct towards any child or vulnerable adult,
 then such a staff or volunteer shall not be further allowed to serve with children or vulnerable adults in HKSKH.



Details about the best practices can be found at https://www.stjohnscathedral.org.hk/uploads/doc/20220430HKSKH_SafeguardingPolicyBestPractices.pdf

Flow chart in handling alleged misconduct

An alleged misconduct against a child or an adult is suspected/reported.
(If the incident is serious and is suspected to be criminal in nature, report it to the police or government authorities.)

The Parish Safeguarding Officer and the Vicar report the alleged misconduct to the Provincial Safeguarding Coordinator.
He/she will dispatch an Incident Team to the concerned parish.
Initial investigation will be done within 72 hours and Form D should be submitted.

Incident Team conducts an investigation.

The Provincial Safeguarding Coordinator informs the Diocesan Bishop of the investigation.
(If the incident is serious, report to police or government authorities.)

Incident Team determines outcome

- Confirmed misconduct; or
- Inappropriate behavior; or
- False accusation; or
- Allegation not amounting to misconduct or abuse; or
- Unclear outcome

Vicar determines follow-up plan

- Mediation
- Follow-up actions on the case
- Pastoral care for all involved parties
- Response to media if arises
- Record keeping

Appeal, if any

WE ARE ALL JONAH

REFLECTIONS

By John Tanner

The story of Jonah is one of those Bible stories that even non-Christians may have heard of – at least the part where Jonah is swallowed by a humongous fish and sits in its belly for three days. But of course, like most Bible stories, there's more to the story than that – perhaps even more than you might think. Recently, the Revd Will Newman organised a short Bible study class to study the Book of Jonah, and the discussions revealed that the story is more multi-layered than it looks, and is strikingly relevant to our faith today.

To recap the basic narrative: Jonah is called by God to preach repentance to the Ninevites, but he tries to run away rather than obey God. Jonah boards a ship to Tarshish, but God sends a raging storm that threatens to wreck the ship. After working out that Jonah's God is causing the storm, the crew pray to the Lord and throw Jonah into the sea, whereupon he is swallowed by a huge fish (which may or may not be a whale) sent by God. After three days and nights, Jonah repents, and God commands the fish to spit Jonah out on dry land. He preaches to the Ninevites, who repent and are spared by God, which makes Jonah angry, whereupon God teaches him another lesson about mercy.

It may seem like a strange story to include in the Bible – and yet we know it's an important one because Jesus refers to it directly when the Pharisees ask him for a sign (Matthew 12.38-40). In fact, if we read Jonah carefully enough, we see that many of the underlying themes in the book are reflected throughout Jesus' ministry.

Parallels and metaphors

For example, the scene where Jonah is asleep in the boat while the storm rages recalls a similar scene in the Synoptic Gospels where Jesus is also asleep in a boat during a storm (Matthew 8.23-27, Mark 4.35-41, and Luke 8.22-25). In both cases, everyone else on the ship

is frightened, and both Jonah and Jesus are criticised for sleeping rather than taking action. Jesus calms the storm by commanding it – Jonah calms the storm by willingly being thrown into the sea.

Another parallel can be found in the fact that Jonah is in the fish's belly for three days and three nights – the same time it took for Jesus to die and rise again. This isn't a coincidence – indeed, this is why Jesus refers the Pharisees and teachers of the law to Jonah: *'For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.'* (Matthew 12.40)

Moreover, it's noteworthy that when Jonah prays to the Lord in Chapter 2, he describes his predicament as being in 'the belly of Sheol' – the Hebrew name for the place of the dead, where all are cut off from life and from God. In other words, Jonah's prayer comes from a place of death. And God's command to the fish to spit him out on dry land is a metaphorical foreshadowing of the resurrection of Christ.

Yet another parallel can be found in Jonah's anger that Nineveh is spared and forgiven, which calls to mind Jesus' parable of the Prodigal Son.

As you'll no doubt remember, the eldest son is unhappy that the younger son is welcomed back so grandly despite his various transgressions. It seems unfair and wrong to him, especially as he stayed home and did right by his family while his younger brother abandoned the family and blew his fortune on a life of high-order debauchery.

Similarly, Jonah hates the Ninevites – he is well aware of the evil they have done, and thinks it's unfair that they should be spared. Even after everything he's been through

FROM WITHIN THE BELLY OF THE WHALE FISH

and his restored relationship with God, he still can't accept God's decision to spare those who he sees as his enemies.

God's mercy and compassion

Metaphors and parallels aside, Jonah is also a powerful story about God's compassion and mercy – two key truths that Jesus preached during his time on Earth.

We see this most obviously in the repentance of Nineveh in Chapter 3, after which God decides not to bring down the calamity he promised. The Ninevites experience a true change of heart when they renounce evil and violence. We know this because the message Jonah preaches isn't an ultimatum: *'Repent now or face God's wrath!'* The message is simply that God will overthrow Nineveh. The Ninevites have no way of knowing if repentance will save them. They must have faith that God will be merciful and forgive them.

And he does. In fact, in Chapter 4 we see that God isn't just merciful – he wants to be merciful. He makes this point to Jonah at the end of the book: 'Should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?'

God didn't want to destroy Nineveh – if he did, he could have done it any time he wanted, and he wouldn't have sent Jonah to give them 40 days' notice. But even in his righteous anger, God gives the Ninevites a chance to change their hearts.

And of course, we also see God's mercy and compassion in his relationship with Jonah. Even though Jonah tries to disobey God, and gets angry with him, God accepts Jonah's prayer for forgiveness from the belly of the fish. Also, he doesn't respond to Jonah's anger with anger – he encourages Jonah to reflect on whether his anger is justified, since God has the sovereign right to decide Nineveh's fate.

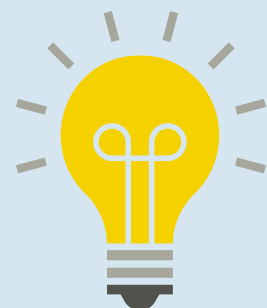
The Book of Jonah is ultimately a story of God's love and mercy, how God's nature contrasts with human nature, and how God has a way of aligning us so that we eventually want what he wants ... even if it takes spending three days inside a fish for us to realise this.

Of course, even after repenting, Jonah pushes back against God in his anger. But that's why Jonah is a relatable metaphor for most of us as humans and Christians, even if we may feel uncomfortable admitting this. We all get angry with God sometimes. We run away when he asks us to do things that frighten us or shove us out of our comfort zone. And we sometimes feel cheated when God forgives people that we don't feel deserve it.

Yet, like Jonah, we eventually come to realise that God is sovereign and just, and that he'll forgive us too if we ask. God loves us and wants to forgive us so much that he won't give up on us. He'll walk with us and teach us until we finally get it. That's why God's grace is so humbling and comforting.

And you thought it was just a tale about a guy being swallowed by a jolly huge fish.

Life Enrichment Tips from LEC



By Vanice Chan

Walking with teenagers, St John's Cathedral Life Enrichment Centre (LEC) strives to enrich the life of young people by the infusion of positivity. Although most of our activities and gatherings

have been hindered by the pandemic, we have managed to offer our youth some tips so that they would find life fulfilling, meaningful, and filled with joy. Here are some ideas shared by LEC:

10 Tips to enrich your life

1 Embrace every possibility

Be brave to express your feelings and say 'no', but at the same time be open to listening to others. It's okay to be not okay. Accept the present situation, listen to your conscience, understand what you need and genuinely express your thoughts. No one is perfect. Sometimes it might be rewarding and enriching. (if you are comfortable), to take a wrong path. In the end, it will lead you to the right one, because every path has its own course.

3 Try new things!

It's not easy to overcome fears of stepping out of your comfort zone, but if you challenge yourself a little bit and be open to accepting new experiences, you will find that life is different. Growth comes from new learning and how you find the meaning breaking through those fears.

2

Don't forget your old 'friend' (old hobby)

Sometimes picking up your old hobbies can make you feel grounded and relaxed, or you can also cultivate a new hobby which gives your life meaning. It may not necessarily be something you are good at but something you really enjoy. Life is not easy, so do things you like!

4

Be a smart Internet user

Sometimes you might miss something valuable when you stay too long on the Internet, especially on social media. Refrain from spending too much time worrying about other people's thoughts and expectations. Beware that many things on social media seem to be perfect, causing netizens to compare themselves with others. This may set wrong expectations for oneself.

5 Be compassionate toward others and non-judgemental

It's a process to learn to forgive, but if you usually hold a grudge, spending hours seething with bitterness, and resenting others, you might not be able to enjoy life to the fullest. Learn to have empathy toward others and move on. Sometimes we make mistakes, too. Everyone is different and it takes time to understand each other. 'Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.' (Luke 6.37)

6

Read more

Reading creates wisdom, especially when you have your own quiet time. Pause a bit and you can learn from the authors' viewpoints and broaden your horizons. Reading is an easy pastime, even during the pandemic. You can read online and pick up new knowledge from around the world.

8 Make goals

Goals do not need to be big, but should be meaningful to you or your dreams. Never give up your goals in pursuit of your dreams. Sometimes we can just start by taking small steps. Trust yourself that you can do it, which may bring a self-fulfilling prophecy effect. Always find your purpose.

7

Eat healthily, exercise regularly and have enough 'Me' time

Balanced meals every day with enough exercise can help you energise yourself with nutrients. Slow down a bit and you will have more energy to deal with stress and other issues. To begin with, try for example, doing mindfulness practice 30 minutes a day.

9

Be grateful to yourself, others and the environment

Take the time to appreciate the things that you may have been taking for granted, from your peers, family and the environment, etc. Create less waste and remember there are people who are less fortunate than you. Be thankful for what you have instead of bemoaning what you lack.

10

Do volunteer work

It's always a blessing to serve and you will feel more empowered during the process. You will have the chance to know and make friends with more people. Besides, your life may influence people, while you may feel inspired by others' lives at the same time. A positive social network can also help build protective support for individuals.

LEC welcomes you to join our teens' family. For more information or enquiries, please feel free to join our social media!



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The Initiation of Expressive Arts Teens Drama Project

By Kanu Fung

In response to recent social changes, St John's Cathedral's Youth Ministry has initiated a youth theatrical troupe for the first time. We hope that through different expressive arts workshops and drama skills training, students can find a safe platform to express themselves and to build confidence through theatrical performances. We are pleased to have recruited 30 secondary and tertiary students from different schools all over Hong Kong.

Secondary and tertiary students are at the preparatory stage before stepping into society. They are in search of their own identities and roles in an ever-changing social environment. The finding of an adequate balance between the pursuance of a goal and the need for a compromise in the present socio-cultural context is vital at their age. In these activities, participants are asked to confront their fears and challenges with courage, and to look for their sources of strength and solutions with creativity. To create a trusting environment and build a consolidated community is what we aim to achieve in this project.



Central to our project is its person-centred expressive arts therapy component. Participants attend different kinds of creative arts therapy workshops to explore their own inner selves. With this, they then collaborate to screen-write a play based on their discoveries and express their thoughts and feelings through public performances. Art is not merely a hobby or some unrealistic pursuit; we believe that art harnesses the power to help release stress and enhance personal growth. This serves as a great opportunity to promote the therapeutic use of art in our society.

There were a lot of challenges in the first year of organising the theatrical troupe. Besides numerous trials and errors, we encountered the fifth wave of the epidemic. It was hard to imagine how drama classes, such as drama therapy workshops and singing skill workshops could be run on Zoom. Gladfully, the feedback has been positive. When everyone participates with a positive attitude, barriers become tools to strengthen our resilience and perseverance. Please stay tuned for updates about our future performances!



Benefits of Playing Bible Story Puzzles

Puzzles are well proven to help in learning and relaxation. Learning and living through the Bible is important for developing faith, understanding, and wisdom. The following recommended items are a creative mix of puzzles and the Bible, that promises you and your children a fun and brain-teasing challenge as they learn the Bible.

Thematically selected and arranged, the *Puzzle Bible Series* covers Bible stories that all children love. These volumes give a quick view of God's work in the Old Testament—*God's Wonderful Creation*, *God's Chosen People* and *A People of Faith*, with an additional exciting volume, *The Adventure Puzzle Bible*, that highlights God's salvation grace to mankind, ultimately realised in Jesus Christ.

As you put the pieces together, each story is accompanied by fun and colourful puzzles that unfold the narrative. It is a perfect storytelling tool for church and in class, as well as an engaging reading activity for quiet little ones at home. Learning through play allows children to focus and engage, and reinforces their memory of the Bible story as they complete the task.

The *Puzzle Bible* is particularly suitable for children aged three to eight. Each volume holds six stories and six puzzles, designed to contain each and every piece in place after use, ensuring compact fun and convenient storage right on the bookshelf.

And what if you would like more fun with puzzles? *Bible Puzzles* may be the right choice for you. Featuring five life-giving and character-building scripture verses with endearing artwork, these *Bible Puzzles* come in five different sizes and levels of difficulty, suited for children aged four to twelve. Designed to teach scripture through art and activity, they are drawn by bestselling illustrators to capture the eye, so that the Word of God vividly remains in children's hearts and develops their characters. Hang the piece up in the living room, children's bedroom or the classroom, and it will be a daily reminder of the Word as they grow.

Doing puzzles seems like an activity that is coming back for adults, too, replacing other 'mindfulness' methods like drawing or colouring. The 1,000-piece option will be a pleasant addition to anybody's games cupboard, allowing one to connect with friends and family, or simply with yourself as you work on it. It is definitely an artwork that one can proudly show and decorate the home, with a message that never goes out of style.



A Sunday in the Life of ...

Thomas Li

Executive Administrator



In conversation with Andrew Ashley

I'm already at church on Sunday morning so I'll spend an hour or two in the office. There's always plenty to do and I need to show that I'm around and active.' In a nutshell, that's Sunday for Thomas Li. After singing in the choir at Choral Eucharist, he slips back into his role as the cathedral's Executive Administrator, a position he's held since May 2021.

His aptitude for both music and management has been a significant aspect of Thomas's church life. He first became involved in choral music at boarding school in the UK, an Anglican foundation. 'I prepared the music for services. I think that moulded me into the Anglican style of worship,' says Thomas.

School was followed by university in Sheffield and Thomas became a chorister at the cathedral, where he was confirmed. He also sang with the Sheffield Oratorio Chorus and served on the committee, gaining further experience of choir management. After completing a Master's degree in International Communication, Thomas thought about remaining in the UK, but the economy was still weak after the global financial crisis. 'My parents told me to come home!' he recalls.

Back in Hong Kong, Thomas started training with an accountancy firm but he was determined to keep singing. 'I went to St John's one Sunday and was amazed to find the choir singing choral mattins. It was already becoming a rarity in the UK.' He had an audition and joined the choir at Christmas 2010.

Thomas was soon immersed in choir life. 'I learned a lot about the church and made many friends.' He still had another contribution to make, in addition to singing on Sunday mornings. His professional accounting background made Thomas a natural choice for choir treasurer. In this role, he introduced standard accounting methods and effective cost controls, ensuring that the choir is financially self-sufficient.

Thomas is modest about his success as treasurer but his business experience and work for the choir clearly impressed the St John's Trustees. He was invited to join the Cathedral staff and became Accounts & Administration Officer in July 2018. His role broadened and he gradually took on other tasks, working closely with the Trustees and the Treasurer.

This prepared Thomas for the position of Executive Administrator when Viola Ip retired. He pays tribute to Viola for the thorough grounding she provided for his new role. 'St John's administration is much more complex than I realised. People ask a lot of demanding questions. Viola's training prepared me for the problems and how to solve them.'

Thomas admits that he hesitated before accepting his new job. 'It was a big step up from my previous role and I sensed there'd be frustrating moments.' But now, still in his first year as Executive Administrator, he is clearly enjoying the challenge.

Music and management seem the perfect combination for Thomas. When asked about where else his career might take him, he admits that managing a performing arts organisation would be his dream job. 'I have a fantasy about running an opera house. Perhaps a German avant garde opera company – I love the way they break the mould!'

Back to those Sunday mornings at St John's, when Thomas sings and then hurries over to the office. He's obviously very conscientious, but sometimes on Sundays he thinks 'Enough of the Cathedral, it's time to go!' Then he's off to one of Hong Kong's many hiking trails for a respite from his busy work life.

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

26 JUN The Second Sunday after Trinity
5.00pm Sung Eucharist with Baptism and Confirmation

29 JUN Peter and Paul, Apostles
7.30pm Sung Eucharist

03 JUL Thomas the Apostle
11.45am Sung Eucharist with Baptism

06 AUG The Transfiguration of Our Lord
12.00 noon Sung Eucharist

15 AUG The Blessed Virgin Mary
7.30pm Sung Eucharist

Discovery Bay Church

SKH Wei Lun Primary School
Lantau
Tel: 2987 4210
URL: www.discoverybaychurch.org.hk

Every Sunday
10.00am Sung Eucharist

Emmanuel Church

Béthanie Chapel
139 Pok Fu Lam Road, Pok Fu Lam
Tel: 2523 4157
URL: www.emmanuel.org.hk

Every Sunday
10.15am Sung Eucharist

St Stephen's Chapel

St Stephen's College
22 Tung Tau Wan Road, Stanley
Tel: 2813 0408
URL: www.ststephen.org.hk

Every Sunday
10.00am Sung Eucharist

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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