

# IN TOUCH

Issue 042

*Still Standing.*

*Still Growing*



October 2025

Cathedral Magazine  
Autumn Edition

ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL

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Read Online





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# DEAN'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

In a summer marked by unprecedented storms, we have been reminded anew of God's protecting grace. We thank Him that the extraordinary number of Typhoon Signal No. 10 and Black Rainstorm warnings this season did not cause irretrievable damage to our Cathedral. While rain can bring disruption, it also moisturises the earth and gives life to all, signalling growth and development for both the Cathedral and the world.

This summer, encouraged by Bishop Matthias Der, I had a fruitful study trip to the UK, generously supported by the Friends of the Church in China (FCC). Between 1 and 13 July, I visited 6 cathedrals and 2 minsters across several cities, finding great joy in attending services as a participant. I was also honoured to meet 7 deans and 5 bishops, forging new bonds of fellowship. A key part of the trip was attending the 'Restoring the Image' conference at Oxford's Pusey House. We are delighted that these efforts have already initiated communication between the Diocese of Leeds and Bishop Matthias, with promising collaborations on the horizon.

Through the liaison between our Chaplain, the Revd Will Newman, and Muhammad Arshad, the Chief Imam of the Kowloon Mosque and Islamic Centre, we had an impressive visit to the largest mosque in HK and its community on Saturday, 6 September. This inter-faith link will be continued by further dialogue between our Cathedral community and our new Muslim friends.

We also had ecumenical gatherings with our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters and Anglican friends from St Paul's Church. Visits were arranged to the Canossian Sisters Community on Caine Road, the Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, St Paul's Anglican Church, our Anglican Provincial Office, and our own Cathedral. More inter-faith and ecumenical gatherings will be arranged on an ongoing basis. Please stay tuned.

Our Cathedral celebrated her 176<sup>th</sup> anniversary on Sunday, 21 September. The scale was not as large as the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary held last year, but we still thanked God for a wonderful time counting our blessings and planning ahead for our Cathedral. In the pew bulletin, we encouraged Cathedral members to help sustaining the legacy of this historical building by contributing and donating. Next year, we will begin renovation work on the administrative building, Cathedral Church, and the Li Hall. Your generous support means a great deal to us.

In fact, renovation and maintenance work has been underway on our Cathedral grounds this summer. A huge scaffolding over the main altar and high altar was erected in July. The contractor recruited by the government is examining and repairing minor defects in our Cathedral church ceiling. This will be completed by the end of November. The Li Hall floor tiles were also renewed following the works in August. So, even though the Cathedral is a 176-year-old lady, we still ensure this sacred space is well presented.

May God bless you all.

Love from Dean KK



各位朋友：

在這個風暴頻密的夏季，我們深深體會到上帝看顧的恩典。雖然今季十號風球與黑色暴雨警告次數異常頻密，我們仍衷心感謝上主保守，讓座堂得以保持完好。雨水雖或造成不便，卻也滋養大地、孕育生機，喻示著座堂與世界的成長與發展。

今年夏天，在謝子和主教鼓勵下，我前赴英國進行了一次豐碩的學習之旅。承蒙中國教會之友（FCC）慷慨資助，7月1日至13日期間，我到訪多個城市，參觀了六座大教堂與兩座修道院教堂。以信徒身份參與崇拜，讓我深感喜樂。此外，我有幸與七位座堂主任牧師及五位主教會面，建立了新的團契情誼。此行重點包括參加牛津大學普西學院（Pusey House）舉辦的「恢復形象」會議。欣見這些交流已促成列斯教區與謝子和主教展開對話，為未來合作奠下基礎。

透過本堂劉偉力牧師與九龍清真寺及伊斯蘭中心首席伊瑪目 Muhammad Arshad 的安排，我們於9月6日（星期六）參觀了全港最大的清真寺，此行令人印象深刻。這道跨宗教的橋樑，將會透過座堂群體與穆斯林朋友持續對話而得以延續。

我們亦與天主教弟兄姊妹及聖公會聖保羅堂教友舉行了合一聚會，先後探訪了堅道的嘉諾撒仁愛女修會、天主教聖母無原罪主教座堂、聖保羅堂、教省辦事處，以及我們的座堂。未來我們將繼續籌辦更多跨宗教與合一聚會，敬請期待。

9月21日主日，我們懷著感恩的心慶祝座堂成立176周年。規模雖不及去年的175周年慶典，我們仍然感謝上帝賜下美好時刻，讓我們數算恩典、展望前路。透過座堂季刊，我們鼓勵弟兄姊妹以奉獻支持這座歷史建築的使命。明年我們將展開行政大樓、主教座堂及李堂的翻新工程，你們的慷慨支持對我們至關重要。

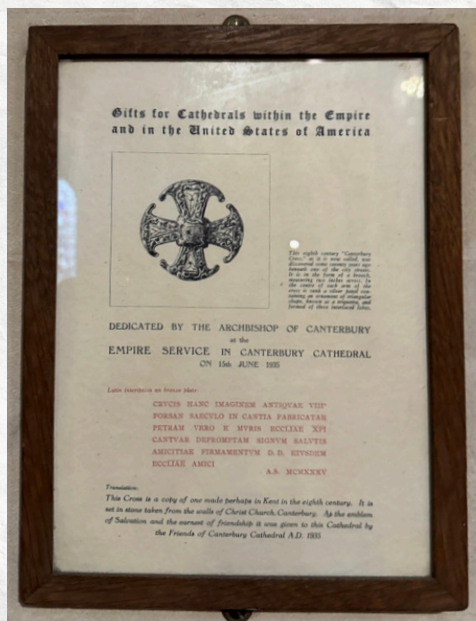
事實上，座堂今年夏季已開展多項維修工程：在7月，座堂的聖壇和高聖壇上方搭建了大型竹棚，政府委聘的承建商正在檢查修復堂頂的細微損壞，工程預計11月底前完成；李堂的地板亦已於8月更換。雖然座堂已歷176載寒暑，我們仍盡心守護這個屬靈神聖空間，保持她的莊嚴雅觀。

願上帝賜福各位。

座堂主任牧師  
陳國強謹啟



# A Symbol of Unity: The Canterbury Cross Wall-Stone



Christ Church Cathedral Dublin

Text by/  
**ANDREW LIM**  
Photo by/  
**ALEX CHAN, DOUGLAS LAM,  
ANDREW LIM, PUBLIC DOMAIN**

**T**he Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us. In this Cathedral the building the Word is made stone. It dwells among the other buildings of this city as a witness to the Living God... It is a symbol both of our faith in God and of the beauty that we give back in worship and in art.' (Bishop R. O. Hall, 1935)

Eagle-eyed parishioners may have seen a small stone plaque mounted on a pillar just above the Dean's Throne behind the Eagle Lectern. But have you ever wondered what it is? What does it say? Or where did it come from?



Christ Church Cathedral Montreal

## The Latin inscription reads:

CRVCIS HANC IMAGINEM ANTIQVAE VIII  
FORSAN SAECVLO IN CANTIA FABRICATAE  
PETRAM VERO E MVRIS ECCLIAE XPI  
CANTVAR DE PROMPTAM SIGNVM SALVTIS  
AMICITIAE FIRMAMENTVM D.D. EIVSDEM  
ECCLIAE AMICI A.S. MCMXXXV

## Which translates to:

This is a copy of an ancient 8<sup>th</sup> century cross, perhaps made in Kent. It is set in stone taken from the walls of Christ Church, Canterbury. Given as a symbol of salvation and a token of friendship, it was gifted by the Friends of Canterbury Cathedral in the 1935<sup>th</sup> year of salvation.

## Origins: Stone and Communion

The Canterbury Cross is based on a 9<sup>th</sup> century Anglo-Saxon brooch, discovered in 1867 during excavations on St George's Street, Canterbury. The original brooch was cast in bronze, decorated with silver panels featuring triquetras inlaid with black niello. The arms of the cross resemble triangles, while the overall shape resembles a round wheel. A second similar brooch was subsequently unearthed under Eastbridge Hospital in Canterbury. These crosses are unique to the area, though they bear a resemblance to other early Christian crosses from England, such as the Trumpington and St Cuthbert Crosses.

In 1935, the Friends of Canterbury Cathedral—the official 'fan club' of the Cathedral—commissioned 93 identical wall-stones, each bearing a bronze replica of the Canterbury Cross and a plaque with a Latin inscription. These were mounted on blocks of Caen Stone, cut from the walls of the Cathedral. Each block weighed 11.5 pounds and measured 10 by 14 inches. The Friends raised £275 for this project, equivalent to £16,500 today.

These wall-stones were dedicated by Cosmo Lang, the Archbishop of Canterbury, during the Empire Service on 15 June 1935. This service

was broadcast live by the BBC Empire Service on shortwave. Representative tunes from the Home Country were performed before the service, probably intended to resonate with expatriates across the Empire. British patriotic songs, such as *Hearts of Oak*, *Jerusalem*, *Abide with Me*, *Land of Hope and Glory*, and *God Save the King*, were prominently featured throughout the service.

After prayers for the King's Dominions and for peace, a message from the Prince of Wales—the first Friend on the Roll of the Friends—was read out. Archbishop Lang then blessed the wall-stones, saying: 'From this ancient shrine of our civilisation and of our religion, I send forth to the Dominions and Colonies a heart-felt benediction on their rulers, and the lives, the labours, and the homes of all their peoples.'

The wall-stones were packed into small wooden cases and shipped across the world, to various cathedrals in the Commonwealth, the Empire, and the United States of America.

## Our Stone

While convalescing abroad, the Revd N. Victor Halward—the Bishop's Chaplain—received our wall-stone from Canterbury Cathedral. He handed it to Ralph Dormer, the District Scoutmaster of Kowloon, who returned to the Colony aboard the *SS Rajputana* on 4 September 1935.

## Historic Service Links Empire With Kent

PRIMATE READS PRINCE'S MESSAGE  
TO DISTINGUISHED ASSEMBLY

PAGEANTRY AT CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL, the scene of many great occasions in the past, on Saturday was a centre of pageantry and colour when its grey walls welcomed representatives from all over the King's Dominions at an Empire Service which opened the Friends' annual Festival of Music and Drama.

Seldom in recent years has the City seen so many splendid processions wend their way through the Christ Church Gateway and large crowds gathered to watch the spectacle.

Through the broadcast of the service, many thousands of people at home and in the remotest corners of the Empire heard the Archbishop read the Prince of Wales' message and proceed to dedicate the pieces of Cathedral stone which will still further strengthen the bond between the Mother Church and her offshoots abroad.

MILLIONS HEAR DEDICATION CEREMONY

THE service, in addition to being broad-| God grant, may the spirit of the Cross be



EMPIRE SERVICE.—The Archbishop of Canterbury, followed by the Dean, leaving the Cathedral, after the Service.

Empire Service from *The Kent Messenger*



The formal dedication took place at the 11.00am Mattins on 'Cathedral Sunday', 22 December 1935. This service was presided by the Revd Henry Wolfe Baines, who later became the Bishop of Singapore. Bishop Ronald Owen Hall and the Governor Sir Andrew Caldecott were in attendance.

The service began with the processional hymn *Hail Thee, Festival Day*, as the choir entered in single file along both side aisles, forming a double column in the crossing before proceeding into the chancel. As the procession halted in front of the wall-stone, Bishop Hall stood alongside Trustees Philip Stanley Cassidy and Alfred Brearley.

Mr Cassidy addressed the congregation, saying, 'The Rt Revd Father in God and friends, we have received this stone taken from the walls of Christ Church, Canterbury, as the earnest of friendship uniting the children of the mother church of China with those of the mother church of Britain. In it is set a cross, copied from one perhaps made in Kent 1,200 years ago. We now gratefully accept this bond of peace and emblem of salvation.'

Mr Brearley followed, saying, 'The Rt Revd Father in God, we desire you to dedicate this cross, made by an unknown disciple, that all who see it may rejoice in the unity of the Spirit and glorify the love of God.'

Bishop Hall then dedicated the cross, and *Psalm 24* was sung as the procession continued. The remainder of the service followed the standard Morning Prayer liturgy from *The Book of Common Prayer*. Like many artifacts within our Cathedral, the wall-stone was damaged during the Japanese occupation but was later restored.

The 1936 annual report from the Friends of Canterbury Cathedral notes that in addition to the wall-stone, each cathedral was sent a framed inscription featuring a diagram of the Canterbury Cross, accompanied by the inscription in both Latin and English. The service order from the Empire Service was also included in the package. Ours were likely lost during the Japanese occupation.

## How Many Wall-Stones are There?

The 1936 Friends annual report stated that 93 wall-stones were dedicated by Archbishop Lang, a number echoed on the Canterbury Historical and Archaeological Society (CHAS) website. This figure is incorrect.

There is a handwritten list with 91 recipients next to Canterbury Cathedral's wall-stone. There are 2 erroneous entries: 'The Holy Catholic Church in China' and the 'Province of Armagh', excludes Canterbury Cathedral itself. The numerical error was recently spotted by Mr Daniel Korachi-Alaoui of the Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Dr Ian Osterloh of CHAS. Hongkongers will also notice that the Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui (CHSKH) was misspelt.

Contemporary reports from British, Singaporean, and Canadian newspapers mentioned 92 in total. Archbishop Lang was quoted by *The Kent Messenger*, saying that the wall-stones would be distributed to '90



St John's Cathedral

cathedral churches within the Empire and to 2 in the United States of America'. In a 1937 article from *The Faversham News*, it was reported that 91 wall-stones were sent abroad, with the 92<sup>nd</sup> being presented to Canterbury itself during the Friends' Festival Service in 1937.

The list of recipients was not finalised at the time of the Empire Service. Parishioners at St Andrew's Cathedral in Singapore initially complained about their exclusion, but by early 1936 realised they were actually on the list. One might say that, in true Anglican fashion, confusion was present in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be.

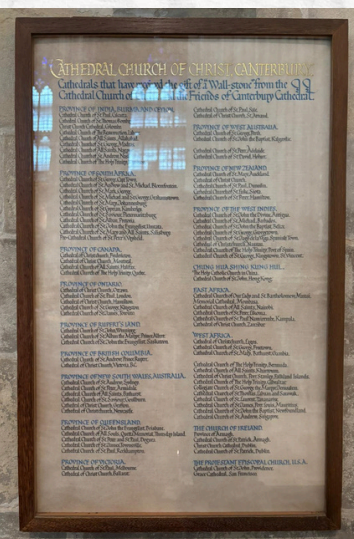
What previously seemed lost to history was that St John's was not the only CHSKH recipient. On 25 April 1937, an additional wall-stone was presented to Holy Trinity Cathedral in Shanghai as a part of their St George's Day celebrations. This copy was not a part of the original 92, as Shanghai was neither a dominion nor colony. Nevertheless, the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury agreed to produce an additional copy, with costs borne by Mr D. L. Ralph from the Royal Society of St George. This event was reported in *The North China Daily News*, *The Shanghai Times*, and *The China Press*, though no Chinese language records survive, nor was it reported on in the UK.

One mystery remains: why did neither the Scottish Episcopal Church nor the Church in Wales appear on the recipient list, especially considering that Archbishop Lang himself was Scottish? Staff at both St Mary's Cathedrals in Edinburgh and Glasgow have confirmed that they never received any wall-stones.

90 years after the wall-stones were sent globally, several recipient cathedrals have been downgraded to parish churches, while others have been demolished entirely. Wars and natural disasters have also claimed their toll, most recently Christ Church Cathedral in Christchurch. All Saint's Cathedral in Khartoum was seized in a coup in 1971 and repurposed as a secular museum. It is likely that wall-stones from these cathedrals would have been lost, so it seems almost impossible to track all of them down today.

## Why is this Relevant?

While our friend the Very Revd Professor Martyn Percy may hold differing views on the Anglican Communion—views he shares in his latest book—we servers believe that our Canterbury Cross wall-stone embodies the invisible spiritual bond between the Mother Church of Anglo-Saxon Christianity and the Church in China. As Bishop Hall so eloquently stated in his sermon, 'It is right that the stone from Canterbury Cathedral, the Mother Church of all England, should have been fastened today in this Daughter Church. It is a symbol both of our faith in God and of the beauty that we give back in worship and in art.'



List of Recipients





# STILL STANDING, STILL GROWING:

## *176 Years at St John's*

Text by / NATASHA NGAN

These days, anyone walking into the Cathedral is met with a familiar sight—the scaffolding around the altar has become part of the landscape. It's been there for weeks now, a quiet testament to the ongoing work of preserving a building with so much history. On Sunday 21 September, as we gathered for our 176<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it felt strangely fitting. It stood as a reminder that this Cathedral has never been held up by stone and wood alone, but by generations of love and care from the people who call it home.

The Gospel reading for the day provided a surprising text for a birthday celebration—the story of Jesus cleansing the temple. Not exactly typical festival reading, but the Dean helped everyone see something deeper in it. He spoke about how the disciples, after witnessing Jesus' actions, had to search their memories of Scripture to truly understand who He was. Seeing miracles wasn't enough—they needed to connect them to God's bigger story.

That theme of remembering resonated through the service. The Dean shared a bit from Bishop George Smith's diary from 176 years ago, painting a picture of how challenging it was to establish a church here in the early days. Hearing those historical struggles made looking around the packed Cathedral that much more powerful—seeing the mix of faces, languages, and generations all worshipping together was a powerful testament to the faithfulness of those who came before.

If the scaffolding reminds us of the physical care this building requires, the day's celebration highlighted the deeper, ongoing work of strengthening faith. The temporary framework above the altar supports stone, but it's the community's shared commitment that truly sustains this place. After 176 years, St John's Cathedral stands not just as a historic landmark, but as a living community—still growing, still believing, and still writing its story together.





# Adrian & Diana's GOLDEN JUBILEE

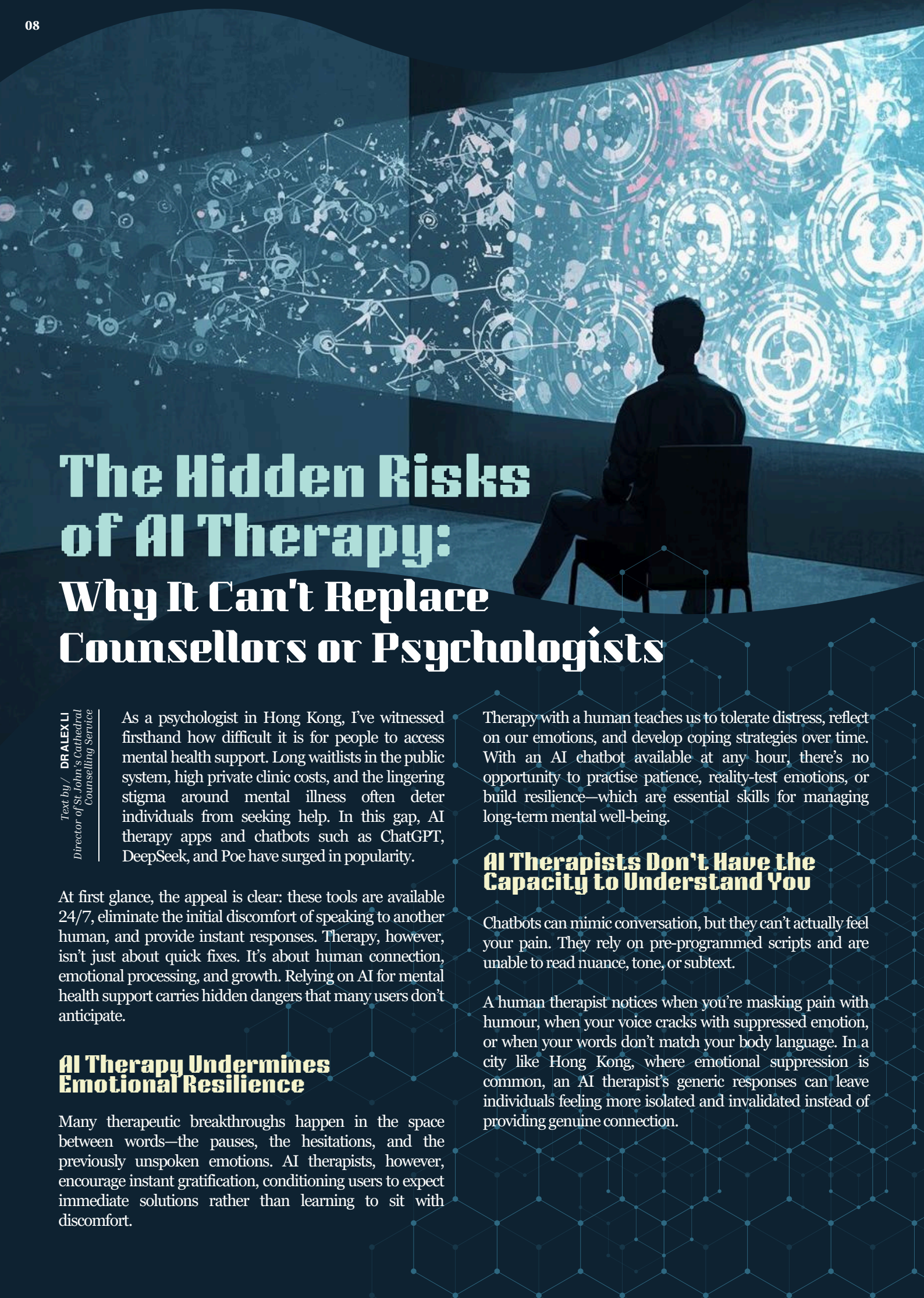
Text by / NATASHANGAN

The community of St John's Cathedral was filled with joy on Friday 12 September, as we celebrated the Golden Jubilee of Adrian and Diana. The occasion was truly meaningful, as we honoured a couple who have been a cherished part of our parish family for more than 5 decades.

To mark this special milestone, the Revd Robert Martin officiated a heartfelt renewal of vows ceremony. It was deeply moving to see Adrian and Diana reaffirm their lifelong commitment here in their spiritual home, surrounded by loved ones from both their family and their cathedral community. We were also delighted that the Rt Revd Dr Matthias Der was present to offer a special blessing for the next chapter of their journey together.

This celebration was more than an anniversary; it was a powerful testament to a shared history and a beautiful witness to lifelong love. A huge congratulations, Adrian and Diana! Your 50 years of marriage, nurtured within our community, is an inspiration to us all. Thank you for showing us the meaning of faithful commitment. May God continue to richly bless your path together in the years to come.





# The Hidden Risks of AI Therapy: Why It Can't Replace Counsellors or Psychologists

Text by / **DRALEX LI**  
Director of St John's Cathedral  
Counselling Service

As a psychologist in Hong Kong, I've witnessed firsthand how difficult it is for people to access mental health support. Long waitlists in the public system, high private clinic costs, and the lingering stigma around mental illness often deter individuals from seeking help. In this gap, AI therapy apps and chatbots such as ChatGPT, DeepSeek, and Poe have surged in popularity.

At first glance, the appeal is clear: these tools are available 24/7, eliminate the initial discomfort of speaking to another human, and provide instant responses. Therapy, however, isn't just about quick fixes. It's about human connection, emotional processing, and growth. Relying on AI for mental health support carries hidden dangers that many users don't anticipate.

## AI Therapy Undermines Emotional Resilience

Many therapeutic breakthroughs happen in the space between words—the pauses, the hesitations, and the previously unspoken emotions. AI therapists, however, encourage instant gratification, conditioning users to expect immediate solutions rather than learning to sit with discomfort.

Therapy with a human teaches us to tolerate distress, reflect on our emotions, and develop coping strategies over time. With an AI chatbot available at any hour, there's no opportunity to practise patience, reality-test emotions, or build resilience—which are essential skills for managing long-term mental well-being.

## AI Therapists Don't Have the Capacity to Understand You

Chatbots can mimic conversation, but they can't actually feel your pain. They rely on pre-programmed scripts and are unable to read nuance, tone, or subtext.

A human therapist notices when you're masking pain with humour, when your voice cracks with suppressed emotion, or when your words don't match your body language. In a city like Hong Kong, where emotional suppression is common, an AI therapist's generic responses can leave individuals feeling more isolated and invalidated instead of providing genuine connection.



## AI Therapists Can Get It Wrong—Sometimes With Dangerous Consequences

AI therapists do not have the capacity to understand human emotions; they have been trained to guess based on data.

### Consider the following scenarios:

A person saying ‘I’m so tired of everything’ could mean depression, suicidal ideation, or stress. A human therapist is trained to probe deeper, whilst an AI therapist might just suggest meditation or better sleep.

In Hong Kong, anxiety often manifests physically. A person may say, ‘My chest feels tight’. An AI therapist could misinterpret this as a heart issue rather than a panic attack. A human therapist will be attuned to the anxiety symptoms being manifested and explore further.

Worse, some AI therapy apps have given dangerous advice. There are cases where AI therapists have told users with eating disorders to ‘just eat less’ or brushed off suicidal thoughts with phrases such as, ‘Sometimes endings are new beginnings’. Without a human therapist providing oversight, these mistakes can be life-threatening.

## Your Privacy Is at Risk

Would you confess your deepest fears to a stranger who might sell your secrets? Many mental health apps collect and monetise user data such as chat content, demographics, moods, and even location. Unlike licensed therapists, who are bound by confidentiality laws, AI platforms operate under vague terms of service, leaving your sensitive information unprotected.

## Quick Fixes Don’t Heal Deep Wounds

Whilst Hong Kong thrives on speed, mental health recovery doesn’t work at this blistering pace. True healing requires time, self-reflection, and sometimes uncomfortable truths.

Alarmingly, AI therapists often reinforce harmful beliefs because they’re designed to be agreeable. There have been reported cases of individuals with bipolar disorder having their delusions validated by AI, leading to dangerous actions. Therapy shouldn’t be an echo chamber; rather, it should challenge and guide appropriately.

## What Role Can AI Play in Therapy?

AI can be a starting point—similar to reading a self-help book or watching an educational video. However, just as you can’t learn to drive a car by reading a manual, you can’t heal deep emotional wounds through scripted interactions.

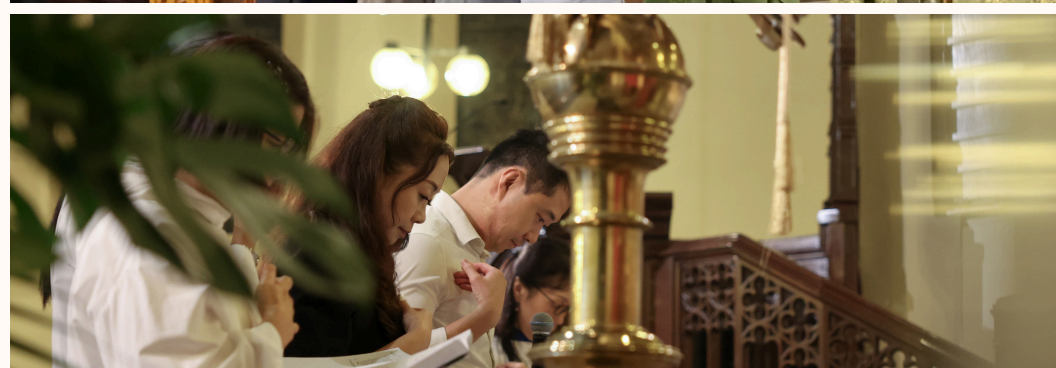
Mental health support requires empathy, ethical accountability, and professional training—none of which AI possesses. AI therapists would therefore need to be regulated, held to clinical standards, and able to replicate genuine human understanding.

The people you trust with your mental health need to have the correct training so that they can support you properly; this applies also to the creators and developers of the apps for AI therapy. Some apps may claim to have been trained on clinical data, but where did they get consent to use this data? And often they market themselves as having mental health professionals overseeing their work, but these credentials are not easily checked.

It’s not enough to want to be helpful; you must attain the correct training and uphold ethical standards. So far, there is no such thing as a licensed AI therapist or psychologist, and thus these providers cannot be held accountable. Would you trust someone with your mental health—or that of those you care about—knowing that they cannot be held accountable?







Ministries Commissioning



# Cantate Domino canticum novum: *Welcoming the Revised English Hymnal*

Text by / FELIX YEUNG

Ralph Vaughan Williams' famous orchestral piece, *Fantasia on Greensleeves*, provided the test tracks for the English listening exams of generations of Hong Kong students. This same melody represents a pivotal moment in English church music—the 1906 publication of *The English Hymnal*, a legacy that has nourished our worship for over a century and finds its newest expression in the most recent *Revised English Hymnal*.

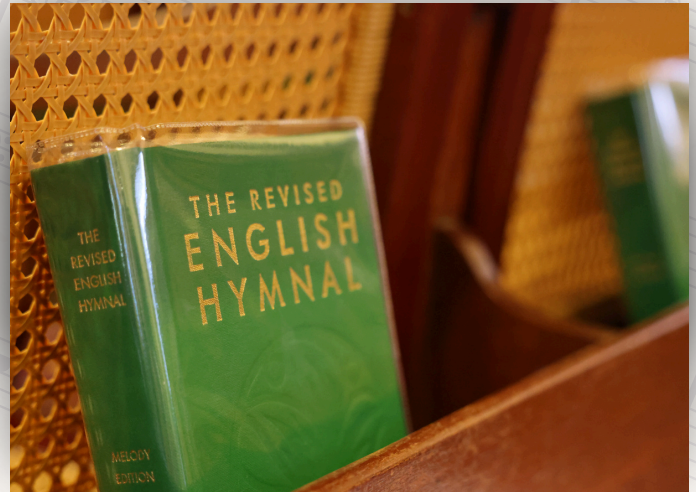
Since 1986, we have cherished *The New English Hymnal* as our spiritual companion. Its own foundation was the revolutionary 1906 original, a project born from a desire to reclaim the soul of English sacred songs. The Revd Percy Dearmer, its 'mastermind', believed the sentimental popular music of his day had diluted sacred music. He found a kindred spirit in Vaughan Williams, whom he invited to be the musical editor of *The English Hymnal*.

Vaughan Williams, being a musical patriot, shared Dearmer's vision that Anglican liturgy should be rooted in England's own pre-Reformation and folk traditions. This philosophy is why masterpieces like his *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* feel so spiritually resonant, and why *The English Hymnal* was filled with timeless tunes adapted from English folksongs, such as 'Forest Green' for O little town of Bethlehem and 'Kingsfold' for I heard the voice of Jesus say.

Vaughan Williams's editorial principle was simple yet profound; he wrote in the preface of *The English Hymnal* that, 'where there is congregational singing it is important that familiar melodies should be employed, or at least those which have stood the test of time: therefore the "specially composed tune"—that bane of many a hymnal—has been avoided as far as possible.' His goal was musical integrity that empowered the whole congregation to sing with confidence and heart.

## *A Living Tradition.*

*Now Revised for the Global Church*  
This commitment to theological soundness, musical richness, and congregational participation is the very heart of the tradition we inherit. The *Revised English Hymnal* is the next great step in this journey. Like its predecessors, it aims to be 'a humble companion' to the common prayer of the Church, for every English-speaking worship (or beyond) that values this tradition around the world.



This is a substantial and thoughtful new edition: of its approximately 680 items, about 185 are new to users of *The New English Hymnal*, thoughtfully expanding our musical and liturgical resources. The collection is deeply rooted in the Church's life, with over half of the hymns dedicated to the liturgical year and a generous selection for different sacraments and liturgical occasions.

Significantly, this edition enhances its practical utility for daily worship. It features an expanded Liturgical Section with 8 communion settings, about 50 items of music associated with various ceremonies (including a full provision for Holy Week), and expanded the Office hymns collection for both seasonal and ordinary use. To assist those planning the liturgy, the hymnal includes various indexes and list of suggested hymns for Sundays and festivals. The volume is further enriched by an essay from the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, president of the Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

Just as the 1906 hymnal offered a fresh alternative rooted in timeless value, *The Revised English Hymnal* invites a new generation to experience the joy and power of singing the faith. It stands on the shoulders of the great tradition that came before it, ensuring this beloved heritage remains a vibrant, living resource for the global church of today and tomorrow.

We extend our gratitude to the late Fr Hugh Phillipson and Mrs Ruth Phillipson, and Ms Grace Fung for their generosity in donating the Full Music Edition that the Cathedral Choir and the organists are using; and to Yung Foundation Ltd for donating the Melody Edition in the pews. All the hymnbooks were dedicated at the 9am Sung Eucharist on Sunday 31 August 2025. With these new books, may we do as the Psalmist says: *Cantate Domino canticum novum* (Sing unto the Lord a new song)!



# FREE

## Indeed

Text by / THE REV. DREW COURTRIGHT

It had been 7 months since I had been inside a prison. The last time was at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility in New York in December 2024. I celebrated a final eucharist with 12 women at this maximum-security prison where I had been a visiting chaplain for 18 months. I had been feeling a little guilty about 'leaving' them to move to Hong Kong, but they surprised me with their excitement and genuine happiness for me. That's when it dawned on me that, for these inmates, anytime someone leaves prison, it's a good thing!

And so, as I walked up to Stanley Prison with the Revd Will Newman and 7 young adults from the Life Enrichment Centre, I knew I was covered in prayer from my last prison visit. This time, going into a men's facility in Hong Kong was very different. Different guards, different doors, different sights, different inmates. Yet, despite these superficial differences, there was still one thing that was exactly the same—the inmates we visited were so thankful that we were there. Having visitors is a great gift to inmates who see those same guards, doors, sights, and fellow inmates all day, every day. The monotony, I'm told, can really wear one down. But having visitors mixes it up, breaks the routine, and is like a breath of fresh air. It lifts the spirit and brings relief.

That's true of God, too. Before God came to visit us in His Son Jesus Christ, humanity was imprisoned under the Law by the consequences of Sin. Nothing we could do—no amount of good works, religious ritual, or even spiritual tomfoolery—could ever open the doors to freedom. We needed relief from outside. And so, the Holy Visitor came not only to break the monotony but to break the chains and to set us free through His death and resurrection. And THAT is the message that truly lifts the spirits of literal and figurative prisoners. Visiting is great, but sharing with one another how God's freeing spirit is at work in or outside the facility—that is what makes prison ministry so powerful for inmate and visitor alike.

Therefore, we rejoice in the words of Jesus found in John's gospel: 'So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.' (John 8. 36)



Drew with inmate Sara K. At her Confirmation with Bishop Mary Glasspool





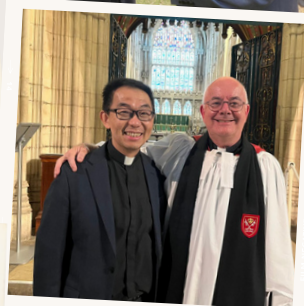


Blessing of Animals



# With History in One Hand, and Mission in the Other

*Dean's Pilgrimage to England  
Inspires Vision for Our Future*



Text by / NATASHANGAN

As we give thanks for our Cathedral's 176 years of witness in Hong Kong, we are reminded that our faith is a living tradition—one that draws strength from its history while continually seeking renewal for its mission. This spirit of reflection and forward-looking hope was beautifully embodied in our Dean's recent study tour to the United Kingdom this summer. His journey, which combined deep theological reflection at the University of Oxford with pilgrimages to England's ancient cathedrals, has brought back fresh inspiration for our shared mission.

The heart of the tour was an international conference at Oxford's Pusey House, titled 'Restoring the Image: Creation, Salvation, and the Human Person'. For 3 days, the Dean engaged with scholars exploring the profound question of what it means to be made in God's image.

The Dean described the experience as 'a real refreshing process', revisiting the philosophical and theological foundations studied during his time at Ming Hua. He highlighted several profound lectures, from Professor



Jennifer Frey's insights on the Imago Dei as the foundation of moral philosophy to Professor Joanna Collicutt's compelling talk on understanding sin through the lens of modern psychology and evolutionary processes.

'The conference was not just an academic exercise', the Dean shared. 'It was an invitation to reflect on our own finitude, our redemption, and our calling as God's people. It reiterated the importance of contemplation as a means to remember we are Godlike, naturally orienting us to do good and appreciate friendship with all creation'.

The Dean's itinerary included a pilgrimage to several of England's great churches, both before and after the conference. The sites visited included the majestic York Minster and the community-embedded Southwark Cathedral. A highlight was a private tour of the York Minster crypt, conducted by its Dean, the Very Revd Dominic Barrington.

'What stayed with me was not just the history, but Dean Dominic's passion in telling its story', he reflected. 'It was a powerful example of how to be both a guardian of a sacred legacy and an enthusiastic storyteller for a new generation'. He noted the parallel with our own Cathedral, as York Minster, like ours, is undergoing significant renovation—a sign of a living faith that honours its past while actively building its future.

Bringing this experience home, the Dean sees a clear path for our community as we step into our 177<sup>th</sup> year. He envisions a chapter that honours our inherited traditions while courageously exploring new initiatives.

'Inspired by what I saw, my prayer is that we continue to be humble, devout servants to Hong Kong', he said. 'Let us be a community that holds its history with one hand and reaches forward in mission with the other, faithfully steering the "Three-Horse Chariot" of our Anglican heritage into the future'.

His journey reminds us that our 176-year of story is still being written, enriched by global conversations and a timeless call to service.





# GRACE

## *in a busy week*

### A Journey of Faith and Fellowship

Text by / FRANK LANG

In our fast-paced lives, finding time for spiritual growth and fellowship can often feel like a challenge. Recognising this need, the former Dean of the Cathedral, Matthias, now the Bishop, initiated a bible study group in 2017 called 'Grace in a Busy Week'. Its purpose was to provide parishioners working in the Central area with an opportunity to engage in scripture study and fellowship during their lunch hour.

The group's first gathering took place on 27 October 2017, initially planned for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of each month and limited to a maximum of 15 participants. However, the response far exceeded expectations, with 35 people signing up for the first meeting. Participants brought their own lunches and spent the hour together in study, prayer, and community. This innovative approach quickly became a cherished part of many parishioners' weekly routines.

After Bishop Matthias was consecrated as Bishop in 2020, the study continued under the leadership of different clergy members. Despite the challenges posed by the global pandemic, Grace in a Busy Week adapted to a hybrid format, allowing members to participate both in person and via Zoom. This flexibility ensured that the group remained a vital part of the Cathedral's ministry, even during uncertain times.

#### Looking Ahead: Expanding Grace in a Busy Week

As the group looks to the future, Grace in a Busy Week is planning to resume its bi-monthly lunchtime Bible study gatherings this autumn. These sessions will continue to provide a convenient time for parishioners to study scripture and share fellowship in a supportive community.

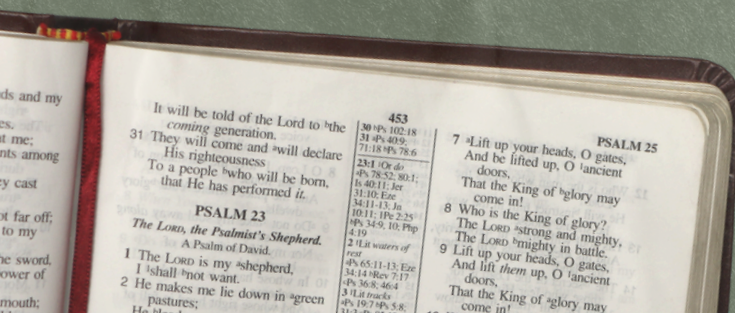


In addition to bi-weekly gatherings, we are also excited to incorporate stand-alone sessions led by clergy members. We are delighted to confirm that the Revd Drew Courtright will lead a 3-session series in November 2025 titled 'Grounded in Grace'. These sessions, scheduled for 6, 13, and 20 November, aim to present grace—God's unmerited, one-way love for sinners—as the foundation and culmination of the church and its mission. Participants will explore how grace shapes our spiritual lives, our relationships, and the church's purpose in the world.

This combination of regular studies and focused sessions allows us to offer both continuity and fresh insights, ensuring that Grace in a Busy Week remains an accessible and enriching experience for all.

#### Evening Bible Study Series: A New Chapter

Recognising the evolving needs of parishioners, Grace in a Busy Week introduced short evening bible study series to accommodate those unable to attend during the day. The first evening series, titled 'Let's Each Gospel Speak for Itself', took place earlier this year in May 2025. Led by the distinguished scholar the Revd Professor John Kater, PhD, it attracted nearly 40 participants and was highly praised for its depth and insight.





*Let Each Gospel  
Speak for Itself*

# Study Series

The 'Grace in a Busy Week' Bible study group is organising a special 4-week series led by the Revd Professor John Kater, titled 'Let Each Gospel Speak for Itself'.

This series will explore how each Gospel offers a unique perspective on Jesus, his life, and his message, and how they collectively shape our understanding of his teachings.

Dates: 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> June  
(Mondays)

Time: 7.00-8.00pm

Venue: Harold Smyth Room  
(SJC Admin Building)

Please note that seating is limited. To register, please email: [reception@stjohnscathedral.org.hk](mailto:reception@stjohnscathedral.org.hk) or call the Cathedral Office at 2522 4157.

## GRACE *in a busy week*

13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> October  
(Mondays)

7.00-8.00pm

Harold Smyth Room

Register by email [reception@stjohnscathedral.org.hk](mailto:reception@stjohnscathedral.org.hk)  
or WhatsApp 5107 7170

**Introducing Jesus  
(to those who think they already know him)**

For many Christians, Jesus can seem very familiar. Our everyday stories about Jesus and those he told in parables are well-known to us. But suppose our customary ways of reading the gospels only serve to emasculate the real power and deeper meanings that might be hidden in the meetings that Jesus had with others, as well as the miracles and parables we encounter?

In this series of three Bible studies led by our Provost Theologian, the Very Revd Professor Martyn Percy, we explore an approach to emerging new insights in biblical scholarship. This journey can lead to a new, authentic, and sustaining faith in Christ as we explore together the challenges, compassion, and convictions that lie at the heart of Jesus' ministry. This course introduces us to Jesus afresh—and especially to those who think they already know him.

**Speaker**

The Very Revd Professor  
Martyn Percy

Fr John's impressive career includes serving as rector at Christ Episcopal Church in Poughkeepsie, New York, and teaching at Vassar College, the Episcopal Diocese of Panama, and Ming Hua Theological College in Hong Kong.

### Upcoming Series: Exploring Jesus and the Psalms

Building on the success of the May series, Grace in a Busy Week is preparing another enriching offering this autumn: 'Introducing Jesus—to Those Who Think They Already Know Him'. This thought-provoking 3-part series will be held in October 2025 and will be led by the Very Revd Professor Martyn Percy, a renowned theologian and Provost-Theologian at Ming Hua College in Hong Kong. Fr Martyn extensive credentials include roles as Professor of Religion and Culture at the University of Saint Joseph in Macao, Senior Research Associate at the James Hutton Institute in Aberdeen, and Canon Theologian for the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe.

For many Christians, Jesus can seem very familiar. Our everyday stories about Jesus and those he told in parables are well-known to us. But suppose our customary ways of reading the gospels only serve to emasculate the real power and deeper meanings that might be hidden in the meetings that Jesus had with others, as well as the miracles and parables we encounter?

In this series of 3 bible studies, we will explore an approach to faith that warmly embraces critical discernment and is open to emerging new insights in biblical scholarship. This journey can lead to a new, authentic, and sustaining faith in Christ as we explore together the challenges, compassion, and convictions that lie at the heart of Jesus' ministry. This course introduces us to Jesus afresh—and especially to those who think they already know him.

The series will feature:

1. The Miracles of Jesus and Their Meanings
2. The Point of Parables
3. Encounters with Jesus

In spring 2026, Fr Martyn will lead another series titled 'Psalms in Everyday Life', followed later in the year by a study on the 'Book of Jonah'. Additionally, Fr John will return in 2026 to lead another series, with the topic to be announced soon.

## A Testament to the Cathedral's Commitment

Grace in a Busy Week continues to exemplify the Cathedral's dedication to fostering spiritual growth, fellowship, and learning. Through the steadfast support of parishioners and the inspiring leadership of dedicated clergy and theologians, the group remains a cornerstone of our ministry. Whether through lunchtime gatherings, evening series, or new initiatives, Grace in a Busy Week offers parishioners a meaningful opportunity to connect with scripture and one another. We look forward to the exciting new studies ahead and give thanks for the journey of faith that binds us together.





## Celebrating *44 Years of Service* and Welcoming Faith-based Partners and Migrant Worker Ministries from Around the World

Text by / JOHANNIE TONG  
Community Relations Officer of MFMW

As we mark our 44<sup>th</sup> year of dedicated service to the migrant community here in Hong Kong, we at the Mission For Migrant Workers (MFMW) are delighted to host ecumenical partners from around the world. These visitors come with a shared desire to learn about our work and to gain insights into the experiences of migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong. Some hail from other migrant destination countries, seeking to understand ministry with migrants from diverse backgrounds; while others are from the migrants' home countries, eager to strengthen ministries with their families and communities back home. Whether they visit for a short time or spend several days with us, we are truly blessed by their presence and engagement.

This year has been particularly meaningful for us. We had the honour of welcoming the Revd Dr Judy Y. Chung, Executive Director of Missionary Service representing the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) of the United Methodist Church. Her team's visit was for the commissioning of Shiela Mae Hablan by the UMC-Hong Kong President, the Revd Tim Lam. This marked a significant milestone as it was the first time a fellow was commissioned during their placement in Hong Kong. Shiela Mae is our current Young Adult Global Mission Fellow. The Revd Dr Judy's team joined our Migrant Care Centre outreach activities the following Sunday, engaging directly with migrant workers to learn from their experiences.

We also hosted leaders from the Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ & Disciples of Christ in the United States. Their visit provided valuable insights into what ministry with migrant workers entails and how we can continue to serve effectively.







As we expand our services to reach more migrants, we are also strengthening our partnerships. We are honoured to be designated as a United Methodist Volunteers in Mission site, welcoming teams of volunteers eager to learn about the migrant experience while providing essential services. Our first 2 teams focused on addressing physical and mental health concerns among migrant workers. They conducted training sessions on mental health care and basic health checks, with nurses on hand to discuss chronic health conditions and the importance of regular health screenings.

Alongside these experiences, we continue to foster meaningful partnerships with Filipino churches and leaders to support migrant families and learn from their experiences.

We hosted the Executive Committee of the Women of the Philippine Independent Church (WOPIC). Kathleen Yañez, the president of WOPIC, along with 10 of their members, had an engaging meeting with staff from the MFMW, the APMW, and Bethune House, the migrant worker residents of the shelter, and the IFI Fellowship on Sunday. They expressed that they found inspiration to pursue their plan of improving and establishing more programmes for the families of migrant workers back in the homeland.

We also welcomed a visit from a female priest, the Revd Angelyn dela Torre, whose purpose was to deepen her understanding of women migrant workers' experiences.

She was followed by Bishop Antonio Ablon, also of the PIC, who preached at the 1.30pm service and shared his ministry with seafarers in Germany. Both engaged with our congregation and visited our Migrant Care Centre outreach services on Chater Road to connect with Filipino migrants living in Hong Kong.

In partnership with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) Hong Kong Fellowship, we hosted Bishop Reuel Norman Marigza from the UCCP. Visiting Hong Kong for the HKCC anniversary, Bishop Marigza took time to visit our office and learn about our ongoing work supporting migrants.

Last but not least, we welcomed the newly-elected Executive Director of the Anglican Alliance, the Revd Robert Dawes, and Dr Gay Manodon, the Anglican Alliance Facilitator for East Asia. They both visited our partner institutions for migrants, and Dr Manodon had the meaningful experience of assisting a Filipina worker on her way home to the Philippines. Following this visit, Dr Manodon facilitated our connection with the Anglican Alliance's Youth Programme Officer, Ms Amy Bishop, who is considering sending young adult fellows for an internship at the MFMW.

Through these visits, we hope our ties with churches are strengthened and our collective efforts to serve migrant communities enhanced, fostering cross-cultural understanding and support. We look forward to growing these partnerships and welcoming more teams in the future.





# BEING INTELLIGENT? OR ALL ARTIFICIAL AMONG US?

Text by /  
YOUTH MINISTRY

ChatGPT, Deepseek, Gemini, Claude, Grok, Perplexity are just few of the many artificial intelligence tools around us. To what extent have these tools impacted your daily habits? Or your faith? Here is what we like to share.

## ELLA TAM



There were friends around me who asked AI to help with their homework a year ago when I was studying. Now, at my workplace, colleagues ask AI to complete some of their tasks. It still sounded great to me when people were using AI to get inspiration and boost efficiency—until I realised that some actually asked AI what to eat for the next meal, and actually went to the restaurant decided by it.

This got me thinking: so am I wasting my time browsing the ratings and comments of each listed restaurant online when AI can help to list all of the information and even make a decision? Am I too stubborn to still ‘sense’ with my body and mind what I want to eat?

Of course, I understand that they might be really lacking lunch ideas, or would like to just have fun by trying out random restaurants. Yet, we also see here how impatient people of this era are in the search for answers. Understandably, AI is speeding up the pace of the world with its convenience, intelligence, and versatility. It is no surprise that people are very likely to be more and more impatient to think, to find, and to wait for answers. We tend to let AI quickly solve some problems, so we save time and energy for other things.

While we are worried and upset about many things at one moment, Jesus would like to remind us: few things are needed—

or indeed only one (Luke 10. 41-42). Instead of the strength of multitasking, which the world encourages, Jesus would love us to focus on that one thing: slow down for being with him.

It feels great when AI can decide on lunch immediately. It also feels amazing to browse pretty photos and lively comments on food guide platforms.

It feels great when AI can complete difficult tasks in the blink of an eye. It also feels amazing to slow down through being with Jesus in prayers, Bible readings, or just a simple quiet rest!



## ANDREW LIM



One cannot deny that the widespread adoption of AI has significantly and irreversibly altered the course of humanity. Ever since the AI boom gained momentum in the early 2020s, our lives have become increasingly reliant on this technology.

When presented with the question of whether AI is ultimately beneficial or harmful, many of us may be quick to conclude that it is overwhelmingly harmful. We point to deepfakes, AI-generated slop, that terribly annoying TikTok robot voice, incompetent customer service chatbots, censorship, political bias, and more.

As Cardinal Tagle pointed out, AI is frequently used for ethically questionable purposes. Many use it to ‘influence consumers so that monetary profit may increase’, and ‘some resort to false advertising—even using deepfakes or fabricated endorsements’.

But this, I would argue, is an overly simplistic interpretation of the AI debate. Before we jump to conclusions, have we asked ourselves if we truly understand what AI is?

IBM defines AI as the simulation of human intelligence by machines. Machine learning, a subset of AI, enables systems to learn from historical data. Deep Learning goes further, mimicking the functions of the human brain beyond just intelligence, while Generative AI (GenAI) is a form of Deep Learning that can create original content.

So when most people criticise AI, they are usually referring to GenAI, and more specifically to Large Language Models (LLMs). But it is important to remember that civilisation has been benefiting from other forms of AI for decades.



Have you ever used Google Translate while abroad? What about speech-to-text input? Remember Deep Blue, the chess supercomputer that defeated Garry Kasparov in 1996? Or Siri, Alexa, and Google Assistant? Autocomplete when typing on your phone or searching online? And even further back, industrial robots and the Lunar and Mars Rovers? All of these, by IBM's definition, are examples of AI.

Cardinal Tagle is right when he says 'Jesus is not the face or a voice generated by a digital programme'. Still, we cannot ignore the immense convenience AI has brought to human civilisation. While I share concerns about the potentially harmful impact of LLMs, it is our responsibility, and arguably part of our Faith, to ensure that new technologies are used ethically and for the common good.

Beatus homo qui invenit sapientiam et qui affluit prudentia. (Proverbs 3. 13)

AI, having been created by humans, is essentially an extension of human intelligence. God has given us brains—let us use them.



**JEREMY HSU**



Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly influencing every facet of contemporary life, from education and business to government policy, raising deeper questions about what truly constitutes intelligence and how it differs from human capacity for free will.

While society focuses on the practical benefits of AI—efficiency gains in schools and workplaces—a more fundamental exploration often goes overlooked: can AI be described as genuinely intelligent, or merely as a powerful tool for knowledge retrieval?

### **Intelligence Versus Knowledge:**

The term 'artificial intelligence' itself invites scrutiny. While it is certainly artificial, being a human-crafted entity, its claim to intelligence is less clear. Commonly, intelligence and knowledge are conflated—students with extensive knowledge are referred to as 'intelligent', yet intelligence, in its purest sense, is the capacity to think critically and creatively. Knowledge, as described by Plato, is a belief grounded in reason and logic. Being intelligent involves deep thinking and deduction, not simply accumulating facts. Alan Turing's famous Turing Test, which evaluates whether a machine can exhibit human-like responses indistinguishable from a person, highlights this ambiguity. The emergence of large language models (LLMs) like ChatGPT dazzled audiences with their human-like dialogue, seemingly passing such tests. However, their apparent ability to 'think' is governed by massive data inputs and mimicked reasoning, leaving open the question of whether their responses reflect true understanding or merely sophisticated replication.

### **The Issue of Free Will:**

Some argue that AI's development process, absorbing vast human experiences and patterns, parallels how humans acquire intelligence—through exposure and imitation. Nevertheless, a critical distinction remains: humans possess free will. Philosophers like Thomas Hobbes define free will as the freedom to choose alternate courses of action, independent of preset rules or expectations. This ability is especially vital in complex moral or ethical situations, where rigid, rule-bound reasoning can fall short.

AI, for all its apparent problem-solving skills, is fundamentally bound by its programmed rules and the guidance of its developers. Even when seeming to offer balanced or impartial opinions, AI is constrained by preset boundaries, often shaped by the biases or philosophies of

those who design it. For example, different AI models may display distinct tendencies depending on their creators' ideological backgrounds.

### **Divine Gift & Human Uniqueness:**

The human gift of free will is often regarded, especially in religious thought, as a divine endowment that enables people to discern and choose appropriate actions. Unlike intelligence or knowledge, free will is neither a product of logical deduction nor a marker of intellectual prowess—it is a unique privilege enabling authentic, independent judgment.

Although artificial intelligence may enhance everyday life, it cannot—and should not—replace the human capacity for free, original choice. Relying excessively on AI's judgment risks diminishing this essential aspect of personhood, and the danger lies not in AI's intelligence or knowledge, but in its lack of unbiased free will.



AI's progress challenges society to celebrate its benefits while remaining vigilant about preserving humanity's unique ability to think and choose independently. Only by holding onto this distinction can people secure a future where technology empowers, not overrides, the richness of human decision-making.

**MORITZ LEUNG**



Some say AI (Artificial intelligence) provides opportunities and enhances productivity, some say AI takes over jobs and leaves people unemployed. To me as a student, I see AI as a tool for acquiring knowledge that is not taught at school.



When learning something new, it is not particularly hard for you to research a certain topic. Just paste keywords about the topic in the search bar and thousands of related learning materials pop up. What's hard is to learn about something you don't even know existed. In this case, an LLM (large language model) can be of much use. Simply by describing what you are trying to find and learn, the AI may help and generate the terms and topics that you want. However, I do not use AI by itself as it may contain false information. What I do is also read from other sources online.

One of the best things about AI is the ability to continue the discussion based on your previous prompts. You could ask the AI if you do not understand its response or you could ask it to make adjustments if you are asking for a text. It's much easier if you have specific requests. When learning, it could also be useful to dive deep into the research topic by asking further questions.



For individuals, the impact of using AI depends on how you use it. As I said, it could be used for self-development. This can help students with their exam or simply to learn new skills. On the creative side, it could be used for digital creations like 'Italian Brainrot' and other new trendy videos. On the other hand, it can also be misused for unethical purposes. Fake news reports were made using AI and it is so realistic that it may be hard to differentiate from real news. There has also been an incident where an under-

graduate student made explicit images of his classmates. In some way, it encourages unethical acts. Given its simplicity, many things are made easy, no matter good or bad.

So what about society? AI is definitely beneficial to the society as a whole, otherwise people would not be using it. Companies use it to improve their systems such as analysing data, provide better consumer services and generate new business ideas for extra profit. But the usage of AI is really broad and not everyone using it has good intentions. It all comes to us to promote good use of AI for the sake of keeping our society safe.

**JASON WONG**

*Is this the real deal? Try with this question!*

*Oh, I have a better one!*

What were the questions you tried when the first chatbot became released publicly 3 years ago?

Artificial intelligence has for many years remained, well, artificial but a concept that long continued to intrigue us with the sending of cybernetic assassins back in time from 2029 (artificially just 4 years away from now) to hunt an unborn saviour of mankind, the simulation of reality to keep humans pacified so as to harness bioelectric energy, or the incarnation as 'just a rather very intelligent system' which designs and builds armored suits faster than baking pizzas, aside from interacting like a butler.

Amazing blockbusters. Obviously not quite there yet, but the steep advancement of artificial intelligence is beginning to see palpable impacts around us. Whether this takes the form of improved medical diagnosis, reduced wait times for customer services, or completing research papers, times have moved from conjecture to anticipation. Expectation too. *Will it do what I want? Why isn't this as planned?*

It seems almost as though that there is

an unspoken division between believers and half-believers in artificial intelligence. Believers continue to be excited and preach about their successful implementations in the resolution of growing issues at hand. Half-believers, for want of a better description because they do not exactly deny the technology which has somehow become omnipresent, stubbornly remain skeptical. It may be that they are just used to their own ways and not ready for a change.

All sound familiar when it comes to our faith, doesn't it? Granted, God is by no means artificial but divinely intelligent. And precisely because of that, were you excited when He was first revealed to you? Have you experienced doubts about Him when things do not go as wished? Have you openly praised Him for addressing your needs exactly in time? When was the last time you made a change in a small habit because of Him?

Keep being excited about God. Keep exploring about Him. Do this artificially even if you have to because like artificial intelligence, and in this very narrow context, it gets better with training. After all, there is nothing artificial at all when it comes to developing our faith. Don't stop at being a half believer in God. Immerse fully in Him.



**HELP AMONG US!**

Hello! Just in case you have missed this last time...got any needs? Article feedback? Lost property? Ministry volunteers? Want to help? Prayer requests? Or simply wish to say hi? Scan the code and let us know!







ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL  
聖公會聖約翰座堂

ALL SOULS' DAY

諸靈日

A EUCHARIST FOR  
THE COMMEMORATION  
OF THE FAITHFUL  
DEPARTED

紀念亡者聖餐崇拜

*Music* 崇拜樂章

特羅塔《安魂曲》

Requiem (Michael John Trotta)

sung by Cathedral Choir with Chamber Orchestra

詩班：聖約翰座堂詩班（室樂團演奏）

MONDAY

星期一

3 November 2025

二〇二五年十一月三日

at 7.30pm

晚上七時半

St John's Cathedral

聖約翰座堂

4-8 Garden Road, Central

中環花園道四至八號



# Cathedral News

## EXPANDING OUR REACH: MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT AT THE EDUCATION FAIR AND FIRST SAFETALK WORKSHOP

Text by / **DRAEXLI**  
Director of St. John's Cathedral Counselling Service

St John's Cathedral Counselling Service was invited to attend the International Education Fair 2025, from 16 to 19 July, organised by Amber Education, where universities from the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand provided information and offers for overseas university education. It was an opportunity for DSE students to consider options for studying overseas and to talk to university representatives directly. We provided mental health support to students and parents as they considered embarking on the next chapter of their educational journeys.

On Saturday 21 June, SJC Counselling Service ran its first safeTALK workshop, training the community to support those who may have suicidal ideation. Utilising LivingWorks' safeTALK and ASIST training programmes, we are creating a network of safety for organisations and educational institutions to support those in need before they are able to access professional mental health resources.



## CELEBRATING FR AMOS'S NEW BOOK

Text by / **NATASHANGAN**

What a wonderful sight it was on Sunday 3 August to see so many cathedral members gathered for the book signing of Fr Amos's new Chinese publication, *Embracing God in Times of Uncertainty: A Millennials' Thesis of Faith*. Seeing so many people excited to get their copies made for a truly special afternoon.

If you couldn't make it on the day, copies are available at our Cathedral Bookstore. It's a really meaningful read that tackles questions of faith in our modern world. And for those who'd like a preview, the last issue of *In Touch* features a great article by Fr Amos about the book in English—don't miss it if you want to get a sense of what makes this book so relevant to our times.

## OUTREACH SUNDAY

We hosted our annual Outreach Sunday on 28 September, connecting our parishioners with the vital work of our Cathedral Outreach Ministries. Throughout the day, ministry representatives shared their services and the profound impact they have on our community. The event fostered a vibrant atmosphere, offering a powerful glimpse into how we live our faith through service.

A sincere thank you to all the volunteers and parishioners whose energy and interest are the foundation for even greater service in the year ahead. We invite the entire congregation to continue supporting these efforts through your awareness and prayers as we work together to serve our community.





# What are we reading?



## We Believe: Exploring the Nicene Creed

Malcolm Guite

Join with believers around the world in celebrating 1700 years of the Nicene Creed, one of the most enduring statements of the Christian faith.

'We Believe' offers 24 daily Bible readings and reflections to help you pray and reflect on the Nicene Creed's timeless truths. Taking each line of the Creed in turn, it provides a short Bible reading, a reflection, a question to help you grow in faith, and a prayer, drawing you deeper into the Creed's meaning and significance for your life.

Whether you have been reciting the Creed for many years—or are exploring the Christian faith for the very first time—this beautifully illustrated booklet will offer you new insight and inspiration.



## Pilgrim Journeys—40 Days of Reflections

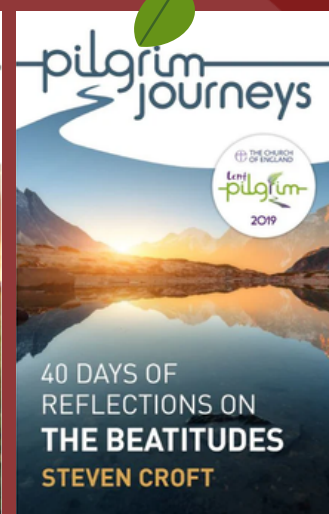
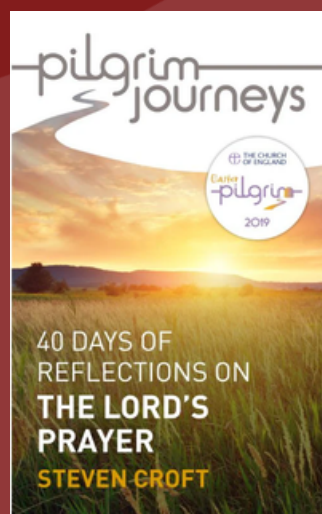
Steven Croft

### ◦ The Lord's Prayer

It takes you on a 40-day journey through the prayer Jesus taught his followers—one which continues to shape the lives of Christians across the world. Each day provides you with a short Bible reflection, an invitation to pray, and a suggestion for responding to the vision of the Lord's Prayer itself.

### ◦ The Beatitudes

It explores the challenging vision Jesus sets out in this crucial part of his teachings. For 40 days, it offers a short Bible reflection, an invitation to pray, and a suggestion of how you might respond to the Beatitudes' challenge to live as God intends, both as an individual and in community.



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# Major Services & Celebrations at St John's & Daughter Churches

## St John's Cathedral

4-8 Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong

25  
OCT

***Michaelmas Fair 2025***



2  
NOV

***All Saints' Sunday***

9.00am Sung Eucharist

3  
NOV

***All Souls' Day***

7.30pm Requiem Eucharist

9  
NOV

***Remembrance Sunday***

5.00pm Eucharist of  
Peace & Reconciliation

23  
NOV

***Christ the King***

9.00am Sung Eucharist

5.00pm Choral Evensong  
with Benediction

Tel: 2523 4157

Website:





# Discovery Bay Church

SKH Wei Lun Primary School, Lantau

***Every Sunday***

*10.00am Sung Eucharist*

Tel: 2987 4210

Website:



# Emmanuel Church

Béthanie Chapel  
139 Pok Fu Lam Road, Pok Fu Lam

***Every Sunday***

*10.30am Sung Eucharist*

Tel: 2523 4157

Website:



# St Stephen's Chapel

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

***Every Sunday***

*10.00am Sung Eucharist*

Tel: 2813 0408

Website:



## St John's Cathedral

4-8 Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong

Tel: 2523 4157

Fax: 2521 7830

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

## Dean

The Very Revd Kwok-keung Chan

## Cathedral Chaplains

The Revd Canon Dwight dela Torre

The Revd Canon Peter Koon

The Revd Sharon Langbis

The Revd Amos Poon

The Revd Drew Courtright

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

The Revd Robert Martin CMP

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

The Revd Will Newman

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

## Cathedral Honorary Chaplains

The Revd Professor Philip Wickeri

The Revd Polly Wong Heung-fong

## Executive Administrator

Thomas Li

## Director of Music

Felix Yeung

## Assistant Director of Music

Alan Tsang

## Organist

Jonathan Yip

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Natasha Ngan

## Verger

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Daniel Kong

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James Choo

## Head Sidesman

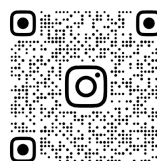
Frank Lang

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CATHEDRAL

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賣物會

Michaelmas Fair  
JOY IN UNITY

喜 樂 同 行

25<sup>th</sup> OCT 10.00AM-4.00PM  
上午10時至下午4時

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