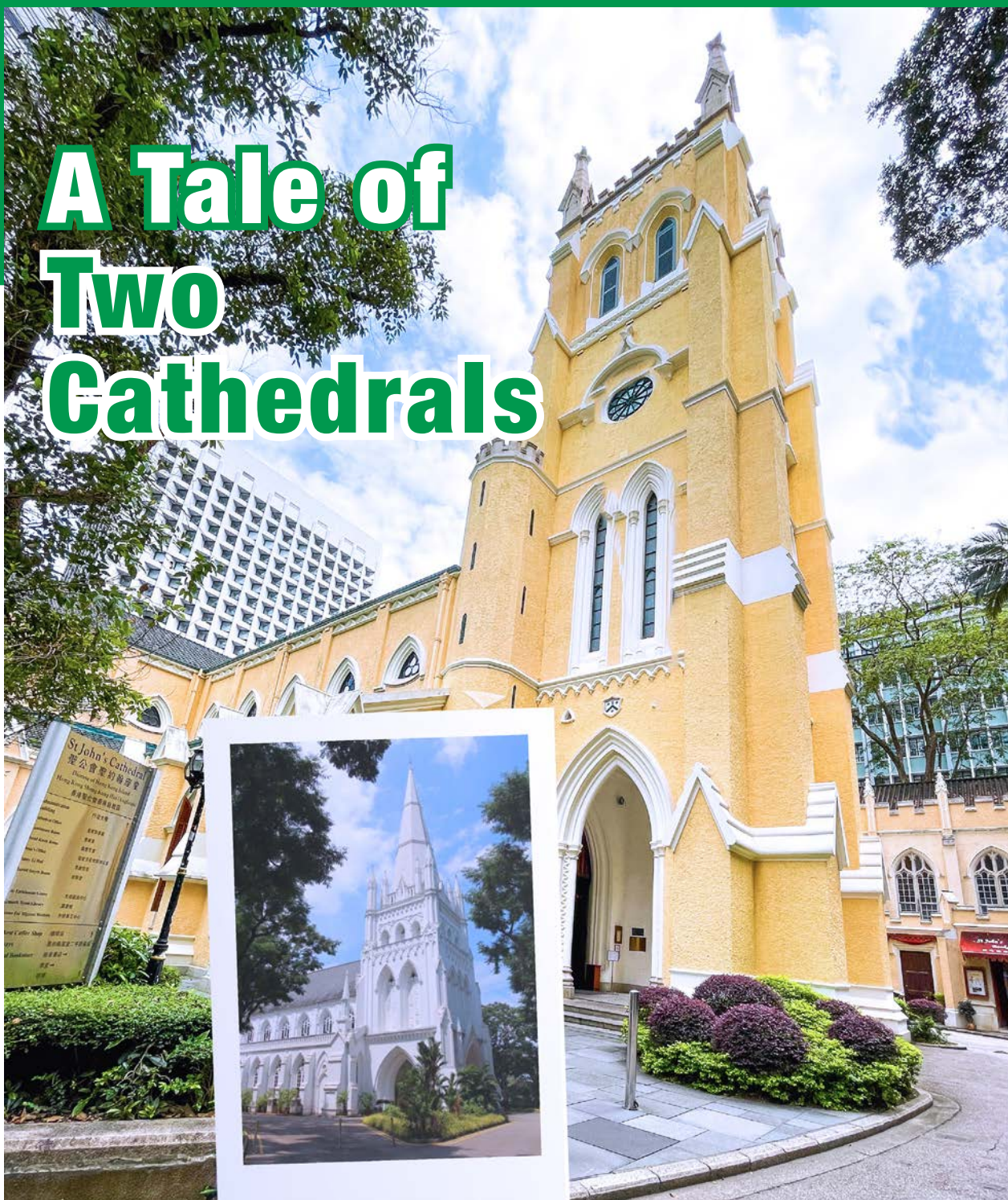


# In Touch

The Cathedral Magazine - Summer Edition 2023

## A Tale of Two Cathedrals



ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL HONG KONG  
Diocese of HK Island Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui  
香港聖公會聖約翰座堂

# In Touch

ISSUE 034

## 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 Robert Martin

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

The Revd Will Newman

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

The Revd Amos Poon

The Revd Mark Rogers

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

## Cathedral Honorary Chaplain

The Revd Dr Philip Wickeri

The Revd Polly Wong Heung-fong

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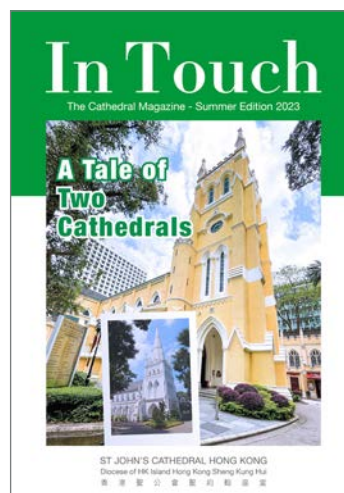
Evelyn Chan - Editor

Michael Gibb

Steve Hackman

John Tanner

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# Dean's Message

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

May the peace of the risen Lord be with you.

The Holy Week and Easter of 2023 was a remarkable turning point for St John's Cathedral to be able to organise all the different services and liturgy after COVID-19. For the past three years, we somehow missed different aspects of the celebration of the resurrection of the Lord Christ Jesus. This year, with our masks taken off, with face-to-face full houses, and with the excellent musical and liturgical elements in our services, we could truly shout out loudly to God, 'The Lord is risen indeed, Alleluia!'

After Easter, the Dean and Chapter members spent five days on a Cathedral Singapore Study Tour. Our spouses were also invited to join. We visited St Andrew's Cathedral, St George's Church and Christ Church, and attended Holy Eucharists in the latter two. The fellowship-building and sharing allowed the clergy team of the Cathedral a bit of relaxation after Easter.

Our Annual Church Meeting was held smoothly on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April. The Elections of Trustees and Council members were completed – congratulations to all the new blood entering the Cathedral Council. This year, like some other activities and ministries, we were able to enjoy a simple lunch before the start of the ACM at 1pm in Li Hall. Thank God for his providence and all the hard work and preparation by some sisters in Christ behind the scenes.

A 'Council Away Day' was held on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June at St John's College, University of Hong Kong. It was a perfect opportunity for the Trustees and Council members to really have some quiet time to sit together, share our faith, support one another in our prayers and re-visit the role and duties of being a Trustee or Council member.

*'Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.'* (1 Thessalonians 5.18) May we all give thanks to God in our different circumstances.

Lovingly yours,  
Dean KK



各位主內弟兄姊妹：

願復活主的平安與你們同在。

新冠疫情過後，聖約翰座堂在 2023 年的聖周及復活節期開始全面恢復舉行各項崇拜禮儀。過去三年，我們某程度上錯過了慶祝主耶穌基督復活的不同環節。今年，除下口罩，在座無虛席的座堂內，藉着崇拜中優美的聖樂和禮儀，我們可以打從心底高聲呼喊：「主已經復活，哈利路亞。」

復活節後，我與座堂聖品前赴新加坡進行了為期五天的學習之旅；我們的配偶也應邀同行。我們到訪 St Andrew's Cathedral、St George's Church 和 Christ Church，並參與在後兩間教堂舉行的聖餐崇拜。行程中建立的團契和分享，讓我們的牧師團隊得以在復活節過後稍為輕鬆一下。

座堂今年的周年大會於 4 月 30 日的主日順利舉行，並選出新一屆的信託人及座堂議會成員，謹此祝賀所有座堂議會的新成員。如其他活動和事工般，今年我們可以在周年大會開始前在李堂享用簡單午餐，隨後大會於下午一時正式開始。感謝上帝的眷顧，以及部分姊妹在幕後的辛勤準備，令會議得以圓滿結束。

座堂議會的退修日 (Council Away Day) 於 6 月 3 日 (星期六) 假香港大學聖約翰學院舉行。這活動為信託人及座堂議會成員提供機會，聚首安靜下來，分享信仰，在禱告中互相支持，並反思作為信託人及座堂議會成員的角色和責任。

「凡事謝恩，因為這是上帝在基督耶穌裏向你們所定的旨意。」 (帖撒羅尼迦前書 5 章 18 節) 願我們能在不同的情況下都向上帝謝恩。

座堂主任牧師  
陳國強謹啟



# A TALE OF TWO CATHEDRALS

## Our Clergy Study Trip to Singapore

Starting from the time of Bishop Matthias' deanship, the Cathedral Clergy have had a study trip each year to a different Anglican Diocese or ecclesial community. The purpose of these trips has been to experience the life of another Anglican diocese in an Asian context. In the previous years, pre-COVID, we have been blessed with visits to Seoul, Taipei, Nanjing and Guangzhou. This year we ventured farther south to visit our brothers and sisters in the Diocese of Singapore. Here are some reflections on the trip from our clergy team.

### Reflections from the Dean

As I shared in St Andrew's Cathedral of Singapore on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April, I found so many similarities between our Cathedral in Hong Kong and theirs. We are both located at the central business district with all the skyscrapers located just adjacent to us. We are both international cathedrals, with English and Chinese being two of the languages we commonly use in our services. We were British colonies before, but now Singapore is an independent nation and Hong Kong has returned to be a special administrative region of China. All these similarities easily pull the two Anglican cathedrals close to each other, where we have the valuable opportunity to share and learn from one another.

We enjoyed listening to the sharing from staff members of St Andrew's Cathedral on the topics of outreach ministries, foreign workers' ministries and youth work. There were also some good interactions between our Cathedral Chaplains and those from Singapore. In return, I also represented our own Cathedral to share on the mission and some of our ministries here in Hong Kong. Although the Cathedral building in Singapore is under renovation with scaffolding all around and we were unable to enter, we got a chance to enter their present worshipping space, a huge sacred area with nicely designed altar and sufficient sunlight from glass roofs. Our team was most thankful to the hospitality of the Revd Canon Dr Lewis Lew and his Cathedral colleagues. We look forward to having further dialogue on future possibility of collaboration between the two cathedrals.



*The Dean & Canon Lewis Lew, Vicar of St Andrew's Cathedral*

## Reflections of the Revd Amos Poon

I have been to Singapore before, but it was 18 years ago during a study conference, leaving me with no time to explore the city. However, on this trip, aside from visiting churches in the Diocese and touring the city to experience its rich culture and diverse population, I found the most enjoyable moments were the two mornings I spent jogging and watching the sunrise.

On the first morning, I jogged from our hotel near the Botanic Gardens, passing Orchard Road and heading east towards Marina Bay. The route featured a mixture of old and new buildings, with Marina Bay being a newly reclaimed area with towering commercial buildings, while the original shoreline had older buildings like the Fullerton Hotel and the old fire station. The sunrise scene was spectacular.



The second morning, I attempted to hike up Singapore's tallest mountain, Mount Faber (which is only 106 meters tall!), but unfortunately, a thunderstorm approached, and the view was not as good. Nonetheless, enjoying the sunrise was a valuable lesson, reminding us to take time to appreciate the wonder of God's creation.

## Reflections from the Revd Sharon Langbis

Consuming the Holy Communion – which was individually packed with little cups and host on top – brought me nostalgic feelings. On the third day of our study tour, we visited St George's Church and met several congregation members for Holy Communion with the Vicar, the Revd Ian Hadfield. I was reminded of my younger years when I once joined an Evangelical and Charismatic group worshipping in a para-liturgy and receiving the Holy Communion in the same way. I felt awkward and out of place. Nevertheless, those earlier experiences of worshipping with other Christian groups made me appreciate more the solemn and liturgical way of worshipping God.



*'A mystery of faith, indeed!'*

## Reflections from the Revd Polly Wong

Polly was amazed, stunned, treasured, rewarded and refreshed! Highlights: the Dean, Fr Robert and Doris Lye's wonderful planning and care, learning about St Andrew's Cathedral outreach ministries to migrant workers and neighbouring countries, visiting the historic Fullerton Hotel, and feeling special with Revd Sharon as the only women clergy in Singapore! Lowlight: Gaining weight from all the delicious food! Following the Dean's advice, **'It's ok to be naughty sometimes!'**



## Reflections from the Revd Mark Rogers

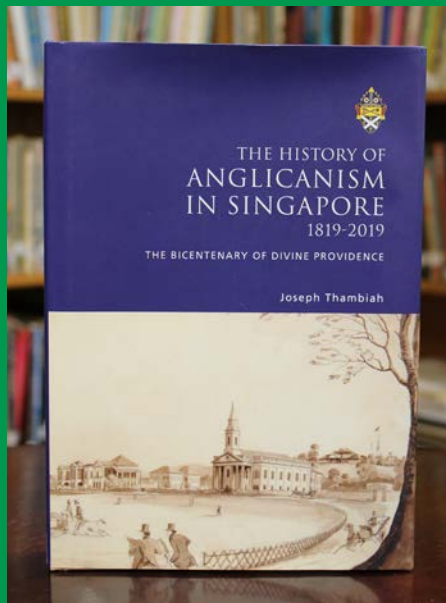


I enjoyed the visit to St George's Church. We participated in the Wednesday morning Eucharist. Although it was a mid-week low Mass, Father Ian, the Rector, was able to organise an elaborate service involving the organist, a reader, an intercessor and a lay preacher. On top of this, a PowerPoint had been prepared and was used to guide us through the liturgy, hymns and announcements. There were about 30 or so people in attendance. I thought all this was an indication of a healthy, vibrant congregation.

St George's Church is the old garrison church. One distinctive feature is that the sides of the church are without windows, open to the outside. The place felt airy, accessible and light.

Father Ian gave us a warm welcome, and coffee and refreshments followed the service. This was typical of the warm welcome and friendly hospitality we encountered throughout the week.

## Reflections of the Revd Philip Wickeri



I was interested in visiting Singapore because I am an historian who writes about the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui. Anglicanism in Singapore began in 1819, thirty years before the founding of the Diocese of Victoria. In the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, clergy went back and forth between the two territories. Leonard Wilson, once Dean of St John's Cathedral, became Bishop of Singapore in 1841. He was later interned there during the Japanese occupation. There were also exchanges between the Chinese clergy of Hong Kong and Singapore. I am now reading the history of Anglicanism in Singapore, which offers a more in depth perspective. I did not realise that the famous Chinese evangelist John Sung (宋尚節, 1901-1944) made an evangelistic visit to Singapore which left a deep impression on Anglicans there. This in part explains, or at least illustrates, the more conservative nature of the church in Singapore today, in comparison with our church in Hong Kong.

## Reflections from the Revd Will Newman

For me, the real highlights of the trip were our times in nature. The orchid garden in the Botanical Garden is absolutely spectacular, I've never such an amazingly colourful variety of orchids. At the Night Safari I enjoyed a quick dash around the jungle on foot, seeing animals you can't see from the train, including the tiger. And there was the spectacular Supertree light show at the Gardens on the Bay. Returning to the Botanical Gardens on the last afternoon, I discovered the quiet sundial garden. Inscribed on the sundial are the words 'What thou seekest is a shadow'. Food for spiritual reflection.



## Reflections from the Revd Robert Martin



For me, Singapore is a home from home and many of the sights, sounds and smells brought back memories of happy times with family and friends. From this trip I come back with memories of old friendships renewed and new ones made. It was a joy to meet our brother clergy from the diocese and hear about their mission and ministry initiatives. We paid visits to the Cathedral and shared in the worship of Christ Church, Dorset Road and St George's, Tanglin where we met the local congregations and shared fellowship with them.

I was also invited to have a separate meeting with one of the Cathedral clergy, the Revd Moses Israeli, who was particularly interested in learning more about the liturgical tradition of St John's. Apparently, we are famous through our weekly livestreaming of the Sunday Eucharist. We hope that this contact will be the start of an ongoing process of mutual sharing between the two sister cathedrals.

Special thanks must go to Ron and Doris Lye for being our Singapore liaison and generously helping with the logistics of the trip. Former

parishioners of St John's, they are a wonderful example of *'One Church, two Cathedrals'* - back home in Singapore but still very much part of St John's Cathedral. For me one of the most moving parts of the trip was on our final night to bless their new home and celebrate the Eucharist with the Dean. This was a wonderful time of blessing to close our trip to Singapore. It was, of course, set within the context of a sumptuous Singaporean meal, and the food was truly wonderful!

A big thank you to Doris and Ron and the Diocese of Singapore for making our 'Study Trip' into a real family visit.

**'One Church, One Faith, one Lord'!**

 *The Revd Robert Martin*  
 *July Rogers, Emmy Kam, the Revd Sharon Langbis*

# To Be a Pilgrim

Pilgrimages are back!

*An island of the Hidden Christians*

In the years before COVID-19, pilgrimages were a great part of our common life at St John's Cathedral. We've visited English cathedrals, Italian churches, India in the Footsteps of St Thomas, Germany for the Oberammergau Passion Play, Christian sites in China, and we've enjoyed several pilgrimages to the Holy Land.

A pilgrimage is first of all a journey to visit holy places, made sacred by generations of Christians. We may walk in the footsteps of saints and martyrs, or follow in the footsteps of Christ himself in Bethlehem, Galilee and Jerusalem.

A Christian pilgrimage will always be a journey of prayer: bible readings, Eucharists and times of prayer and reflection centre us as we journey, bringing us back to the ground of our faith.

Above all, to be a pilgrim is to be open to learn. We are changed by making a pilgrimage. We return home with a deeper faith and a stronger sense of community, enriched by all that we have experienced together.

The first pilgrimage after COVID-19 will be to Nagasaki, to discover the story of Christianity in Japan, from 29<sup>th</sup> October to 4<sup>th</sup> November this year.

Together we will explore Christianity in Japan from the Jesuit missionaries, through severe persecution, to the astonishing re-emergence of the 'Hidden Christians', and into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We'll reflect on Christianity and Culture, particularly seen through the eyes of Shusaku Endo, author of the novel 'Silence' that was made into a powerful and challenging movie by Martin Scorsese.

And we will set sail to an island where Hidden Christians kept their faith in secret, and visit the church where they first revealed their faith, as well as other churches in the beautiful hills around Nagasaki.

*The modern Urukami Cathedral is located behind the ruins of the old cathedral.*

ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL

## PILGRIMAGE TO NAGASAKI

29 October – 4 November 2023 (7 days)



一趙盼望和復活的旅程  
A Journey of Hope and Resurrection

**Explore** Christianity in Japan from the **Jesuit missionaries**, through severe persecution to the astonishing re-emergence of the 'Hidden Christians', and into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. 探索日本基督教從耶穌會傳教士開始，經過迫害到「隱匿基督徒」重新發現，並邁進21世紀的故事。

**Reflect** on the relationship between **Culture and Christianity**, and explore the writing of **Shusaku Endo**, author of 'Silence'. 一起探討《沈默》的作者遠藤周作的寫作，並反思文化與基督教的關係。

**Set sail** to an island where the **Hidden Christians** kept the faith in secret, and visit the church where the Hidden Christians first revealed their faith, and churches in the beautiful hills around **Nagasaki**. 乘船前往隱匿基督徒堅守信仰的島嶼，參觀隱匿基督徒首次揭示其信仰的教堂，以及長崎周邊山丘上的教堂。

Led by  
**Revd Will Newman & Revd Amos Poon**


For registration, please email  
[deanssec@stjohnscathedral.org.hk](mailto:deanssec@stjohnscathedral.org.hk)



It's a story of hope and resurrection, of Christians keeping the small light of faith alive through dark times, and rising again from failure and fear into renewed life!

The Revd Will Newman and the Revd Amos Poon will be your spiritual guides on this transformative pilgrimage. Contact us to know more. The deadline to sign up will be 31<sup>st</sup> August.

 The Revd Will Newman

 The Revd Will Newman,  
the Revd Amos Poon, Hu Qing-xin

# ACM 2023

## Reveals Another Year of Grace at St John's

There is much to be thankful for within our church community, a sentiment that was spotlighted at the St John's Cathedral Annual Church Meeting (ACM) held on 30<sup>th</sup> April.

Even the most casual of glances through the Annual Report for 2023 handed out to the dozens of attendees who gathered in Li Hall for the ACM reveals the sheer scale of operations. There are committees galore, sister churches, ministries run for various language communities, at least seven choirs plus cantors, Sunday school, CLARES, Christians in Central, Counselling Service, guilds, missions, programmes, a glorious library and lots and lots of outreach.

'We are thankful that God is blessing us,' said the Very Revd Kwok-keung Chan, the Dean, in his address at the ACM, noting that the 2023 theme at St John's Cathedral, 'Lighten Our Darkness', has been so apt for the past few months as Hong Kong gets back on its feet following a return to normal after the pandemic.

The ACM covered a huge amount of ground in a very short space of time. The Minutes from the 2022 ACM were authorised without any matters arising, and the election of Council members for 2023/24 was swift: 19 lay members of the St John's community were standing for 20 places. Mr Craig Lindsay was elected as a Trustee after many years of service as Honorary Treasurer, a position he was stepping down from. F. S. Li & Co. were approved once more as auditors, and the sidesmen were re-appointed.



The main message from the Dean was that, through God's grace, life was getting back to normal despite the difficulties that the past two to three years had posed. There was no more mandatory wearing of masks or scanning of apps; and full participation in the Eucharist was once again possible, as was having a cup of tea after the 9.00am Sunday service with fellow worshippers.

And most of all, at the ACM, we could all enjoy the excellent snacks provided by Mrs June Li and Mrs Anita MacKillop.

'I thank God for all these changes which allow more sisters and brothers in Christ to come back to the Cathedral,' said the Dean.



 Michael Gibb  
 Jeannie Chan, Thomas Li

# Reflections on Holy Week

The crowds for Palm Sunday are immense. It's 'standing room only' 15 minutes before the combined bi-lingual Liturgy of Palm Sunday and the Sung Eucharist is scheduled to start. Clergy and servers are bustling, the choir and brass section are tuning up, members of the congregation are braiding their palm leave, and sidesmen are seeking ever-more creative ways of allowing more worshippers through the West Door. The talk is that we *must* have enough sidesmen to marshal the procession to satisfy police regulations for gatherings.

Bishop Matthias addresses the congregation at the Celtic Cross in the Cathedral gardens, highlighting how Lent has prepared everyone for Holy Week and the solemn celebration of the Lord's death and Resurrection.

'Let us go with him in faith and love so that united with him in his suffering, we may share his risen life,' Bishop

Matthias says. The procession then proceeds clockwise around the Cathedral, east down the path to Garden Road, turning right up Garden Road and then rejoining Battery Path. Palms are held aloft amid the music from the choir and brass band and hearty singing of the hymn 'All Glory, Laud and Honour.' Nearly 700 worshippers joined this service, with everyone delighted that, finally, the Palm Sunday Procession could take place again.

Holy Week is an intensely moving occasion, and **Maunder Thursday** is especially affecting. We witness Bishop Matthias assisted by Dean KK Chan, having removed their vestments, washing the feet of members of the congregation. This traditional rite reenacts Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet, the point during the Passion at which '*Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father*' (John 13.1). It is a custom that spotlights the selflessness and humility that Christianity teaches.



After the Post-Communion Prayer, the Blessed Sacrament is taken to St Michael's Chapel for the Watch, and then the altar and sanctuary are stripped bare. The choir sings Psalm 22 and the lights are turned off one by one until the Cathedral falls into silence and darkness. We depart, many of us reflecting on the thoughts that Father Mark shared during his sermon, his emphasis on how Jesus responded to his imminent death with no recrimination, no malice, and no blame. In his homily, Father Mark stresses the need for a theology that promotes non-violence, one that drops the threat of hell and





damnation, and demands greater inclusivity and, above all else, a determined peace movement.

The sermon by Father Robert at the Liturgy of **Good Friday** is equally compelling. He points out how the name Good Friday in English jars with the reality of the crucifixion, whereas in other languages the name for this day highlights sorrow and loss. After all, it's a day when Jesus asks why his Father has forsaken him (Matthew 27.46), a sentiment that Father Robert admits he has asked himself of God: where was God during the genocides, conflicts and mass shootings, or when a child dies of disease in her parent's arms? Where is the all-loving God?



A difficult but enlightening path through these doubts, Father Robert says, is lit by the image of Jesus on the cross. Jesus could not be more incarnate and more human than when he is dying. On Good Friday, God has not forsaken his Son or us: he is there, present, through the suffering and pain. As with the name Emmanuel, God is with us.

**Easter Sunday** and St John's is packed once more, a service dominated by the reading from John 20.1-18 in which Mary Magdalene discovers Jesus' body is not present in the tomb, the two angels in white and then

Jesus appearing before Mary; the thanksgiving for the resurrection; the renewal of baptismal promises; and the profession of faith; and Dean KK's homily.

'Hallelujah, Christ is risen!' he begins, expressing his joy that we can celebrate Easter Sunday together, with no masks. His address celebrates the new light of a new dawn that this day symbolises. His words are uplifting and energising. 'By his rising in glory, Jesus break through the darkness of death and sins. By his resurrection, a new creation becomes possible,' the Dean says adding that Jesus' death and resurrection echo the theme for St John's Cathedral this year: 'Lighten our Darkness', the famous phrase written by Thomas Cranmer for Evensong about 500 years ago.

Holy Week draws to a close with Festal Evensong on Easter Sunday, with Father Mark's reflections in his sermon on what he believes about the resurrection based on his formative experience post-seminary in Nicaragua studying liberation theology, and as a new priest in Montreal. Affirming what he believes, Father Mark stresses that the resurrection is something that happened to the disciples, something 'profound, transformative and deeply psychological' that gave them the courage to overcome their fears and confusion to spread the word about the non-violent, inclusive Jesus of Nazareth.

The resurrection is an essential part of life, Father Mark says. 'It is what makes life worth living.' The resurrection is in us and all around, giving us hope, the capacity to overcome tragedy, and the drive to reconcile conflict. It is the foundation on which the church communicates Jesus' message of unconditional love for every person and his radical call for servanthood and equality.



 Michael Gibb  
 ECHO, Evelyn Chan

# So long, Donald!

Though it doesn't mean forever, we had to say goodbye to Donald Leung and his family who left Hong Kong and went home (in Donald's own words) to Canada in April this year. Steve Hackman had a conversation with this long-serving Sunday school coordinator and sidesman of St John's before his departure.



*Tell us a little bit about yourself and your family's connection for three generations to St John's Cathedral.*

I first came to St John's in 1986. When we moved to Hong Kong Island I had no idea why my father chose St John's Cathedral, but he tended to like English cathedrals. I attended St John's initially in the summer because I studied in Canada from 1986-1991. My father tended to wake up early, so he'd wake me up and we would attend the 8.00am service. From this beginning, I have been part of the St John's family for over 37 years. Besides attending Sunday school and the Children's Choir, as the 'third generation', my daughter has actively been involved with the Life Enrichment Centre and the Youth Ministry of the Cathedral.

*How did you end up becoming more involved in the work at St John's?*

My father passed away in 1993, but I continued to attend the church with my mother. One of the sidesmen asked me if I wanted to take my dad's place. I responded, 'Oh sure, why not? I'm also an early riser.' The 8.00am service really worked for me and I became an 8.00am sidesman. I could do the Midnight Mass and then come back and for the 8.00am Christmas morning service, but that's when I was younger!

Eventually, I got married at the Cathedral in 1996, and in 2004 when we had our daughter, things changed and I got more active at the church.

*You've been in Sunday school for 18 years. Well done! What has been the most rewarding or transformative to you during that time?*

It's definitely when some of the students become part of the congregation. That is really what gives me a sense of gratitude. Also getting involved with the parents and watching them with their children to where they also grow with the Sunday school. We are able to encourage them into our faith, and that is one of the most rewarding experiences. It actually tells me that what we are doing is right.

The Sunday school grew from, like I said, ten kids and little organisation. But as a group we've become very organised and had, at a peak before COVID-19, 270 registrations. Now it's gone back down to 170-180 this year, but we only just started up.

*So your child's birth in 2004 was a catalyst for your faith?*

Yes, it definitely was. She got baptised at the Cathedral before she was one year old. And then she started to attend Sunday school. Probably most of the people at church know me more from my work with the Sunday school than as a sidesman even though I've been a sidesman WAY longer. My daughter actually enjoyed Sunday school a lot, and then one day the [then] Dean's wife, Sarah Chan, asked me if I wanted to help in the Sunday school and I said 'Oh sure, I'll give it a try and see my daughter more'. From there my involvement really started taking off.

I was a helper for quite a while, and then became a coordinator with Rita Chan. Back then, when my daughter was attending, we had only about ten students total, so there were only about two or three students per class. Gradually Sarah and Father Des [the Revd Desmond Cox] had some ideas and we did some field trips, and we started getting along no longer as just Sunday school teachers, but as a Sunday school *community*. From then, it really took off, and it's now been 18 years since I first started in the Sunday school. It's been a great journey and very rewarding. I was also a Council member for a few years and take great pride in how the Cathedral Garden has blossomed.

*We went through three long years of COVID-19 here in Hong Kong. How did the Sunday school adjust?*

When COVID-19 first hit it was tough. I'm going to give the credit more to Rita [Chan] on how we made it a virtual Sunday school. At first, we had simple home learning materials, but from that, we had the idea of doing YouTube Carpet Time. With the older students we started Zoom sessions and included educational tools like Kahoot, which really helped keep the interest of the students. It was difficult, as sometimes we could meet in-person and other times we couldn't. We just wanted to keep the community together. With the help of the teachers and efforts of Rita, we were able to do that. And I'm so thankful Andrew and Devon are taking over after I leave, as they are wonderful. I really thank God for guiding us.

*I can speak as a parent of a child in Sunday school and say well done, it's been such a blessing. What your plans are going forward as you leave Hong Kong?*

We will be going back to Canada. I was born in Canada and it's where I lived the first 10 years of my life. I lived some years of high school there as well as my university time, so I am definitely 'going home' as they say. I've been very structured for the last 30 years, so I'm just going to take it easy before we leave. My daughter is already there at university in Toronto, so I will be leaving with my wife. I will definitely continue to be involved with the church and will let God to continue to lead me.

*As a long-time member and being so involved in the life of the church, do you have any parting message for the congregation of St John's?*

I'm not worried about St John's Cathedral as it's very blessed with many wonderful, devoted, and competent people, and I know it will continue to grow. So that's one thing I don't have to worry about. But will I miss it? It's been in my family for 37 years, so definitely I will miss it.

# The Jesus Family

## A Chinese Christian response to conflict and chaos in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century

**The early 20<sup>th</sup> century was a time of political and social upheaval in China. The end of the Qing Dynasty in 1911 was followed by a collapse of central government authority as regional warlords fought each other for power.**

One of the provinces that suffered most was Shandong. Subject throughout history to floods, droughts and famine, now lawlessness and war made life even more miserable and precarious. Where could people turn to for help?

Some took the law into their own hands. It is estimated that in the 1930s, there were some 200,000 bandits in Shandong Province. This was a kind of predatory self-help: the only way to survive seemed to be to prey on others.

Others turned to forms of Pentecostal Christianity, contributing to the 'Shandong Charismatic Revival' in the 1920s.

One man aimed to find an alternative way to survive by creating peaceful Christian communities of mutual support.

Jing Dianying ( 敬 奠 瀛 ) was born in the village of Mazhuang ( 馬 莊 ), near Tai'an ( 泰 安 ), in 1890. He studied the Confucian classics, but his hopes for a government position were dashed when the traditional

examination system was abolished in 1905. Both his parents died, and in 1912 he enrolled at an American Methodist Episcopal Middle School in Tai'an, where he was baptised in 1914, under the influence of an American missionary, Nora Dillenbeck.

In 1924, as Jing and Dillenbeck became increasingly attracted to Pentecostal Christianity, he experienced a charismatic 'Baptism by the Spirit'. Returning to Mazhuang, he set up his own Christian community in the village, and in 1927 he named it the Jesus Family ( 耶 穌 家 庭 ).

The Jesus Family was characterised by poverty. Members gave up all their possessions, and like the early Christians in Acts of the Apostles, 'they held all things in common'. In those times of hardship, they lived on a scanty diet of what they could grow on the land belonging to the community, and as they owned nothing, there was nothing for bandits to steal. Jing wrote:

*Joy in poverty! Joy in poverty!  
Little to eat, nothing to drink,  
Laughing and clapping our empty hands,  
Seeking only to abide in Him.  
Who cares if there is anything to cook in the pot?  
The Spirit lights the fire, tears steam the buns of life.*

In worship, the members sought to be filled with the Holy Spirit, singing, crying, wailing, dancing, and falling to the floor in a trance, where they believed that the soul left the body and was transported into heaven to meet the Lord face to face.

*Spread your spiritual wings and the world  
becomes small!  
Let go your arms and dance, and the earth will tremble!  
Pluck the stars to taste the fruits from God!  
Pull up the rivers to gird your loins,  
Shake the mountain and spin it round!  
The wind is our messenger, and our servant is flame!  
Misty and mysterious, the Lord abides in us.*





耶稣家庭的成员一起热切地祷告

Online photo showing members of the Jesus Family praying together @ asiaharvest.org



Life in the Jesus Family was strictly controlled by Jing and the leadership, and there was harsh discipline for breaking the rules. Members were assigned different kinds of work: weaving, farming, shoemaking, spiritual formation, cooking, and so on. Men and women lived separately, and existing family ties were replaced by belonging to a new family – the Jesus Family. Marriages were arranged by the leadership, but

husbands and wives lived apart from each other, and children were cared for communally.

Inevitably there are suggestions that Jing abused his power of control over the community. He and the women leaders of the community were said to live apart from the other members, and to enjoy much better food.

Whatever the truth of this, the Jesus Family spread to other provinces, and by 1940 there were over 100 branches of the Jesus Family in China, with up to 10,000 members.

What attracted people to the Jesus Family? Most of the members were people without hope: orphans, the destitute, the homeless and the disabled, people who had lost everything. The Jesus Family offered

mutual support, purpose in life, spiritual gifts, and the assurance of being saved. Jing described the Jesus Family as an Ark,

*‘that carries the saved across the boundless sea as hardships and afflictions fly wildly by. Outside the Ark the sea is ferocious and mankind cries in pain; inside the Ark animals dance and birds sing together.’*

Jing also compared the Jesus Family with the Confucian ideal of Great Harmony (大同), the utopian vision of ‘a land beyond the peach trees’.

*The Jesus Family is filled with love.  
The young are cherished and the old are at peace.  
The widows and widowers, though alone, are at ease.  
The sick are cared for, the dead buried.  
The guests are welcome at home;  
The lame are grateful from their hearts.  
Isn't it the Great Harmony? Isn't it Communism?*

After the Communists came to power in 1949 the Jesus Family was one of the first Christian organisations to be closed down by the new government. Jing was arrested in 1952, and died in prison in Xi'an in 1957.



1952年，马庄村被拆毁的耶稣家庭之一角。

A corner of a demolished Jesus Family building in the village of Mazhuang in 1952 @ asiaharvest.org

In the Autumn Term 2022, I audited a course in the History of Christianity in China, taught by the Revd Dr Philip Wickeri and Dr Chan Ruiwen, Rowena, at Ming Hua Theological College. There I became interested in the Jesus Family as a Christian community that, despite its flaws, gave life and hope to desperate people in terrible times.

 The Revd Will Newman

# Beloved Volunteers of LEC

Since our establishment, St John's Cathedral Life Enrichment Centre has been blessed with many heartfelt volunteers to support its programmes for youth, physically and financially. From Acts 20.35, we learn that *'In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."*' Over the years, we have been organising different programmes and events to invite volunteers to serve the needy in the community, such as the LEC Guided Tour

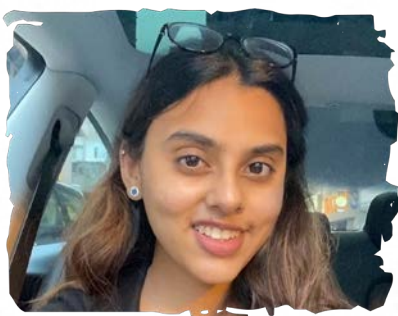
Ambassador Scheme, Mentorship project, Youth Internship, art class, 'To pause is to finally see' Photography and Storytelling Competition, 'Light up' Inclusive Charity Concert, Expressive Arts Teens Drama, Youth Ministry group, etc.

Last year, a volunteer committee team was formed with eight founding members. It was decided that all LEC volunteers would be referred to as 'Between' members (meaning 'together and not serving alone'). We are glad that our volunteer system has become more structured since then with different levels of the certificate system.

## Highlights of April 2023 Volunteers Experiential Training Camp



## A Stronger Team



Hello, my name is Arvinder and I have been working as a project officer at St John's Cathedral Life Enrichment Centre (LEC) since August 2022. During my time here, I have had

the opportunity to work on some exciting projects, engage with some wonderful youths and have grown both professionally and personally. Outside of work, I enjoy going on hikes, which helps me to maintain a healthy work-life balance. I am proud to be part of St John's Cathedral and I look forward to contributing to its success in the coming months. It has been a pleasure working in a church that is filled with rewarding experiences.



Hello all! I am Rooney Chow. I'm thrilled to introduce myself as one of the newest members at LEC. I joined the team as a part time staff in August last year. Currently, I am a final year student majoring in Counselling &

Psychology. The people and working environment in St John's are delightful, so I'll start working full time here in May.

I'm passionate about football, the harmonica, and SEN volunteering. Please feel free to stop by and say hello or ask me any questions you may have. I'm excited to be part of St John's and can't wait to see what we can achieve together!

Feedback gathered from some of the students in the camp:

Uriah Ip: 'In this camp, I learnt that everyone is distinctive and with multiple identities. I felt refreshed and relieved after meeting enthusiastic friends and benevolent tutors who supported me mentally and spiritually in the camp. Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude for the tutors' incredible services, especially to Vanice, Rooney, Waiting and Astor.'

Kitty Ho: 'To have a better understanding of other volunteers and to enhance our cohesiveness as a volunteer team.'

Ben Li: 'Everyone has their own uniqueness, and when we work together, we can create unlimited possibilities.'

Michelle Hung: 'I have more courage to express myself.'

Jeremy Kung: 'I learned to get along with people more and understand myself better. Grateful!'



HOW TO BE  
**LEC VOLUNTEER**

Opens all year

**Application guidelines**

1. Submit volunteer form through QR code.
2. Participants may be asked to attend a meeting/ or to be referred in order to become a volunteer under LEC. Our staff will call to inform about the confirmed date of the meeting if necessary;
3. Volunteer need to attend related trainings if needed.
4. Volunteers under the age of 18 need to submit a parent consent form.



Enquiry: [volunteer@sjclec.org](mailto:volunteer@sjclec.org) / 6083 9391

## SERVING OTHERS IS THE KEY TO HAPPINESS AND FULFILMENT

Last but not least, we would like to give special thanks to the following volunteers who contributed their time to LEC (in no particular order) in these past two years:

### **Mentors, Guided Tour Ambassadors and regular main support volunteers**

Betty Tsang, Francis Lam, Harold Tin, Howard Lam, Jada Wong, Janice Tsang, Joanna Wong, Julianne Doe, Theodore Lau, Lindy Lam, Lisa Luo, Margaret Sang, TK Cheung, Alan Leung, Kevin Leung, Anpel Chan, Emily Fok, John Tanner, Wendy Chan

### **Youth Volunteer committee**

Jack Ng, Dickson Chan, Uriah Ip, Kitty Ho, Anna Ng, Ben Li, Seraph Wong, Jessica Chou, Kammuri Lee, Michelle Hung, Jeremy Kung, Jimmy Wu

### **Teens Drama committee**

Alita Chow, KT Ho, Roysee Ko, Tommy Wu, Seraph Wong, Hilary Kan

### **Youth Ministry committee**

Andrew Lim, Athena Wong, James Yim, Jason Wong, Jimmy Wu, Kammuri Lee, Seraph Wong, Timothy Poon

## for Youth Support



Hi, I am Iris, working as a youth work officer at LEC. Before joining LEC, most of my work experiences were related to education. Although teaching was fun, I would like to step out of my comfort zone and try something different. Thank God for guiding me to the LEC family. Since the day I joined LEC, I have been participating in various meaningful activities, such as the mentorship programme, the 'Light

up! Inclusive Charity Concert' and the teens drama 'Why be normal if you could be happy'. Not only did I get to understand more about the needs of the youth and disabled people, but I also had the opportunity to assist and support them throughout the activities. With support from God and the teamwork at LEC, I have accomplished things that I never thought would be possible. I hope my communication and leadership skills will improve and equip me to become a better carer!



Hello everyone! My name is Roysee and I have been working as a part time drama project assistant at LEC since March 2023. It is my pleasure to work in LEC, which provides me lots of opportunities to learn. I feel glad to be part of St John's Cathedral! Last but not least, please support our drama project that is presented by the Cathedral's teenagers!

# Becoming a church for sinners

**Provincial celebrations kick off with reminders for church leaders about spirituality, discernment, leadership, doing more for God, and the importance of being a church where sinners feel welcome and loved.**

There are many people who feel undeserving of God's love – so much so that they even refuse it when it is offered to them. The Most Revd Stephen Chow Sau Yan, S.J., Catholic Bishop of Hong Kong, has a message for them: 'We are all sinners ... No one is more deserved to be loved.'

This was how Bishop Stephen opened his talk at the Spiritual Cultivation of Christian Leaders on 15<sup>th</sup> April. He was invited to offer his insights at the Vestry Members' Retreat and Kick-off Ceremony to mark the occasion of the 180<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Foundation of Sheng Kung Hui in Hong Kong, as well as the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Inauguration of the Province of HKSKH.

'God's love is unconditional,' he said. 'It's how open we are to his love ... It's about our willingness to believe in and receive the love of God.'

Bishop Stephen continued with the idea of finding God in all things, saying, 'Creation comes from love and returns to love.' He also said that we should not only feel and experience love, but also return it with love.

The Most Revd Andrew Chan, Archbishop of Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui, added that when we acknowledge that our church is a church of sinners, we then become the church *for* sinners. 'A church of sinners may not necessarily be one *for* sinners. It also needs to be a church of pilgrimage – a church that orientates towards God. Then we can work for the world, embracing the calamity of the people.'

Archbishop Andrew then shared a quote from Gandhi – 'My life is my message' – to remind all that it's not easy to proclaim the good news of God with our lives. As we kick off our anniversary celebrations, we should reflect on whether we have the discernment in our personal and church lives to impact the world.

Bishop Stephen also spoke about 'the Magis spirit – Inner Freedom and AMDG'. (Note to the reader: these are concepts from Ignatian spirituality, in which 'magis' means 'doing more for Christ'. AMDG is an acronym for 'Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam', the motto of the Society of Jesus, which means 'for the Greater Glory of God'.)

Other topics covered by Bishop Stephen included discernment of the spirits, the practice of Spiritual Conversation and characteristics of leaders, among others.

Following the talks, participants broke out into small group discussion in different locations of Diocesan Boys' School. The event was concluded with a noonday prayer led by the Revd Dr Lam Chun Wai.



*Present at the Vestry Members' Retreat and Kick-off Ceremony are (from right): the Rt Revd Timothy Kwok, the Most Revd Andrew Chan, the Most Revd Stephen Chow, the Rt Revd Dr Thomas Soo and the Very Revd Kwok-keung Chan.*



As we give thanks for the 180<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of Sheng Kung Hui in Hong Kong and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the inauguration of the Province of HKSKH, a series of celebrations will be held this year under the theme 'One family in Christ, our Rock'. Activities for the year include:

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| <p><b>15<sup>th</sup> APR</b> Vestry Members' Retreat and Kick-off Ceremony<br/>Time: 10.00am – 1.00pm<br/>Venue: Diocesan Boys' School</p>                            | <p><b>18<sup>th</sup> JUL</b> HKSKH Silver Jubilee Concert<br/>Time: 8.00pm<br/>Venue: Hong Kong Cultural Centre</p>   |
| <p><b>28<sup>th</sup> MAY</b> Revival Meeting: 'A Church Revived by the Holy Spirit'<br/>Time: 4.00pm<br/>Venue: Holy Trinity Cathedral</p>                            | <p><b>23<sup>rd</sup> OCT</b> Thanksgiving Service<br/>Time: 3.00pm<br/>Venue: Queen Elizabeth Stadium, Wanchai</p> <p><b>Thanksgiving Banquet</b><br/>Time: 6.30pm<br/>Venue: Ocean Park Marriott Hotel</p> |
| <p><b>30<sup>th</sup> MAY</b> The Development Day for Parish, School and Social Service<br/>Time: 8.30am – 1.00pm<br/>Venue: AsiaWorld Expo (Hall 1), Chep Lap Kok</p> | <p><b>11<sup>th</sup> NOV</b> Provincial Sports Carnival 'One + Run'<br/>Further details to be announced</p>   |

# Major Services

at St John's & Daughter Churches

## St John's Cathedral

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

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**11**  
JUN

### Corpus Christi

9.00am      Worship for All  
5.00pm      Choral Evensong with  
                  Benediction

**29**  
JUN

### Saints Peter & Paul

7.30pm      Sung Eucharist

**15**  
AUG

### The Blessed Virgin Mary

7.30pm      Sung Eucharist

## Emmanuel Church

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

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### Every Sunday

10.30am      Sung Eucharist

## St Stephen's Chapel

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

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### Every Sunday

10.00am      Sung Eucharist

## Discovery Bay Church

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

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### Every Sunday

10.00am      Sung Eucharist

Please visit our website for the latest updates about service arrangements.



ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL  
聖公會聖約翰座堂

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