ISSUE 46

IN TOUCH

One Heart in a House of Many

October 2026

Cathedral Magazine
Autumn Edition

Read Online













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DEAN'S MESSAGE

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

The extreme heat and severe rainstorms that marked Hong Kong's summer now feel like a distant memory, as the season has turned and the life of our Cathedral has shifted into full swing. This time of year is always a busy one for our community, with many happenings and activities on the horizon. Through it all, the vitality and liveliness of our community have never faded.

The annual Cathedral theme for 2026 is '*A Loving Church, A Caring Church*'. In this issue, I am thankful to all the full-time clergy for sharing on the little acts of love and care we have performed in the Cathedral community. These are just the catalysts to start the charcoal fire and I sincerely hope there will be rippling effects from what the Dean and Chaplains do to practical actions of loving and caring for the others by our Cathedral members. Just like what we mention in our mission statement, we welcome all to our Cathedral regardless to any differences we may possibly have.

On Dedication Festival, the Cathedral celebrated her 177th anniversary. I give thanks to God for his abundance of grace and love on all of us, and for the generations of sisters and brothers who have worshipped and served here before us.

As we come to the end of this year's theme, I would like to give a preview of our upcoming theme, which will be an overarching one for the next three years; I will share more about it in the next issue. This, together with the renovation project and pipe organ project that we endorsed after the July Council meeting, forms part of our preparation for the 180th anniversary of St John's Cathedral in 2029. We are expecting some changes in the outlook of the various Cathedral buildings, as well as some internal improvement work on the Cathedral Church and the administration building. Please pray for all the sisters and brothers involved in this large-scale project.

Our annual important event of Michaelmas Fair will be held on Saturday 24 October. Please mark this in your diary and join in this fun-filled occasion of our Cathedral.

May God bless all of us.

Love from Dean KK



各位主內兄姊：

夏季的極端酷熱與暴雨，轉眼間已成過去。季節更替，座堂的生活也隨之回復忙碌——許多活動和事工陸續展開，弟兄姊妹也再次聚首一堂。

座堂2026年度的主題是「愛滿關懷屬靈家」。本期，座堂聖品團隊一同分享我們在群體中愛與關懷的點滴。當然，這些只是引子，我衷心盼望聖品們所做的一切能引發漣漪效應，帶動主內兄姊以實際行動去愛與關懷他人。正如我們在使命宣言中所提及的，座堂歡迎所有人士，與我們一同以跟隨基督、轉化生命為己任。

在祝聖周年紀念日，我們慶祝了座堂177周年堂慶。我為上帝豐盛的恩典與愛，以及歷代在此敬拜和服侍的弟兄姊妹獻上感恩。

隨著今年主題即將結束，我先作預告：我們即將推出一個貫穿未來三年的主題，並將在下一期分享更多。而為迎接2029年聖約翰座堂180周年堂慶，在7月的堂議會會議中，我們通過了翻新工程及管風琴工程議案，作為籌備工作的一部分。我們預期座堂建築物的外觀會有所改變，座堂及行政大樓的內部亦會進行改善工程。請為所有參與這項大型工程的弟兄姊妹祈禱。

座堂年度籌款盛事——聖約翰座堂賣物會將於10月24日（星期六）舉行，期待屆時與大家相聚，一同參與這個充滿樂趣的盛會。

願主祝福大家。

座堂主任牧師
陳國強謹啟



DEDICATION festival







Text & photo by / **NATASHA NGAN**
Communications Officer

Not every anniversary needs fireworks. Ours certainly didn't get any this year. St John's turned 177, and honestly, if it hadn't been for the Feast of Dedication on 20 September, the day might have passed by without much notice.

But 177 years is no small thing. The Revd Robert Martin CMP, preached that day on Matthew 21—you know, the passage where Jesus walks into the temple and starts flipping tables. Not exactly the gentle Jesus we tend to prefer. Fr Robert pointed out that this wasn't a tantrum. It was Jesus cleaning house. The temple had been set aside for worship, and somehow it had become crowded out by noise and commerce.

Then he asked a question worth sitting with: what tables would Jesus flip over in our own lives? The anxiety. The secret sin. The pretence. All the noise that crowds out prayer.

It's uncomfortable to sit with, especially on a day when we're meant to be celebrating. But maybe that's the point.



177 YEARS OF ST JOHN

Because 177 years of prayers have been offered in this building. Thousands of people have worshipped here before us, and their prayers have made this place what it is. That's worth giving thanks for. But Fr Robert was clear that the building, beautiful as it is, isn't the whole story. We are the church—the gathered people of God. As he put it, even if every church building in the world collapsed into ruins this afternoon, the real temple of God would carry on in you and in me.

That's a thought worth holding onto.

So 177 years is worth marking, even quietly. Not because of the stones, but because of the people who've gathered here—and the One who promised to be with us whenever two or three are gathered in his name.

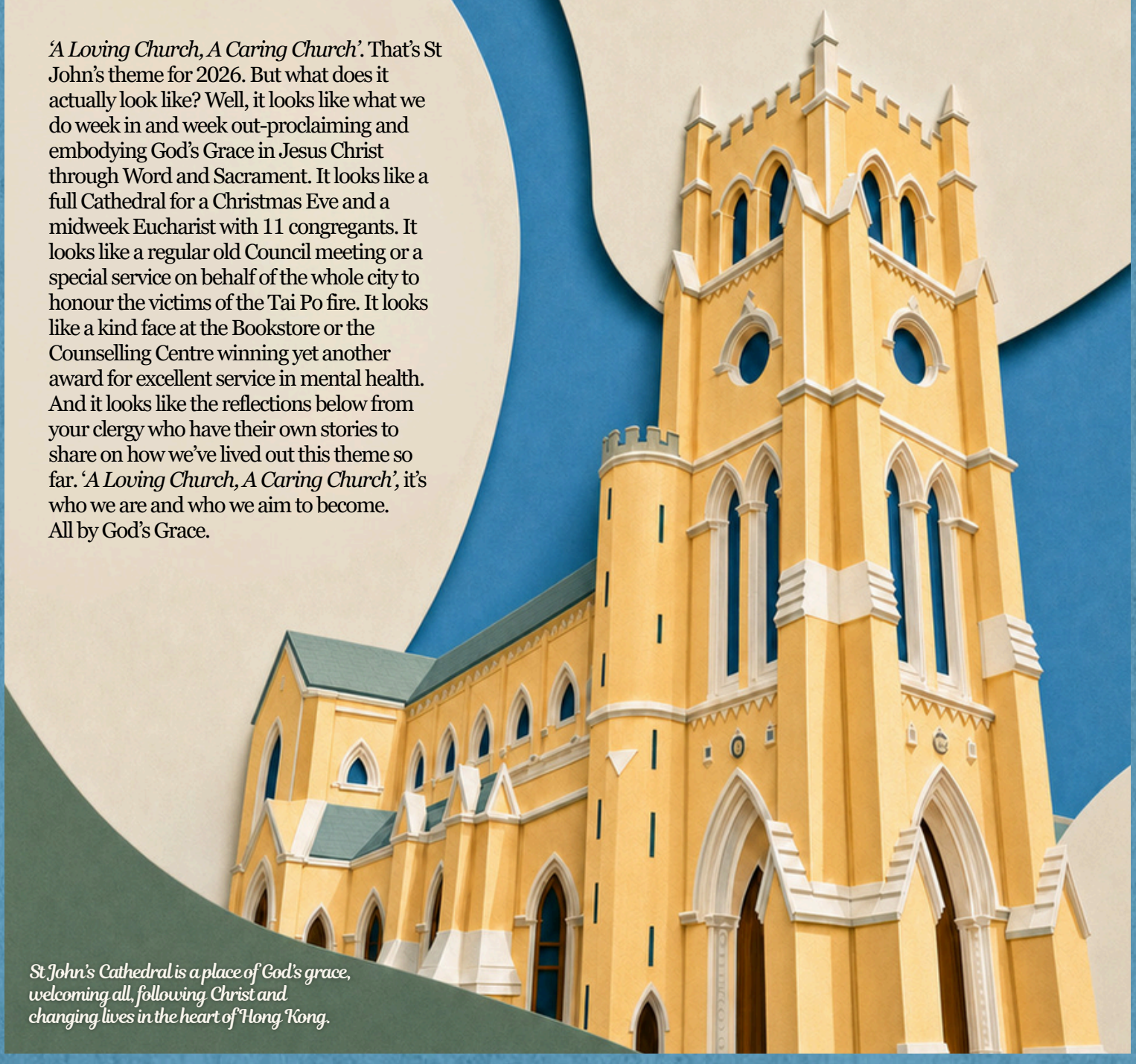
Here's to another year of being a house of prayer, a place of refuge, and a people who carry that out into the world.



A Loving Church, A Caring Church

Text by | The Revd Drew Courtright

'A Loving Church, A Caring Church'. That's St John's theme for 2026. But what does it actually look like? Well, it looks like what we do week in and week out-proclaiming and embodying God's Grace in Jesus Christ through Word and Sacrament. It looks like a full Cathedral for a Christmas Eve and a midweek Eucharist with 11 congregants. It looks like a regular old Council meeting or a special service on behalf of the whole city to honour the victims of the Tai Po fire. It looks like a kind face at the Bookstore or the Counselling Centre winning yet another award for excellent service in mental health. And it looks like the reflections below from your clergy who have their own stories to share on how we've lived out this theme so far. *'A Loving Church, A Caring Church'*, it's who we are and who we aim to become. All by God's Grace.



St John's Cathedral is a place of God's grace, welcoming all, following Christ and changing lives in the heart of Hong Kong.

The late Pope Francis once said, 'Whenever we take a step toward Jesus, we realise he is already there, waiting for us with open arms.' (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 3)

As '*A Loving Church, A Caring Church*', every little action in our Cathedral community shows our love and care to whoever we can reach out to. Even a minimal act, almost unnoticeable to most, allows our members or visitors to get one step closer to Jesus.

On a recent public holiday, I was enjoying reading at home. Suddenly my mobile phone rang and an anxious voice asked in Mandarin if the Cathedral had found his lost purse. I immediately recognised it as the emergency call to the Cathedral Office, but no one was working on public holidays. The call was directed to the on-call clergy, and that was me. So, I asked for his name and promised to call him back. The Cathedral Minders, who are volunteers, had already found the purse, so I told them to wait for the nervous young visitor to come and collect it. He rushed back in no time and thanked us for such a great save.

To us in the Cathedral, what we did was just a small act of love and care; but to this young man, it was a saving action to get back his money and all his identity documents. May we all remember to perform all the possible little deeds of loving and caring for one another. So help us God.

Dean KK





In my first year at Discovery Bay Church, no one moved away. Imagine that! Then, in rapid succession, 2026 saw three long-time parishioners move away from Hong Kong. DBC proved to be a loving and caring church in each instance, in both directions. Let me explain. DBC had been loving and caring to them in the past, and they were sad to be leaving. And, when each person left, we sent them off with a blessing and the chance to say a few words of gratitude. In those remarks, each time, the person leaving was the one who was loving and caring by sharing how much the church had meant to them through life's ups and downs. These personal testimonials made each person's presence that much more cherished and missed. I can't help but think of Jesus' Ascension, when he says one final goodbye to the disciples, but reminds them that he will be with them 'to the end of the age'. Our church friendships are the same. We come and we go, but there is love and care now and in the age to come.

Fr Drew

As Chaplain for Filipinos in Hong Kong, I have celebrated the Eucharist on Chater Road on occasions important to migrant workers, bringing the altar nearer to those who could not normally come to St John's, and celebrating with them events meaningful to them. I have brought Communion to the sick in hospitals and in the workplaces of foreign domestic workers, whenever their employers permit. I have performed funeral services in several mortuaries and funeral homes around Hong Kong. Almost every Saturday and Sunday after the Filipino services at St John's, I have prayed for congregants asking for prayers for their own sicknesses or for a sick or departed loved one, or by those confused or disturbed by developments in their lives. Those moving on to other countries to work also ask for prayers, for guidance and protection, as they open another unknown chapter. On many occasions, I have welcomed Filipino visitors to St John's, entering the Cathedral to whisper a short prayer—encouraging them to go to St Michael's chapel to light a candle or two, for their safe travel or to thank God for all the blessings they have received, especially if the visit to Hong Kong was for a birthday, a wedding anniversary, or as a graduation gift. Or for passing the board exams… All these bring me joy, and at the same time, humility. I have become a part of their pains and sorrows, their joys and hopes… May God continue to bless and guide St John's Cathedral: its council, its various outreach ministries, and its congregation.

Fr Dwight



It may seem a simple message but, believe me, it's not easy to live it out and practice it in our ministry. From my point of view, '*A Loving Church, A Caring Church*' is expressed in the way the church continually keeps its doors open on ordinary days. The Cathedral is one of the important places of refuge from the noise and relentless busyness of everyday life. I am no stranger to this. Hence, when leading the one o'clock prayer, it doesn't bother me whether people sitting in the pews are praying or napping to take a break and enjoy their midday pause. Time and again, I have witnessed how well this opportunity is taken up, to simply sit back and soak up the cool air. A few moments of silence and stillness can transform a person's day even for a non-believer. I believe that an open church can offer a place of encounter or an experience of the sacred for the seeker because in every person there is a heart in pursuit of God and at times without realising it.



Mother Sharon



'Open doors, open hearts'

One of the most powerful symbols of our Cathedral, as a loving and caring church, is the great west doors—doors that are open every day to welcome people in times of joy and in times of sadness. St John's offers a safe and sacred space where folk can gather to express their thanksgivings and their sorrows in God's presence. All are received as children of God regardless of race, nationality, religious affiliation, or anything else. One such occasion was the 'Service of Hope in a Time of Sadness' held on 26 December last year to remember all those who had died, or been injured, in the Wong Fuk Court fire. In this moving liturgy the people of Hong Kong gathered to bring before God their sadness and sorrow but also their hope for the future. Through music, scripture, the lighting of a memorial candle and, especially, the placing of their written prayers in the Christmas Crib the Cathedral truly became a 'House of Prayer' for all peoples. Keeping our doors wide open for those who need love and care is what we have been doing for almost 178 years!

Fr Robert

Have you ever visited St John's Cathedral on a weekday when no service is taking place? On a recent Tuesday around 11am I saw eight people in the Cathedral. An organist was practising a gentle recessional. Of the others, one was lighting a candle in the St Michael Chapel. One was scrolling on her mobile phone. One was reading a newspaper. One was kneeling in prayer. One was meditating, sitting upright with eyes closed and hands at rest. One was sitting at the back, just looking at the East Window and Christ on the cross. The eighth was Calvin, one of our caretakers.

St John's Cathedral is open every day for anyone to come and rest, pray, or find a place of peace in the middle of Central. We are there for everyone, and being there when people need you is sometimes the best way of showing love and care.



Fr Will



St John's knows what it means to be a loving and caring church, because this spirit is deeply woven into who she is. One example that has stayed with me is LEC's mentorship programme, which, over the past six years, has quietly extended our Cathedral's ministry of care to Secondary One students from SPCC. At the recent appreciation ceremony, I was moved by the dedication of our mentors, who have willingly given their time to journey alongside these young people as they navigate the challenges and uncertainties of secondary school. With the support of SPCC, they have offered encouragement, friendship, and a reassuring presence. This is just one of many examples of how our Cathedral continues to carry out its ministry of love and care in quiet and humble ways. Such acts may often go unnoticed, but they are powerful reminders that the Church bears witness to Christ's love not only through what we say, but also through the way we walk alongside and care for others.

Fr Francis

聖約翰座堂賣物會

MICHAELMAS FAIR

ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL

24 十月 OCT

10.00AM–4.00PM(SAT)
上午10時至下午4時（六）

Highlights 活動亮點

BOUNCY CASTLE - FOOD & DRINKS - RAFFLE -
GAME STALLS - HANDICRAFTS - HOME PRODUCE -
LIVE PERFORMANCES - STAMPS STALL - WINE -
WHITE ELEPHANT - SECOND HAND BOOKS



4-8 GARDEN ROAD,
CENTRAL, HONG KONG

香港中環花園道4-8號

TEXT BY | THE REVD WILL NEWMAN

SEEING THE GOOD IN OTHER FAITHS ✦



The Revd Will Newman is Moderator of the Hong Kong Network on Religion and Peace (HKNRP), an informal network of people who want to meet people of other faiths and exchange ideas. We asked him about his interfaith work, building bridges between religious traditions and seeing the good in other faiths.



WHY IS INTERFAITH WORK IMPORTANT TO YOU?

It started for me on 11 September, 25 years ago, when terrorists—claiming to act in the name of Islam—destroyed the twin towers of the World Trade Centre in New York, killing more than two thousand people. People started talking about the 'Clash of Civilizations', as if conflict between Muslims and Christians was inevitable. I felt we can't allow that to happen, or we will destroy each other. We have to make contact across faiths with people of good-will, and I want to be part of that.

BUT IF CHRISTIANITY IS RIGHT, DOESN'T THAT MEAN THAT OTHER FAITHS ARE WRONG?

As a Christian, when I look at Jesus, I see God fully revealed in human form. As St Paul says, 'In him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.' (Colossians 1.19) For me, Jesus is the complete revelation of God. But other religions may also contain truth and goodness. Rather than saying others are wrong, I want to see what is good in them.

WHAT IS THE AIM OF HKNRP?

HKNRP brings together people of different faiths, and some who are not committed to any particular faith. The aim is not to convert or persuade others to our religion or point of view, but to share views and listen to each other so that we hear people speaking about their own faith.

Many of us only know about other faiths from books or the media. Even if we work with colleagues of other faiths, we may never talk about religion. Engaging and making friends with people who belong to other faiths allows us to go beyond media stereotypes and find out what people really think and believe. We get to understand each other better, find points of contact, and appreciate how others seek to connect with God or the divine spirit.

WHAT HAPPENS IN HKNRP MEETINGS?

We meet in each other's meeting rooms or places of worship. We may have an introduction to some aspect of the host's religion, and they may invite speakers from other faiths to share their thoughts on this subject. We may observe or take part in an act of worship in their tradition, and there's always time for Q&A, and conversation over refreshments.

We meet approximately once a month. This year's meetings have included meditating for peace in the Hindu tradition, an introduction to the Zoroastrian faith, the oldest organised religion in the world, and a visit to Kowloon Mosque to meet Mohammed Arshad, the Chief Imam of Hong Kong, and learn more about Islam.

WHAT DO INDIVIDUALS GAIN FROM THESE INTERFAITH ENCOUNTERS?

An opportunity to learn, to see other faiths from the inside, not only the outside. Your own faith may be enriched by the insights of others. And explaining your faith to outsiders encourages you to think more deeply about things you may take for granted, what you believe and what difference it makes to your life. So the encounter can deepen your faith too. You'll also learn where we disagree and see things differently. But you may find that friendship overcomes such barriers.

WHAT IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT INTERFAITH ENCOUNTER YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED?

I gave Imam Arshad and some of his people a tour of St John's Cathedral and an introduction to Christianity. I told them two stories from the gospels: the Parable of the Prodigal Son, and the loving Father; and the story of the Woman taken in adultery, from John chapter 8, when Jesus says 'Let whoever is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.'

After hearing these stories of Jesus, Imam Arshad said 'Truly he was a great prophet.' Muslims don't believe Jesus was the Son of God, but it was moving to hear the Imam give such a warm response to Jesus' teaching.



WHEN ARE THE NEXT HKNRP MEETINGS?

Our meetings are often on weekday evenings, but the next meetings are all on Sunday afternoons. On 18 October we'll visit Ching Chung Koon Taoist temple, Tuen Mun. And on 8 November, St John's will be the host.

HOW DO I JOIN HKNRP?

Scan the WhatsApp QR code below and send your email address to me, and I will forward it to the HKNRP Secretary to join the mailing list. You'll receive email invitations to upcoming meetings. If you are interested in learning and sharing with others—not evangelising or seeking to convert, but making friends across faiths—I look forward to seeing you there.

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

威爾第《安魂曲》
Requiem (Giuseppe Verdi)

sung by Cathedral Choir with Chamber Orchestra
詩班：聖約翰座堂詩班（室樂團演奏）

MONDAY
2 November 2026
at 7.30pm

St John's Cathedral
4-8 Garden Road, Central

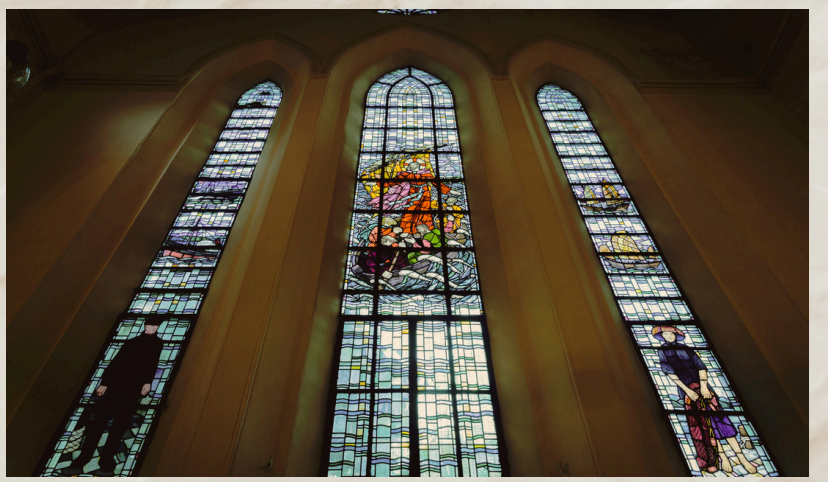
星期一
二〇二六年十一月二日
晚上七時半

聖約翰座堂
中環花園道四至八號

CELEBRATING OUR COMMON FAITH *With the Saints*

Text by | The Revd Robert Martin CMP & Daniel Kong (Verger)

As we moved through the summer months, here at St John's Cathedral we celebrated a rich sequence of major feast days. These holy days lift our eyes and spirits from everyday life to the eternal grace of God. They invite us to walk deeper into the stories of our shared heritage and faith through word, praise, sacrament, and fellowship. The feast days continue through the year, and we would love for you to be part of them—these are occasions that truly enrich our walk of faith. All are welcome.





The Birth of John the Baptist

(24th June)

The Birth of John the Baptist is the first of two feast days dedicated to John, who is the 'forerunner' who prepared the way for Christ. His birth broke the 400-year silence of the prophets and points the world towards Jesus, the Father's beloved son. We celebrate this joyful turning point in salvation history, the greatest of the Old Testament prophets with two sessions of Said Eucharist at 8.00am and 6.00pm.

St Peter and St Paul

(29th June)

St Peter, who held the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven, and St Paul, who set the tone for the foundational teachings of Christ and salvation through faith, are celebrated in a joint feast day that kicked off with a said Eucharist at 8.00am and concluded the day with a beautifully sung Eucharist at 7.30pm. Coincidentally, Professor Martyn Percy ended his extremely popular Bible-themed '*Grace in a Busy Week*' series on a high note that evening, and many participants went on to worship God in spirit and in truth at the Cathedral.

St Mary Magdalene

(22nd July)

In mid-summer, we honour St Mary Magdalene. Known as the apostle to the apostles, she stood by the cross and first saw the risen Lord. Her deep devotion and eyewitness testimony anchor our own hope in the future glory when we exclaim, 'I have seen the Lord.'

St Martha, Mary, and Lazarus

(29th July)

One week after the feast of St Mary Magdalene we turn to a family of three who were dear friends of Jesus: Saint Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. The example of Martha taught us the holiness of practical service and open confession, reminding us that our daily works of love form an integral part of our worship before God. Meanwhile, Mary was a model of quiet devotion and unwavering focus on Christ and his teachings. Lazarus, the only biblical saint who was raised from death, pointed us towards our hope of resurrection.

Transfiguration of the Lord

(6th August)

As August opened, we beheld the Transfiguration of the Lord. On the high mountain, Christ shone with divine light. Moses and Elijah appeared to bear witness. This feast grants us a glimpse of Christ's true glory before the shadow of the cross. It also leads us towards deep contemplation of our Christian walk, when 'mountain top experiences' and the realities of work and ministry play juxtapositions. We celebrated this day with a gloriously sung worship service at 7.30pm and two said Eucharist sessions at 8.30am and 1.15pm of packed attendance at the Cathedral High Altar.

FAMILY FUN NIGHT

Michaelmas Fair 2026

家庭同樂夜

A night to remember

Text & photo by / **NATASHA NGAN**
Communications Officer

There's a certain magic to Family Fun Night that never seems to fade—and this year was no exception.

The evening kicked off with a spread that had everyone going back for seconds (and thirds), glasses of wine in hand as old friends caught up and new ones were made. Before long, the performances began—and what a lineup it was.

First up, the magician, who had the kids taking up the entire front row. The giggles alone could have brought the roof down. Then came the singing, the Pelicans and the Filipino Fellowship, who gave us goosebumps between them, and a piano performance by Malcolm so beautiful you could have heard a pin drop. From start to finish, the room was filled with cheering, laughter, and the kind of applause that comes straight from the heart.



The auction followed, with plenty of excitement as bids came in, and just when we thought the night couldn't get any livelier, the trivia session arrived and turned a room full of friends into fierce rivals. Safe to say, a few friendships were tested.

But beyond the food, the wine, and the friendly rivalry, Family Fun Night is about something far greater. It's about coming together as a community, giving generously, and supporting a cause that matters to all of us. Every ticket bought, every bid placed, every laugh shared—it all adds up to something truly meaningful.

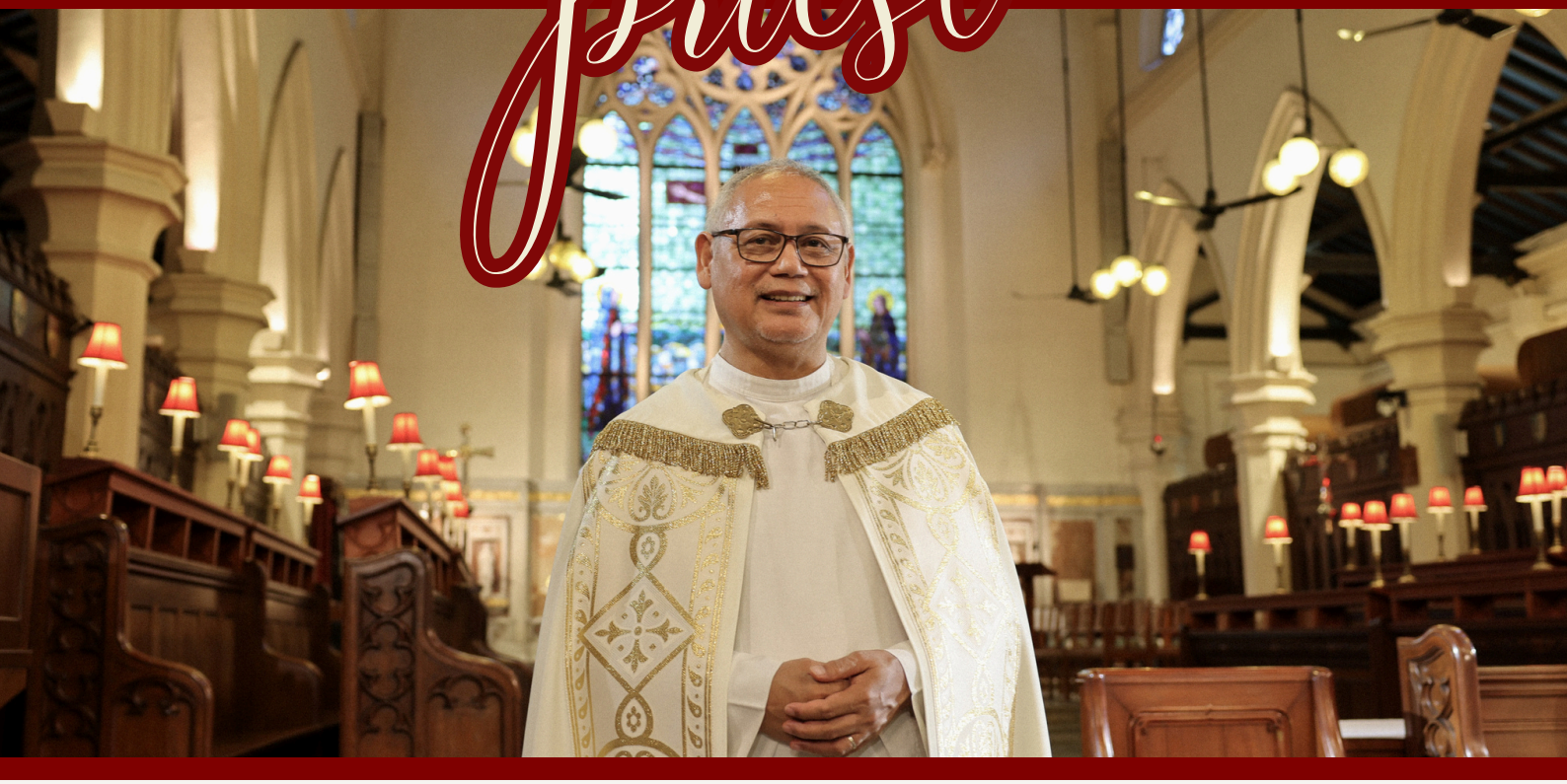
None of it would have been possible without our incredible organising committee, led by our chairlady Yvette, and our wonderful Emcee Alan, who kept the night running smoothly from start to finish. To everyone who joined us, volunteered, or donated: thank you. You made the night what it was.

And to those who couldn't make it—don't worry. Michaelmas Fair 2026 is just around the corner, and we'd love to see you there. It's shaping up to be our biggest yet, so keep an eye out for details.

Until then, enjoy these snapshots from a night we won't soon forget.



THE PIONEERING *priest*



Text by / **NATASHA NGAN**
Communications Officer

In 1994, a young Filipino priest got on a plane for a job interview in a city he had never seen. He got the job. In the blink of an eye, 32 years have passed, and this December, Fr Dwight retires from St John's Cathedral.

He had come from the southern Philippines. The Mission for Migrant Workers (MFMW) was looking for a priest. He knew nothing about Hong Kong. 'I told myself, if I don't get the job, I didn't lose anything', he says. 'I was able to visit Hong Kong'.

What he remembers about that first visit is the church. It was a weekday, people inside—not for a service, just praying. On the Sunday there were even more of them, filling the church and spilling outside.

'I said, wow, this is a perfect place for people who are looking for God', he says. There was no Filipino service at St John's then. Three months after Fr Dwight arrived, that changed. It was, as he puts it, a pioneering job.

He had been ordained in 1978 and served in three parishes in the Philippines. His dreams were simple: to be a parish priest, nothing more. Hong Kong interrupted that. But serving Filipinos here felt like home—people come from different provinces, different islands, but the same language and faith. The cathedral became a microcosm of Philippine society, and on Sundays the sheer number of them is a joy to him.

But it would be naive to pretend the story is only one of warmth and welcome. Fr Dwight has spent 32 years watching migrant workers struggle, and some of what he has seen is hard to hear.



A FAREWELL TO FR DWIGHT



There was a Sunday, the feast of the Epiphany, when a woman approached him after New Year. Her sister had died, and there would be a viewing on Sunday. She asked if he would come and say prayers. He went. The sister who had invited him was not there—the employer had not allowed her to leave. She had to look after the children.

'I was angry at the system', he says. Not at the woman, not even at the employer. At the system. He did three funeral services that morning, one after another, because there were other Filipino women who had died and no one to pray for them. It was, he says, a sad day.

And yet the story does not end there, because Fr Dwight does not believe that sadness is the final word. He quotes, or half-quotes, a line he has carried for years: to be silent in the face of injustice is to tolerate injustice.



This is where the crucifixion comes in. Fr Dwight does not see the cross as a symbol of quiet suffering. He sees it as a political act. Crucifixion, he points out, was the Roman imperial government's form of punishment for those who disturbed the peace of the empire. If Jesus was crucified, he must have been perceived to have disturbed the empire.

That is the ministry Fr Dwight has tried to live: not a comfortable ministry inside church walls, but one that stands with people who are treated unjustly. He joins pickets when Filipino workers protest outside the Philippine consulate. He shouts with them. He says yes to God by saying no to abuse.

He did not do it to grow the congregation, though some did come to St John's afterwards. He did it because if somebody is listening, then he is there.





32 years later, what has changed? The situation is different in some ways. Workers are more informed now. They know their rights. Some things have improved. But the problems remain: discrimination, overworked, workers denied the full privileges they are entitled to. Fr Dwight does not pretend otherwise. He has seen too much to be sentimental. But he also sees progress in the church itself.

When he arrived, he could sense a distance between the Filipino congregation and the wider cathedral community. Now there are two services in Filipino, two Filipino members on the council, and the Filipino Fellowship Choir sings on the second Sunday.

'It's recognition that they are part of the church', Fr Dwight says. He does not take credit for this. 'The time has just arrived', he insists. 'The time has come and people are just able to accept others'.

He is not a man who claims credit for much. When I asked what he was most thankful to St John's for, he did not mention the ministry or the years of service. I had to remind him: what about your wife? He laughed. They met here, after all. She sang in the choir. They married in 2002. Her parish priest in the Philippines, it turns out, had been his student in the seminary.

Retirement is coming, though he does not know quite what it will look like. He talks about flying, about teaching, about filling in at vacant parishes in the Philippines, about resting. He says he will probably be busier when he retires than he is now. He says he will come back to St John's as often as he can.

'Don't forget me', he tells me. I don't think anyone will. He retires at the end of December, so there is still time to say goodbye. Though he might prefer to slip away quietly. And when I ask him what he hopes for the Cathedral's future, he does not talk about himself at all.

He hopes MFMW will one day be closed down. Not because the work is unimportant, but because it should not be needed anymore. He hopes migrant workers will become equal in Hong Kong. He hopes the clergy and people of the cathedral will live out its mission statement: 'A place of God's Grace, welcoming all, following Christ, and changing lives in the heart of Hong Kong.'

He thinks it is a very beautiful statement. He has seen a congregation grow into a community. He has seen love, in the most ordinary and extraordinary ways. And he thinks they are getting there. Slowly, but surely.

The doors of St John's are never locked. That is the point. People come in, they find what they are looking for, and they keep coming back. Fr Dwight has spent 32 years making sure they have somewhere to come. That is not an ending. It is a beginning.





Before we finish, he asks me to mention something. He is grateful to the archbishops and deans he has served under, to his colleagues at St John's, to the trustees and council, to Cynthia at MFMW and her staff, to the leaders of the migrant workers' organisations, to the members of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente HK Fellowship and the SJC Filipino Fellowship, to his friends in the ecumenical movement, and to the many workers whose lives and struggles shaped his understanding of migration. He does not want to leave anyone out.

New Face at the Office

It is with joy that we welcome Jolita Sun to the Cathedral Office. As a long-time parishioner at St John's, she brings a blend of corporate and volunteering experience to the daily life of the office. Jolita enjoys reading, quiet reflection, and connecting with people from all walks of life. She is grateful for the opportunity to transition from worshipping in our pews to stewarding the Cathedral's daily operations, offering her talent in faithful service to the parish she calls home. Please join us in wishing her well in this new chapter.



Jolita Sun



CARING FOR OUR MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK

Text by / **DR ALEX LI**
Director of SJC Counselling Service

The 40th issue of the HKCSS Policy Bulletin has now been published, and this issue focuses on the mental health of working people in Hong Kong, and how individuals can seek support services.

Work takes up a significant part of daily life for many people in Hong Kong. As such, workplace environments, interpersonal relationships, workload, and stress management can all have a profound impact on our mental wellbeing. Good mental health not only helps us stay focused and productive and build healthier relationships at work, it can also support us in our personal lives, relationships, and family roles.

When discussing mental health support, many people may not immediately think of the resources already available through the workplace. One important form of support is the Employee Assistance Programme, or EAP.

EAPs are usually provided by organisations for their employees. They may include confidential counselling services, emotional, and stress management support, crisis intervention, worklife balance guidance, and referrals to appropriate professional services. For employees, an EAP can be an accessible, lower-threshold first step towards seeking help when facing stress, anxiety, depression, relationship difficulties, or major life transitions.

At the same time, we would like to remind both organisations and individuals to be cautious and selective when choosing an EAP or any mental health support service provider. Regulation of these services in Hong Kong remains limited, so it is important to understand the professional background and qualifications of service providers. Support should be sought from qualified counsellors or psychologists who hold a relevant master's degree or above, have completed sufficient supervised practicum and clinical hours, and are registered with recognised local or international professional associations.

At St John's Cathedral Counselling Service, we have many years of experience in providing EAP services to organisations and supporting employees' mental health and overall wellbeing. Our services are available in 17 languages, and all our counsellors are carefully vetted to ensure professional standards and ethical practice.

If your organisation is looking for EAP services, or would like to learn more about how to build stronger mental health support for your employees, please feel free to contact us at info@sjccs.hk.

45 YEARS OF MFMW

A milestone year

A grateful heart





Text by / **JOHANNIE TONG**
Community Relations Officer of MFMW

The Mission For Migrant Workers (MFMW), as one of the outreach ministries of St John's Cathedral, serves migrant domestic workers as an integral part of the church. Grounded in our Christian faith, we seek to reflect God's love by offering practical help and steadfast support anytime, anywhere.

On 10 June, MFMW celebrated its 45th anniversary with a Gala Dinner and Charity Auction that gathered more than 140 guests from corporate partners, churches, schools, and the wider Hong Kong community. That was a night of purpose and shared hope to underscore the NGO's long-running role as Hong Kong's oldest independent service provider for migrant workers in Asia, and a steadfast advocate for a more inclusive city.

The venue exuded warmth as attendees gathered to recognise decades of service that have touched thousands of migrant domestic workers. The night's programme wove personal stories with organisational milestones, providing a human face to the work of MFMW. Among the emotional moments were testimonies from two migrant women—one a cancer survivor and the other a survivor of the Tai Po fire last year—whose narratives illuminated the everyday risks, collective resilience, and dignity of migrant workers in Hong Kong. These stories, paired with the gala's celebratory tone, reminded guests that MFMW's mission is as much about everyday care as it is about systemic support.

The Revd Canon Dwight dela Torre, the Chairperson of MFMW's Board of Directors, opened the evening with a prayer and welcome remarks that set a reflective yet hopeful mood. Messages from partners and supporters reinforced the central message: MFMW's existence is vital, and its vision of a caring, inclusive Hong Kong remains urgent. Johannie Tong, MFMW's community relations officer, later acknowledged the people behind the success of the gala—the staff, volunteers, and performers who turned a fundraising event into a powerful demonstration of solidarity.







The fundraising portion surpassed expectations. Auctioneer Florence, a Sotheby's veteran, led the Live Auction, while KY Wong curated the Charity Arts Sale and Silent Auction. A pledge session, led by Jen and Daniel, helped translate generosity into tangible outcomes. In total, MFMW raised HK$900,000, a figure the organisation frames not merely as a financial achievement but as a signal that the community believes in its work and in the importance of supporting migrant workers.

Commenting on the night's success, MFMW's leadership stressed that the funds would be prudently managed to expand services, empower new communities, and strengthen connections. The overarching message was clear: MFMW will keep building bridges across communities and fostering mutual understanding and respect in a Hong Kong that recognises migrants' contribution to our society.

Established in 1981, MFMW remains a leading voice for Asian migrant workers and a steadfast advocate for a more caring and inclusive society. As the organisation looks to the future, the gala's echoes linger—the reminder that a city's strength is measured not by its wealth alone, but by its willingness to care for those who help sustain it.

With our deepest appreciation, we acknowledge the generosity and steadfast support of the following donors and partners, whose contributions made this evening—and our mission—possible.



With Gratitude

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Hongkong Land Foundation
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Noah's Ark Hong Kong
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Archbishop Andrew Chan
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Lara Jefferies
Merissa Quek
KY Wong
Faye Yee
Natalie Li
Natalie Kwok
Venise Chen



TEXT BY KAMMURI LEE, ELLA TAM, URIAH IP, JEREMY HSU, ANDREW LIM, JASON WONG

What stands among the WITHERING US

Withering and fading are concepts we often ignore when distracted by the present, or when we are just about to blossom ourselves. While the word of God always stands, it often falls on deaf ears until we finally experience some withering, or when we are ready to listen. How do our younger members perceive this? Let us see what some of them have to share!

> The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever. Isaiah 40.8

KAMMURI LEE

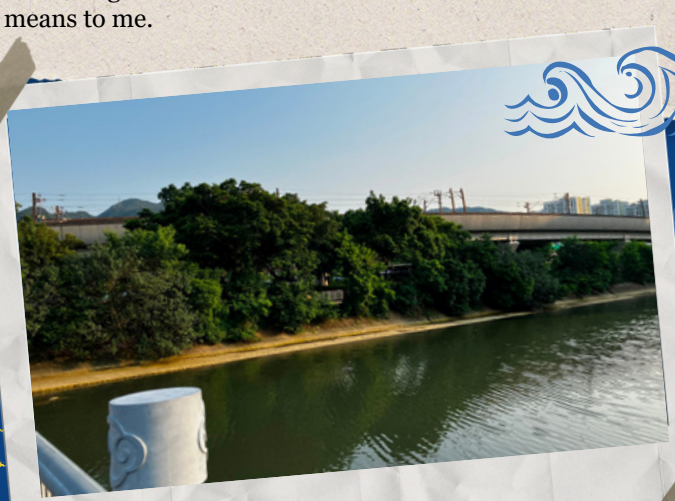
Throughout our journey in life, many different things happen to us, some good and some bad. Some people might say, 'Christians only talk about God when they are in need'. To some extent, that might be true, because we are all ordinary people. When we face fear, loss, or difficulties, we naturally tend to look for a greater power that we can rely on.

Looking back on my own life, I have experienced family members being in hospital, panic attacks, friends leaving, and difficulties in my studies. When bad things happened, I did not always understand why they were happening, and I often felt helpless and discouraged. However, over time, I realised that God had placed different 'angels' around me to support and remind me in different ways that I was not alone.

This reminds me of another Bible verse: 'My grace is sufficient for you.' I have come to understand that God never promised that our lives would always be smooth or easy. Instead, He reminds us that God is already here, but difficulties made me notice His presence more clearly. God's grace does not guarantee that our difficulties will disappear, but that we can be given the strength to go through them.

Some people say, 'What doesn't kill you makes you stronger'. For me, however, these experiences have not only made me stronger, but have also taught me to pay more attention to the people around me and to appreciate the abilities I have to support myself and keep moving forward. I believe these people, strengths, and lessons are also gifts from God.

Even though difficult things will continue to happen in life, God and His grace will remain with me. This is what Isaiah 40.8 means to me.



ELLA TAM

Wilted branches, old trees, twilighting crows; small bridge, flowing water, lived-in houses; an ancient path, west winds, a rawboned horse. Sunset descending westward, those anguished walk at the world's end—Tianjingsha—Autumnal Musings written by Ma Zhi-yuan, Yuan Dynasty

This poem was the first thing that came to my mind when I came across Isaiah 40.8. This was what autumn looked like to the Chinese poet Ma: plants wilted, the sunlight dimmed, a lack of liveliness. Although autumn in China was much cooler about 700 years ago, we can still more or less experience the same nostalgia, loneliness, and hopelessness brought by the dry wind and the decreasing temperature during the autumn season in Hong Kong.

Yet God says to us—and very likely to Ma as well—*that blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.* (Matthew 5.4) While sadness is a valid emotion, the word of God exists over centuries to prove that His company with us is an undeniable fact.

We also often describe people in their later years as being in their autumn of life. It is because there seems to be less possibility and ability to change for oneself, and the close ones may suffer from declining health and soon say farewell —a lack of liveliness, what a synonym for autumn! The seemingly most sensible thing to do in this stage is to be nostalgic, be lonely, and be hopeless.

While lamenting over the autumn of life, God says: *The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.* (Proverbs 16.31) The despairing old age turns miraculously into a glorious matter. Cheers, the word of God saves even in the most sorrowful occasions! I pray that we all dare to embrace every season in life—autumn or spring, summer or winter, adolescence or senior years, with the help of God's words, to experience the richness of life.

URIAH IP

Grass flourishes for a season, then fades. Flowers blossom in breathtaking splendour only to surrender their petals to the wind. In a world full of changes, Isaiah directs our gaze towards the one reality that remains untouched by decay: the everlasting Word of God. Whenever I reflect on this verse, I am reminded of how vulnerable so many aspects of life truly are. Friendships evolve and flow like tides. Even our confidence can be as fragile as a flower standing before a storm. There were times when I felt burdened by loneliness and believed that no one could understand the battles I was fighting within. The road ahead seemed uncertain.

Yet, with hindsight, I realise those moments, painful as they were, were not eternal. They were like the grass Isaiah describes, vivid in the present, but passing. What endured through every disappointment was the steadfast faithfulness of God. His promises remained immovable as a bedrock. Looking through my baptism certificates and photographs, I found myself overwhelmed by gratitude. Baptism and Confirmation remain among the most significant milestones of my life, not merely because of the ceremonies, but because they symbolise God's presence throughout a journey often marked by doubt and struggle. They stand as reminders that even when I could not discern His hand, He was quietly guiding my steps.

Isaiah 40.8 also challenges me to examine where I place my trust. I often seek fulfilment in achievements, recognition, or the approval of others, forgetting that these things are as fleeting as wildflowers in spring. The future remains a mystery and I cannot foresee where the Lord will lead me. Yet Isaiah's words reassure me that I do not need to know every detail of the path ahead because I know the One who walks beside me. People come, people go, but the Word endures for ever. As I conclude, I am reminded of one of my favourite hymns, *Speak O Lord*: 'Truths unchanged from the dawn of time, that will echo down through eternity.'

JEREMY HSU

This verse from Isaiah beautifully sums up the intricacies of life—we will all flourish to different extents, yet death equates us in its inevitability. Death is often an afterthought for many. It is quite unlikely for one to bring up death as a dinner table conversation; in fact, in this day and age, you are much more likely to overhear people talking about ways to prolong life, reverse ageing, and perhaps, death.

Cheating death is not new. In Edgar Allan Poe's *'The Masque of Red Death'*, aristocrats locked themselves up in palaces while throwing lavish parties during the bubonic plague, falling under the misperception that 'gates of iron' and 'welded bolts' would lock Death out. The irony, however, was that locking themselves in and leaving the world outside to rot did not prevent the masked figure—a symbol of death—from reaching them, with the prose ending in a chilling phrase: 'And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all'.

The aristocrat's enjoyment of lavish banquettes is possibly the best reminder one can receive about both life and death. How should we live knowing that we will all die one day? Before you call me out for the pessimistic attitude, perhaps take another read at what Isaiah wrote, '[...] but the word of our God shall stand for ever.' The latter part of this verse is perhaps what is truly most critical. Despite knowing that we will one day all die and our legacy left in the hands of those who outlive us, perhaps what is truly important is knowing what God wants us to do and walk down our life's peaks and valleys following God's words.



ANDREW LIM

It will be fall by the time this piece is published. As with the past decade or so, I am certain the tropical mid-summer sun will still be beating down on us. Like we all say, Hong Kong only has one season: hot. So, let us teleport ourselves to late September in Canada, or November in northern Japan. Leaves are turning yellow and red, and fallen leaves cover the forest floor. It is long past flowering season. The days are getting much shorter, and temperatures drop. For the author of the middle portion of the Book of Isaiah, this would have signified the arrival of a season of desolation, cold, and darkness.

If you have been keeping up with the news, the Church of England has just approved a new 'Festival of Creation in Christ', to be celebrated annually on the first Sunday in September. The festival recognises the placing of Christ's role in creation at the very centre: creation made through Christ, held together in Christ, and destined for renewal in Christ. As with the late Pope Francis's groundbreaking encyclical '*Laudato Si'*, it reminds us that our response to climate and environmental crises must be drawn from the faith, life, and worship of the Church. And why September, you might ask? The Eastern Orthodox Christians, from whom this festival originated, chose this time of year. September is the beginning of harvest season in temperate climates. Alongside the joy of harvest, the countryside gradually turns brown and falls away, awaiting the arrival of winter. Yet this is all a part of the earthly cycle. 'There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant, and a time to uproot', says Ecclesiastes.

Yet this is creation as God intended it. Creation is not static: it grows, flourishes, decays, dies, and begins again. The falling leaf is no less a part of God's creation than the flower that preceded it. 'Dust to dust' is not just a warning of our mortality; it is a reminder of our place within the created order. We are creatures, not creators, and creation does not belong to us. It is God's gift, entrusted to our care. And yet, as Christians, this is not the end of the story. The leaves fall, the flowers fade, and the grass withers, but creation itself is not destined for destruction. As St Paul writes, the whole creation groans as it awaits its liberation through Christ. The Christian hope is therefore not for an escape from creation, but for its renewal.

Cathedral News

Text by / **DR ALEX LI**
Director of SJC Counselling Service



On 9 July, we had the pleasure of welcoming Mr Timothy MA (MH, JP) to our office to learn more about our services. We first met at the ETNet Health Partnership Awards 2025, where he presented us with the award for 'Outstanding Non-Profit Mental Health Counselling Service'.

Timothy is a registered social worker who has devoted his life to serving the local community. As the Founding Executive Director of the Senior Citizen Home Safety Association, he has played a key role in developing the Care-on-Call service, which is widely used in the homes of elderly people across Hong Kong.

It was truly inspiring to meet Timothy and learn more about his long-standing commitment to community care. We very much valued the opportunity to speak with him and discuss how we can work together to better support the mental health of our Hong Kong community!

Outreach Sunday 2026

Text by / **JOHANNIE TONG**
Community Relations Officer of MFMW

On 14 June, MFMW participated in St John's Cathedral Outreach Sunday. We showcased how MFMW serves migrant domestic workers in our everyday work.

Our outreach booth engaged audiences with a culturally interactive game that explored migrant domestic workers' experiences in Hong Kong, and invited the public to take pictures with a photo frame decorated with the theme promoting mutual understanding and respect. We also distributed pamphlets on caregiver stress and practical tips for mental health and wellbeing, inviting participants to learn more about our work and how to support it.



We express heartfelt gratitude to St John's Cathedral for its steadfast support as we celebrate 45 years of service and empowerment for Hong Kong's caregivers, and for promoting harmony within Hong Kong households.



Council Away Day

Text by / **FRANK LANG**
Council Member

On a sunny Saturday in September, the Cathedral Council gathered at the Shek O Retreat Centre for its annual Away Day. Rather than focusing on strategy, as in some previous years, we spent the day in reflection, guided by Ms Mohan Lam, a facilitator trained in Ignatian spirituality. Our theme was '*Listening is the First Act of Love*'.

Set in tranquil Shek O, away from the pace and noise of city life, we were encouraged to pause and listen to God, to our own hearts, and to one another. Through guided reflection, a soundscape exercise, silence, and sharing, we considered how haste, assumptions, and preoccupations can prevent us from truly hearing.

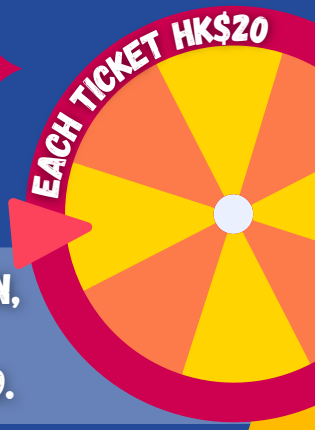
Before the retreat, some of us wondered whether the day might be better spent discussing the Cathedral's future and wider mission. Yet the retreat proved unexpectedly refreshing and energising. The quiet gave us space to become more aware of God's presence and of what was stirring within us. Listening to one another without interruption or debate deepened our fellowship.

We concluded with the Eucharist, grateful for a time of peace, prayer, and renewal, and reminded that wise discernment begins not only with speaking and planning, but with attentive listening.



Michaelmas Fair 2026

GRAND RAFFLE



THE RAFFLE TICKETS' BENEFICIARIES ARE: CHRISTIAN ACTION, ST. JAMES' SETTLEMENT, HOME OF LOVING FAITHFULNESS AND HONG KONG SHENG KUNG HUI WELFARE COUNCIL LIMITED.

Date of Sale: 7th September 2026 - 24th October 2026 | Date of Raffle Draw: Saturday, 24th October 2026

PRIZE	RAFFLE PRIZE	DONOR	WORTH
Grand prize	Four-Course Dinner for Six People with One Bottle of Champagne, One Bottle of White Wine and One Bottle of Red Wine	Crown Wine Cellars	HK$12,000
2nd	Travel Coupon by Hong Kong Four Seas Tours Limited	Hop Yuen Charitable Foundation Limited	HK$10,000
3rd	G2000 Coupon	G2000	HK$10,000
4th	Fortress Vouchers	Mr James Choo	HK$6,000
5th	Fortress Vouchers	Mr Douglas Lam	HK$6,000
6th	Apple iPhone 17e 256GB - Soft Pink	Mr Peter Fung	HK$5,099
7th	SONY Camera ZV-1 M2	Ms Yvette Li	HK$5,000
8th	SONY Gift Coupon	Anonymous	HK$5,000
9th	Sogo Vouchers	Mr Stanley Leung	HK$5,000
10th	Apple iPad Wi-Fi 128GB - Yellow	Mrs Grace Fung	HK$3,599
11th	City Super Voucher	Mr Patrick Fung	HK$3,000
12th	City Super Voucher	Mr Jason Wong	HK$3,000
13th	Gift Coupon	Bed & Bath	HK$2,500
14th - 19th	Six Cans of South African Abalone	Mr Kenny Cheng	HK$2,400
20th	Four Adult Day Admission Tickets	Ocean Park	HK$2,152
21st	Sogo Vouchers	Ms Roselin Yuen	HK$2,000
22nd	City'super Vouchers	Mr Francis Lam	HK$2,000
23rd	Yata Vouchers	Ms Doria Tam	HK$2,000
24th - 25th	Apple Watch SE3	Mr Thomas Swain	HK$1,999
26th	Dining Voucher for Two Persons at Zoku (Japanese Restaurant)	The Hari Hong Kong	HK$1,954
27th - 28th	Samsung Galaxy A17 5G 128GB	Ms Julianna Doe	HK$1,698
29th	Dining Voucher for Two Persons at Lucciola (Italian Restaurant)	The Hari Hong Kong	HK$1,514
30th - 31st	Six Bottles of White Wine	Mrs Natalie Law	HK$1,500
32nd	Oliver's The Delicatessen Vouchers	Dr Andrew Lim	HK$1,500
33rd	Six Bottles of PNKIDS Super Tummy	Mrs Natalie Law	HK$1,494
34th	Gift Voucher for a Tiffin Buffet Lunch for Two Persons	Grand Hyatt Hong Kong	HK$1,338
35th	Honor X6d 5G 128GB	Ms Julianna Doe	HK$1,199
36th	Six Bottles of Wine	Hong Kong Club	HK$900
37th - 38th	Able Carry Core Sling Bag	Julian and Lulu Chow	HK$700
39th - 40th	Able Carry Core Sling Bag Mini	Julian and Lulu Chow	HK$530
41st	Market Place Vouchers	Ms Margaret Sang	HK$500
42nd-51st	SJC Cathedral Bookstore Gift Certificates	Mr Martin Matsui	HK$250

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Major Services at St John's & Daughter Churches

St John's Cathedral

4-8 Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong

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1 NOV	***All Saints' Sunday*** *9.00am Sung Eucharist*
2 NOV	***All Souls' Day*** *7.30pm Requiem Eucharist*
8 NOV	***Remembrance Sunday*** *5.00pm Eucharist of Peace & Reconciliation*

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

Dean

The Very Revd Kwok-keung Chan
(Acting Priest-in-Charge of Emmanuel Church)

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The Revd Canon Peter Koon
The Revd Sharon Langbis
The Revd Robert Martin CMP
The Revd Francis Yu
The Revd Drew Courtright
(Chaplain and Priest-in-Charge of Discovery Bay Church)
The Revd Will Newman
(Chaplain and Priest-in-Charge of St Stephen's Chapel)

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The Revd Polly Wong Heung-fong

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