

In Touch

The Cathedral Magazine - Autumn Edition

ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL HONG KONG

Diocese of Hong Kong Island Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui

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St John's Cathedral

4-8 Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong

Tel: (+852) 2523 4157

Fax: (+852) 2521 7830

Email: general@stjohnscathedral.org.hk

Website: www.stjohnscathedral.org.hk

WORSHIP GOES ON...



**'Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering,
for he who has promised is faithful.' – Hebrews 10:23**

In Touch

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Be Friends with the Environment

A little step by all of us can make a sea change to our environment. We invite our readers to join us in protecting the environment. There are two ways to get involved:

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THE DEAN'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

Under normal circumstances, September is a busy month. Summer holidays would have just finished. Students would have recently returned to school, and working people would have resumed the busyness of life. At St John's, this is the month during which we usually commission the choirs, the servers, and the Sunday School, and prepare for the Michaelmas Fair that is scheduled for October. This year, it is different. None of these events can happen due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been eight months now, and yet the world is still ravaged by the virus. All our lives have been impacted, some tragically and more severely than others, and our patience is wearing thin.

The scripture says 'Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer' (Romans 12:12). It is easier to say than to do when the situation drags on and on! How do we learn to be more patient?

One way to expand our patience is to believe that God is in control of all things. We must trust his providence and provision, even in times of difficulty. Instead of fighting the situation, grumbling about it and resisting it, like the Israelites did in the wilderness, we should embrace it. Ask God, 'What do you want me to learn from this?' When we ponder on this enough, we will gradually see there are many silver linings to the dark clouds. A parishioner told me that while she has been staying at home due to social distancing, she has spent a lot more time praying and reading the Bible. Out of that, she has experienced the love of God in a different way. I have also seen many families become closer to each other as they are at home more than usual. Others have developed new interests, skills and hobbies because of the lockdown. In the midst of a trying time, God has blessed us in many ways.

While we wait patiently for things to turn for the better, it is also important to prevent ourselves from becoming restless. The more restless we are, the more impatient we will be. Instead, we should keep ourselves busy doing God's work, and searching for opportunities to serve others with love and care. By doing so, we occupy our minds and time with worthy causes.

Finally, patience is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5). It is by walking closely with God that our holy patience will grow. God himself is a patient God. When we draw near to him, we have patience and hope in times of tribulation. We begin to see suffering through the eyes of the crucifying Jesus, and experience adversity in life very differently.

The pandemic will one day pass! May God grant us faith, hope, and patience during this time so that we may rise up stronger than before. Keep well and keep safe. God bless you all.

Dean Matthias +



親愛的弟兄姊妹：

一般情況下，九月是一個繁忙的月份。暑假剛剛結束，學生們要重返學校，而上班族也回歸忙碌的生活。在聖約翰座堂，我們在這個月份通常會為詩班、侍從團及主日學等事工舉行差遣禮，並為於十月舉行的座堂賣物會做準備。今年，情況有所不同。因為新冠肺炎疫情的關係，這些都不會發生。疫情爆發至今已八個月，新型冠狀病毒仍然肆虐全球，我們的生活都受到影響，有些人不幸地受到比其他人更為沈重的打擊，而我們也漸漸失去耐性。

聖經說：「在盼望中要喜樂；在患難中要忍耐；禱告要恆切。」（羅馬書12：12）在情況持續惡化的時候，道理往往變得說易行難！我們如何學會變得更有耐心？

相信上帝掌管萬有，是加強我們耐性的一種方法。即使在艱難時期，我們也必須相信祂的旨意和供應。與其抱怨和抵抗逆境，好像以色列人在曠野那樣，不如選擇接受和積極面對。求問上帝：「祢要讓我從中學會甚麼？」深思過後，我們會逐漸看到烏雲邊的亮光。一位教友告訴我，由於要保持社交距離，她一直待在家裡，且花了很多時間祈禱和閱讀聖經，從中她對上帝的愛有著不一樣的體驗。我又看到許多家庭關係變得更加親密，因為家人聚在家裡的時間比以前更多。其他人由於要留在家中而發掘出新的興趣、技能和愛好。在備受考驗的時候，上帝以許多方式祝福我們。

我們在耐心等待疫情好轉的同時，避免自己變得不安也非常重要。我們越不安便越容易失去耐性。相反，我們應該努力為上帝作工，尋找機會以愛心和關懷服務他人，從而將我們的心思和時間投放在有意義的事情上。

忍耐是聖靈的果子（加拉太書5章）。我們應與上帝緊密同行，以培育自己屬靈的耐性。上帝是滿有耐心的神。當我們親近祂的時候，便會得到在患難中所需要的耐心和盼望。我們會從十字架上耶穌的視角去看待苦難，並對生命中逆境有著不一樣的經驗。

疫情總有一天會過去。願上帝賜給我們在這段時間內應有的信心，盼望和耐性，使我們能更堅強地面對生活。請保重身體，願上帝祝福大家！

座堂主任牧師
謝子和 謹啟



Lead Story

Services in the Time of COVID-19

TEXT BY / ANDREW ASHLEY

The working title for this article was 'Back to Church'. The intention was to celebrate our joyful return to services in the Cathedral, starting on 1st June, with a glorious Sung Eucharist for the Feast of the Visitation. But, like so much else in this extraordinary year, the planned article was overtaken by events. Back to church lasted just six weeks before all public worship was once again suspended until further notice.

Don't Stop the Music

One of the ironies of the current situation is that Director of Music Felix Yeung has never had so many choristers available, thanks to travel restrictions – but he can't use them. At the beginning of the first suspension, Felix recalls, there were over 40 choristers in the chancel. 'But we were supposed to be in lockdown. That didn't look good!' The numbers were quickly – and drastically – reduced.

After three months of suspension, the choir was delighted to be singing together once more. But social distancing was strictly enforced, so the stalls looked like a chequerboard, with every

second seat unoccupied. Half the choir were relocated to seats by the high altar. 'They could still be heard throughout the Cathedral,' says Felix, 'but it's much more difficult for the choristers when they're so far away from the conductor.'

Flexibility has been a must for everyone working on services during suspension and social distancing. 'I think I've actually changed my job,' says Felix. 'I'm now the Director of Audio Visual Productions.' He has learned a great deal in this role. 'I only realised during the second suspension that the Cathedral audio system can actually do a lot more than we thought.' When choristers are away from their usual stalls, they can wire their own microphones into the system, significantly enhancing the sound quality.

Masks are a potential lifesaver but they don't make the choir's work any easier. As Wendy says, 'It's bad enough talking with a mask on, but singing...' Her real bugbear was the tiny filaments that detach themselves from masks during vigorous singing. 'By the end of each service they were in my mouth, my nose... all over the place. I couldn't wait to blow my nose!'



Cathedral Choir singing at the Sung Eucharist for the Feast of the Visitation in a social distancing manner

The Sung Eucharist for the Feast of the Visitation on 1st June marked the resumption of public worship which was again suspended in July

Fellow chorister John Li came to the rescue with a copious supply of plastic frames that fit under a mask and keep it away from the wearer's mouth. But even an effective solution can cause a new problem. When a mask is removed so the chorister can receive communion, the plastic frame clatters to the floor at a particularly quiet moment of the service. Wendy admits that 'There's a bit of a scramble after the Anthem, when we all turn away from the cameras, whip our masks down, and slide the plastic frames into our cassock pockets'. All done very discreetly, of course.

Carry On Serving

Looking back at Holy Week and Easter, Head Server James Choo still seems surprised by how the servers managed. 'Because of COVID-19, we had to do everything - foot washing, the Good Friday liturgy, the Easter Vigil... with a team of just four servers. That was definitely a first for us!'

But whatever restrictions have been placed upon services, the servers have remained determined to uphold their usual high standards. Under the arrangements in force during the second suspension, there is just one server to do everything that a whole team would have done previously. 'That means we're a bit busy,' says long time server Marques Ng, with a certain understatement. He adds that 'We try to preserve as much as we can, even though we often have to change plans very quickly.'

The brief back to church period didn't necessarily make things easier. The smooth running of a service depends on constant communication between the servers, but that's not always possible under COVID. Seats have been moved apart, so the servers are much further from each and the mandatory masks mean that it's impossible to read facial expressions.

As both a server and a teacher of nursing, Marques has been particularly well placed to help with infection control measures. 'We had to educate people to do things properly,' he says, and early in the COVID saga, he wrote and narrated a video about how to maintain high levels of hygiene and avoid infection. Originally intended for St John's, the video has been widely

used throughout the province.

Beacons of Hope

There was a familiar sight in the chancel on 24th May, Asia Sunday, just before the first suspension ended. RTHK technicians were working with our commentator Aron Yuen on broadcasting the 9.00am Sung Eucharist. 'The RTHK guys were quite surprised that we were so insistent on business as usual,' says Aron. 'But I think it was reassuring for everyone following the service to see that we could still do the broadcast, despite the unusual circumstances.'

The organ recital on Sunday 2nd August was not only the first for Jonathan Yip in his new role as Cathedral Organist, but also St John's first ever online recital. It was a considerable success. The performance was greatly enhanced because Jonathan could play in the middle of the chancel, rather than tucked away under the speakers, where it's difficult for the organist to hear what he's actually playing. There was an impressive response: by the following day, there had been over 600 views. Regular organ recitals have never attracted such crowds!

So not everything about our current predicament is negative. As so often, what seems like a problem reveals itself as an opportunity. Let's hope and pray that we can return to some semblance of normality before too long.



St John's first ever online recital live webcast on YouTube on 2nd August

My First Experience Celebrating Benediction



TEXT BY / THE REVEREND AMOS POON
PHOTOS BY / MICHAEL LUU

“The feast emphasises the real presence of Christ in the consecrated bread and wine.”



‘Benediction’, or in full, Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament, is a devotional ceremony which has been celebrated in the Christian faith for more than a few centuries. By tradition, it is celebrated on the Feast of Corpus Christi. This year, Corpus Christi was observed on 14th June. As I was the celebrant of the anticipated service on Saturday night, I had the chance to do Benediction. It was the first time I had celebrated Benediction, and it was an exceptional experience for me.

The Feast of Corpus Christi, or the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, can be traced back to the 13th century. St Thomas Aquinas, the Doctor of the Church, proposed to the Pope to establish a feast that solely focused on the Eucharist. The name ‘Corpus Christi’ is a Latin phrase that means the ‘body of Christ’. Therefore, the feast emphasises the real presence of Christ in the consecrated bread and wine. The feast is commonly celebrated on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, or on the Sunday after. Apart from the Eucharist, many countries parade the consecrated bread throughout the city. In one of the photos, the priest holds up a monstrance in which the consecrated host is put inside on display. The parade or procession might include children dressed up in white, while girls would wear a wreath on their heads. That is why the feast is also called the Day of Wreath. As well, the procession is for Christians to show a public witness of their faith and a veneration to the Body of Christ.

In some traditions, rather than a public procession, the service will conclude with simple Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction. The Exposition is to place the Host in a monstrance set upon the altar for viewing. After the Exposition, there is Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament. Upon holding up the monstrance, the priest will wear a humeral veil, which is a piece of cloth draped over the shoulder. The priest is to hold the monstrance without touching it with his or her bare hands. This is a mark of respect. The name humeral veil is given because it covers the humerus of the person wearing it. Theologically speaking, the presence of the veil indicates that it is Jesus, (present in the Host), who blesses the people, and not



Wearing a humeral veil, the priest is to hold the monstrance without touching it with his or her bare hands. This is a mark of respect.

the minister. At Benediction, the Priest holds up the Blessed Sacrament, faces the people, and uses the monstrance to draw a cross from top to bottom, left to right. The Laudes Divinae (Divine Praises) is usually sung or recited during or after the Exposition. This is a set of prayers of blessing, from Blessed be God, Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, to Blessed be God in His Angels and in His Saints.

In the Anglican sacramental theology, we believe in the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. The belief of real presence focuses on the What instead of How. No matter whether you believe in the transubstantiation or consubstantiation of the Host, or simply the pneumatic presence of the body and blood of Christ in the bread and wine, the one thing that is certain is the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. Jesus, during his last supper, told his disciples, ‘Take, eat; this is my body, Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant.’ Therefore, when the Host is held up by the priest after the final Amen of the Eucharistic prayer, it is the Body and Blood of Christ.

This experience of celebrating Corpus Christi with Benediction was totally fresh for me. It was stunning, as the celebrant is dressed with cope as well as the humeral veil, with incense and monstrance and bells ringing. More importantly, the Feast reminded me what is the centre of our ministry. As a priest, we have the privilege to stand at the altar, to say the eucharistic prayer with the institution narratives, to preach the word of God, and to perform God’s blessing and absolution. However, Benediction and the Feast of Corpus Christi reminds us that the centre of our ministry is always Jesus Christ our Lord. It is his presence in our worship which makes our praises worthwhile; and it is his presence in our life that makes our life meaningful. Jesus is the true word of God, and he is the true bread of life. Only through his presence will our life be blessed. As priests, our mission is to hold up Jesus Christ, let His life be manifested, and let His presence be a blessing to his people and to the world.



The Man behind the Organ

Peter Yue

INTERVIEW BY / WENDY NESBITT
PHOTOS BY / MICHAEL LUU & THOMAS LI



When did you first start coming to the Cathedral and who encouraged you to attend?

I started to take piano lessons at the age of seven. When I was a student at St Paul's College, I was assigned by the music teacher, Mr Moses Wu, to assist playing the piano for the morning assembly as there were only a few students taking private piano lessons at that time. Later, Mr Wu encouraged me to join the choir of St John's Cathedral in the mid-1960s as he was acquainted with the Organist and Choirmistress of the Cathedral, Mrs Cecilia Kwok. Since joining the Choir, I was much attracted by the magnificent sound of the organ, and was honoured to be mentored by Mrs Kwok, and was given preliminary lessons on the organ from her. She also encouraged me to consider music as a career.

You continued your studies in the England. Tell me about that.

In 1970, I entered the Royal Academy of Music in London, and first majored in piano. Then I did a double major in piano and organ. I also studied piano accompaniment and choral conducting.

After graduation in 1975, I stayed on in England, and taught music in Bedfordshire for two years. Hong Kong beckoned me back, and I returned in 1977.



What happened when you returned to Hong Kong?

I became a staff member of the newly established Music Office of the HK Government in 1978, and remained there until 1996. There I was involved in the teaching of music theory, aural training to the trainees who came to take lessons on Chinese and western instruments, and to accompany them in examinations and concerts, as well as training choirs. During these years, I rejoined the cathedral choir to sing tenor, assisted in playing the organ for services, and occasionally conducted the choir. I was also teaching privately. My organ students included Felix Yeung, who is now our Director of Music, and several of the present-day choir members. In March 1991, I succeeded Mrs Kwok as the Cathedral Organist.

Do you recall any memorable events that happened while you were the organist?

One of the greatest honours of my days at the Cathedral was playing for the funeral of His Excellency Sir Edward Youde, the Governor of HK from 1982-1986. It really was a sombre and memorable experience. Another occasion I remember was a very big society wedding. The bride was over an hour late, and some guests actually started to leave. I had to keep playing throughout as if I was giving an organ recital!

What does the future hold for Peter Yue?

I have retired from private teaching, but I am still singing in the choir. I am happy to assist with playing the organ when needed. I love to travel, usually with relatives. Of course, my travelling plan has been put on hold, due to the pandemic. Throughout my career, I have composed hymns, descants, and Anglican chants for use in the services, and I will continue to write in my leisure time.

“
I can never remember a time when Peter was not part of a rehearsal, service, or other special musical occasion at St John's. Other than the days when he was away on a holiday, Peter was always THERE.

Whether it was accompanying on the cathedral organ, or perched on a piano bench in one of the halls, we always knew that Peter would be patiently sitting there, waiting for us to find our music, stop talking, and pay attention to the maestro.

We all love to sing Peter's descants, and other music that he has composed. This will continue, as will his smiling face in the tenor section.

Wendy Nesbitt



UPDATES FROM DAUGHTER CHURCHES



Communing with nature: Discovery Bay Church's Wetland Park Day Trip

TEXT BY / THE REVEREND MARK ROGERS

What do you need to organise a church day trip in the time of COVID-19? Patience and luck!

Back in January Discovery Bay Church planned an outing to the Hong Kong Wetland Park in Tin Shui Wai. People signed up for the event, which was scheduled for 8th February. Then suddenly the pandemic came. The trip was rescheduled to 28th March. And again to 23rd May. And again to 11th July. At the fourth attempt, with most things open in Hong Kong in early July, we were able to go. At last!

So at 10.00am on Saturday 11th July, 39 people from the church boarded the bus to the Park.

Forty-five minutes later we arrived. Masks donned, we paid our admission fee and entered the Park. Although things had opened up in Hong Kong, there were very few people around.

The Park is comprised of a Visitor Centre with access to 60 hectares of protected wetland. Boardwalks take you into and over the wetland, and there are observation bird hides where you can do some birdwatching.

The grounds have a rich variety of tropical wetland flora and fauna, plus a healthy measure of insects, including mosquitos. Butterflies are common.

We wandered around the Park for a few hours under the intense burning midday sun and then had lunch back at the Visitor Centre.

At 3.00pm we boarded the bus to return to Discovery Bay.

The participants had a wonderful, fun and interesting day. We all appreciated a rare moment of communal activity in this year of social isolation.



Abigail & Bonnie and the huge lego Kingfisher



Jake looking cool in the bright sun

EMMANUEL UPDATE: Have stole – will travel!

TEXT BY / THE REVEREND ROBERT MARTIN CMP



Many of you will know that the Emmanuel community has been unable to use Béthanie Chapel for our Sunday worship since February. However, during the recent brief respite in the suspension of services, we were invited to celebrate an afternoon Eucharist for Emmanuel folk at St Stephen's, Stanley. This happened on two Sundays, 28th June & 5th July and it was such a delight to gather around the altar, as the Emmanuel community, in such a beautiful and historic building. Many thanks to Fr Will, Boris and Evelyne for their generous Stanley welcome!

Now that we are all back to online worship we have initiated a weekly Emmanuel Eucharist celebrated in the St Michael Chapel at the Cathedral and made available online each weekend. We have called it, rather tongue in cheek, 'Emmanuel: The Movie' and it has been both a challenge and an opportunity to learn new skills in online worship and communication. Many thanks to our recording team; Felix, Marques, Michael and Vicky for their help, encouragement and technical skill in making this possible.

Please keep us in your prayers.

Life in Lockdown

TEXT BY / THE REVEREND WILL NEWMAN

How can a congregation keep together through these months of coronavirus when services are limited to a tiny handful of people? Here are some of the things we've done to keep the community involved at St Stephen's Stanley.

- Church Services by Zoom have allowed people to watch and hear the service, with the chance to join in prayers and favourite hymns. Seeing and greeting each other on screen and exchanging the Peace creates a lovely spirit of community at times when we can't meet up in person.
- 'Jungle Attack!' Back in the Spring a socially distanced taskforce met weekly to hack down the tangle of jungle vines and creepers invading the slopes surrounding the Chapel.
- A Gardening Group then took over, planting flowers, bushes and trees to make the landscape beautiful again.
- Congregation members enjoyed a weekly evening Bible Quiz by Zoom, bringing laughter and fellowship.
- 'Following Jesus', a 6-week evening course, attracted people, both on the lovely vicarage veranda, (when restrictions were relaxed) and on Zoom.

So the virus has not only disrupted the life of the church and all our lives; it has also encouraged creative new ways of being church.



The memorial window in St Stephen's Chapel Stanley

30th August this year marks the 75th Anniversary of the Liberation of Stanley Internment Camp at the end of the Second World War. The memorial window in St Stephen's Chapel Stanley includes a picture of happy, smiling children. It's a copy of a photo taken on that day, when the war was over, and they and their parents were released from nearly 4 years of captivity. And the window is a reminder of the faith, hope and love which sustained them through dark times.

UPDATES FROM ST JOHN'S OUTREACH MINISTRIES



A Gift from God

TEXT BY / DR ELDA CHAN

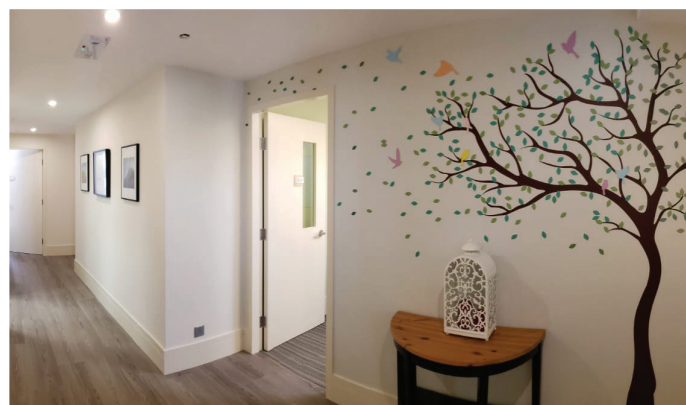
St John's Cathedral Counselling Service has been blessed by God with a new home. On 25th July 2020, the Counselling Service successfully moved into our new office at 7/F, Wings Building, 110-116 Queen's Road Central, Central. This new home offers a more accessible location and additional space for our service expansion.

Whilst it has been not easy to accomplish the renovation schedule under the COVID-19 restrictions, God has given us many angels who have tirelessly helped us make this new home possible and create this new space to do our outreach work with the community.

We now have expanded the number of counselling rooms in the new office. This enables us to have the capacity to meet the growing need for mental health services. Our new rooms allow us to serve a range of clientele from children to adolescents and adults, couples and families. Some of the rooms are specifically designed for specific needs and therapy, such as art therapy, family therapy, psycho educational assessment and relationship therapy.

We will be able to increase our capacity to take on master level and doctoral level trainees in the Counselling and Psychology fields, as we have been providing internship for these students and have trained a significant number of the current practitioners practising today.

Excitingly, we will now also have a group room which offers us the potential for group therapy, psycho educational talks, professional training and staff development. This will expand



upon the work we have developed in the past year, such as the Dialectical Behaviour Therapy Skills Training group, Mental Health Support groups and Parent Effectiveness Training groups. We also hope to invite guest speakers to conduct workshops and provide training opportunities to enhance the skills for our helping profession so that we are integrating and updated on best practices.

In the future, we will continue to serve God through providing professional mental health services for the Hong Kong community. If you would like to understand our services and how we strive towards our Mission statement, work with a counsellor, or make a donation, please contact Dr Elda Chan at **2525 7207** or email elda.chan@sjcshk.com.

Life Begins with Support

St John's Cathedral Counselling Service Launches Support Groups Programme

TEXT BY / KIMBERLY HO

At St John's Cathedral's Outreach Sunday in autumn 2019, a group of dedicated parishioners registered to volunteer their services to support mental health support groups, a new initiative offered by St John's Cathedral Counselling Service. Conceived as an opportunity to broaden the services offered to Counselling Service clients, the support groups serve as a resource to clients who could benefit from support beyond individual counselling.

Still a relatively novel concept in Hong Kong, support groups provide a safe space for individuals to receive encouragement, share personal experiences and feelings, improve skills to cope with challenges, participate in emotional wellness activities and engage in open discussions. Benefits to participants include helping them 1) feel less lonely, isolated or judged, 2) stay motivated to manage ongoing challenges, 3) gain a sense of empowerment and hope, and 4) connect with a community around a common experience and purpose.

Eleven volunteer facilitators underwent a series of training sessions in December 2019 and January 2020. As the pandemic intensified and social distancing measures were enforced, the start dates of the support groups were delayed to May, when an English-speaking support group was launched and successfully completed all eight sessions on consecutive Thursday evenings. The group gathered to engage on topics including forgiveness, emotional awareness, shame/guilt/vulnerability, anger management and rejection. Positive aspects of the group noted by participants included 'safe environment', 'nonjudgmental and positive attitude of participants and facilitators', 'opportunity to openly share' and 'new perspectives to look at situations'. A Cantonese-speaking group started its

initial session in late June. Due to increased restrictions on social distancing, the Cantonese group had to take a hiatus after three sessions, and is in the process of moving its sessions to an online format. Kimberly Ho, coordinator for the support groups, remarked, 'The facilitators have been gracious and enthusiastic at every stage in making this initiative possible, and committed to building a community of safety and learning for all.'

Dr Elda Chan, Director of St John's Cathedral Counselling Service, said, 'Through the support groups, we are able to expand our offerings to the community and clients we serve. We are grateful that a committed group of St John's parishioners and volunteers so willingly partnered with us on this initiative, and look forward to continuing to offer to the community, professional, relevant and timely resources to support those experiencing mental health challenges.'

Following this positive and enthusiastic response from participants, the Counselling Service is planning additional support groups, including men's and women's groups and others as indicated by community need. New groups are being birthed! A support group targeting young adults (university students and recent graduates) which will be led by volunteer young adult facilitators is currently being promoted with a view toward launching in mid to late August.

If you would like to be involved in future support groups, whether as a participant or potential volunteer facilitator, please reach out to Dr Elda Chan at elda.chan@sjcshk.com or Ms Kimberly Ho at kimh@sjcshk.com.





On Palm Sunday this year, Father Robert did something that he has probably never done before in the run up to Holy Week: he offered words of comfort via an online Message of Hope.

In the middle of what was rapidly becoming a global health crisis, Father Robert reminded us that Holy Week, as a time for walking the Way of the Cross, was also a time for giving new life through Christ. With reports of the virus spreading further around the world, this Message of Hope could not have been more relevant, timely or needed.

This Holy Week address was the first of the 'Message of Hope' series produced by St John's clergy. Since then, more than twenty messages have been broadcast. With weekly services cancelled and contact with our brothers and sisters in Christ reduced to zero in many cases, these broadcasts have been a source of great comfort to many.

Shot in a variety of locations – the St John's library, the chapels, offices and homes – the messages have focused on the positives, despite the great concerns that we have harboured during the past few months.

Certainly, we have lost a great deal during the pandemic. There has been no Holy Communion for weeks at a time and all extra-curricular activities have been curtailed. Yes, there have been online services, but we have missed the fellowship, the chat, the sharing and the joy of gathering. A huge part of our lives is unfilled right now.

But these messages of hope have brought us together, albeit remotely, and have reminded us that we are important to each other. As Father Will said in his 11th May Message of Hope, this time of being apart has sharpened our focus on the value of being together because we can't be together!

Social distancing, though, doesn't mean we are spiritually distant. In fact, we are brought together through the Bible. Mother Sharon reminded us in her address on 24th July that the Bible is indispensable for many during this period of uncertainty. For example, despite feeling useless, depressed, and hopeless, Mother Sharon tells us, Jeremiah never gave up. He did his job, prompting the people to return to the Lord and hold on to God's promises. 'For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future' (*Jeremiah 29:11*), she said. Dean Matthias, in his talk on 30th July, also enthused about Bible reading, advising us to take care and time to understand verses and passages. Read slowly, ponder meaning, re-read, reflect, and each time allow silence to fall.

'Spend more time with God through reading the Bible and praying, and allow him to comfort and strengthen you,' The Dean said.

We hope that life will return to normal soon and we can meet again at St John's. In the meantime, there is a regular Message of Hope, and so we need not be apart.

Find out more



Recap of Messages of Hope with summary/transcript available on Cathedral website

Scan this QR code for the Message of Hope Playlist on YouTube



St John's Cathedral 170th Anniversary Photobook

TEXT BY / RITA CHAN

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Brief History of The Cathedral 教堂簡史

Founded in 1849, St John's Cathedral is the oldest neo-gothic cathedral in East Asia and China's oldest surviving Anglican church still in operation. In its early decades it was a centre of colonial life in Hong Kong. More recently, it has opened itself widely to other communities in Hong Kong, becoming a truly international church with services held in several languages.

聖約翰座堂於1849年，是東亞最古老的哥特式大教堂，也是中國保存最悠久的聖公會教堂。建堂初期，座堂曾作為香港殖民地社會的中心，近年更積極歡迎其他不同族裔、不同語言背景的人士，真正成為一座國際化的教堂。

Photo: Peter 廖國榮
John's Free Way Secondary School
聖約翰座堂攝



The idea of producing an anniversary photo book, (an artistic offering for the Cathedral), was proposed in a planning meeting three years ago. It was driven by a sense of appreciation and gratitude. The book was to be a photo-based publication highlighting a year's worth of memorable moments at the Cathedral, seen through the eyes of future generations. Their tireless efforts have significantly contributed to the creation of a visual record of our celebration.

Whilst attending their annual school services at the Cathedral, the students would have seen some elements inside the Cathedral which captivated their imaginations, and allowed them to appreciate all the blessings in their lives. The idea of a photo book came to me during one of these school services, while on a cool and breezy morning I was setting up the Jesse tree in the Quiet Chapel. The synchrony of the singing, and the melody of John Rutter's beautiful piece 'The Lord Bless You And Keep You' warmly touched my soul.

It was a blessing, when three years ago at the Cathedral, I was introduced to a professional photographer while attending the Celebrating Hong Kong Service. As the chief photographer of a local sport magazine and a photography tutor, he accepted my invitation and shared with me his vision for facilitating the



youth groups. With the support from the school principals, 20 students from five secondary schools volunteered to help.

In the three lectures on photography theories and five photoshoot sessions, I was inspired by God's gracious creation; – from the exterior of the Cathedral to the inner thoughts of the student photographers; from participating solely in the summer project to overwhelmingly anticipating the finished work; and for myself, from just merely completing the task to experiencing deeply **His comfort, His support** and **His merciful love**.

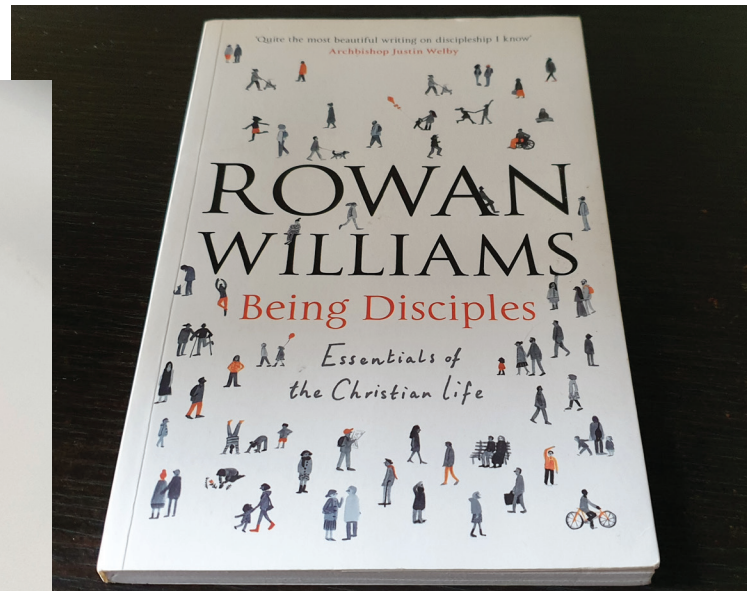
I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go.

– Genesis 28:15

Being Disciples: Essentials of the Christian Life

– Rowan Williams

TEXT BY / THE REVEREND WILL NEWMAN



Rowan Williams' 'Being Disciples' is available from the Cathedral Bookstore in both Chinese and English.

How to live a Christian Life? In this slim book of 86 pages, the former Archbishop of Canterbury offers a treasury of spiritual insights and wisdom.

In the middle of what was rapidly becoming a global health crisis, Being a disciple, says Rowan, is about how we live. Not about coming to church once a week, nor noting down ideas and going away to think about them. It's about being consistently in Christ's company; by seeking out the company of other servants of Christ, seeking Christ in scripture, seeking the company of Christ in prayer; and letting Christ's action come through us as the Father's act comes through him. You, the disciple, learn to be a place in the world where the act of God can come alive.

In the beautiful little chapter titled 'Forgiveness', Rowan talks of 'The Bread of Forgiveness', so that forgiveness becomes a way that we nourish each other. The willingness to forgive and to be forgiven are both marks of a humanity touched by God.

'Life in the Spirit' – or Spirituality – is related to St Paul's wonderful list of the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians chapter 5: Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. When Paul talks about this, he's not talking about activities we may think of as spiritual, such as prayer or meditation, but about virtues, human goodness, ordinary kindness and practical generosity.

'Faith in Society' suggests two principles of Christian faith as the basis for a moral society: We are each of equal value to God – rich or poor, on our deathbed, or a baby who will live for 90 years. And we are all dependent on each other: everyone is able to give to others, to have the dignity of being a giver. 'Being disciples means being called to see others, especially others in great need, from the perspective of an eternal and unalterable love. I hope and pray that we can proclaim this vision as the firmest possible ground for hope in all human societies.' There's a manifesto for the Church in Hong Kong and worldwide.

Reading this book is like the parable of the person who finds treasure in a field. Many fine pearls are hidden here, waiting for you to find them.



1

Portraits of Trees of Hong Kong and Southern China

Hong Kong possesses an impressively diverse tree flora with 390 native species. This book celebrates the incredible diversity, beauty and biology of the territory's tree species, highlighting over 100 important ones that are individually illustrated in exquisitely detailed water colour paintings by Sally Grace Bunker, an acclaimed botanical artist. The illustrations are accompanied by text that teases out a diversity of associated narratives for each species, ranging from the history of global exploration and scientific discoveries, the ecology and biology of each species, and the various ways in which they have been utilised, with their cultural associations.

The Christmas Journey Storybook 追蹤耶穌降生之旅

2

This bilingual storybook is a good resource for parents and Sunday School teachers to share bible stories with children in an interactive manner.

《追蹤耶穌降生之旅》是一本中英對照的立體聖經故事書，集玩樂與學習於一身，是家長和主日學導師陪伴孩子讀經的有趣教材。書中附有6個大型彈出式戲劇場景，伴隨耶穌出生的細節帶出六個不同場景，引導孩子在翻開的大型場景中經歷耶穌降生的重大事蹟。孩子可同時配合25個立體人物模型，與家長、老師和其他小朋友一同發揮想像力，選取人物角色，在不同場景中自由演出變身成為馬利亞和約瑟，結伴追蹤耶穌降生之旅。此外，書末會重溫故事內一些人物、物件的介紹，作為延伸的資料補充，孩子從中可以消化故事內容，同時鞏固學習生字記憶，豐富這趟奇妙的聖經旅程！



Neckties

3: Doves & Crosses

4: Soar on Wings Like Eagle

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

Forthcoming Services at St John's & Daughter Churches

SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER 2020



St John's Cathedral

4-8 Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong
Tel: 2523 4157
www.stjohnscathedral.org.hk

14th September (Monday) Holy Cross Day

7.30PM Sung Eucharist

20th September (Sunday) St John's Cathedral Dedication Festival

9.00AM Sung Eucharist
5.00PM Choral Evensong

29th September (Tuesday) St Michael and All Angels

7.30PM Sung Eucharist

3rd October (Saturday)

3.00PM Consecration of Dean
Matthias Der as Bishop
Co-adjutor

18th October (Sunday) Luke the Evangelist

9.00AM Sung Eucharist

2nd November (Monday) Commemoration of the Faith- ful Departed (All Souls' Day)

7.30PM Orchestral Requiem

8th November (Sunday) Remembrance Sunday

9.00AM Sung Eucharist

22nd November (Sunday) Christ the King

5.00PM Baptism & Confirmation
Service

29th November (Sunday) First Sunday of Advent

5.00PM Advent Carol Service

Emmanuel Church Béthanie Chapel 139 Pok Fu Lam Road, Pok Fu Lam

Tel: 2523 4157
Website: www.emmanuel.org.hk



Every Sunday

10.15AM Sung Eucharist

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

Tel: 2813 0408
Website: www.ststephen.org.hk



Every Sunday

10.00AM Sung Eucharist

Discovery Bay Church SKH Wei Lun Primary School, Lantau

Tel: 2987 4210
Website: www.discoverybaychurch.org.hk



Every Sunday

10.00AM Sung Eucharist

St John's Cathedral

4-8 Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong
Tel: (+852) 2523 4157
Fax: (+852) 2521 7830
Email: general@stjohnscathedral.org.hk
Website: www.stjohnscathedral.org.hk

Dean

The Very Revd Matthias Der

Cathedral Chaplains

The Revd Canon Dwight dela Torre

The Revd Canon Peter Koon

The Revd Sharon Langbis

The Revd Franklin Lee

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

The Revd Amos Poon

Cathedral Honorary Chaplain

The Revd Jenny Wong Nam
The Revd Dr Philip Wickeri

Executive Administrator

Viola Ip

Director of Music

Felix Yeung

Assistant Director of Music

Alan Tsang

Organist

Jonathan Yip

Communications Officer

Evelyn Chan

Verger

Ho Tat Hoi

Head Server

James Choo

Head Sidesman

Roger Cole

In Touch Editorial Team

Evelyn Chan - Editor
Stuart Wolfendale
John Twist
Wendy Nesbitt
Andrew Ashley
Michael Gibb

A Sunday in the Life of... Head Server

James
Choo

In conversation with Andrew Ashley

'Busy, busy' is James Choo's succinct response when asked about his typical Sunday. Hardly surprising, when he is actively involved in most of the day's services and responsible for a large team of servers.

Seeing James in action now, it is hard to believe that he wasn't an altar boy from his earliest days. But when he started serving at St John's, he insists, 'I didn't have a clue! I didn't even realise that we're supposed to wear black shoes under our cassocks. I started off wearing trainers!'

Asked how he became a server, James quotes John 15:16, 'You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you.' After being baptised at St John's in 2008, he felt called to serve the following year.

Training was mostly on the job. 'There's a strong bond between the servers,' says James. 'I was taught by my brothers and sisters.' He would come to church early on Sunday mornings for briefings and then put his learning into practice in that day's services. Much of his training was done discreetly during those services: 'I learned a lot from whispers and gestures from the experienced servers.'

James was clearly a quick learner. He was appointed head server by Dean Andrew in June 2011, just two years after hearing the call to serve. Now he is doing the training, unobtrusively mentoring a new generation of servers. James is a firm believer in the value of keeping calm, whatever the circumstances. 'If an acolyte is walking in the wrong direction, give a wonderful smile and gently correct them!'

There are many tasks to be done before and during each service. The chancel must be arranged, the altar prepared, candles lit, vestments laid out, and much more. Are the orders of service and readings correct? Are the chalices, ciboria and the elements ready for communion services?

'There's a lot of prep work,' says James, 'and I've learned from experience to keep checking.' Even though he strives to ensure that everyone knows what to do, there are many things that can go wrong. Perhaps the altar frontal isn't the correct liturgical



colour and must be changed. Has the music for the Gospel Acclamation been included with the Gospel?

There is often a last minute flurry of activity before a service starts. 'The clergy are busy people and they often get to church just in time to dress up!'

As for dealing with things that crop up during services, James refers to the hymns as a 'buffer zone'. 'When people are singing hymns, they tend not to look up so it's safe to do things then.' And any activity in the chancel should be done as slowly and smoothly as possible, so people don't notice what's happening.

Asked about what makes an effective server, James mentions the story of Mary and Martha. He aims to be as well prepared as possible beforehand so he can emulate Mary, and sit and listen during the service. It's noticeable that James doesn't use the word 'relax'. He's always alert, which is doubtless why the services at St John's progress so efficiently.