

Kowloon Union Church
"Where all are one"
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Secretary: Candy Lam
Social Ministry Worker: Katie Ho
Minister: Maggie Mathieson
Minister-in-charge: Phyllis Wong



Third Sunday after Epiphany
21 January 2024
Morning Worship at 10:30 a.m.

(*: Congregation stands)

APPROACH

PREPARATION SONG "Bless the Lord" – Composer: Taizé
*** CALL TO WORSHIP**
*** HYMN** "Gather Us In" – Composer: Marty Haugen
CALL TO CONFESSION
PRAYER OF CONFESSION
ALL RESPOND "Kyrie Eleison" (Lord, have mercy) – Trad. Orthodox
ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

THE WORD OF GOD

Lord, open our lips.
And our mouths shall show forth Your praise.
HYMN "In Great Thanksgiving" – Music: M L Solis; Words: M.M. Solis
SCRIPTURE READING
Your Word, O Lord, is a lamp to our feet.
A light to our path.
Psalm 1 (O.T.)
Luke 6: 20 - 31 (N.T.)
Lord, may Your Word live in us.
And bear much fruit for Your glory.
HYMN "Let There Be Love Shared Among Us" – Composer: Dave Bilbrough
FAMILY TALK
SERMON
*** AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

THE OFFERTORY

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH
PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE
KUC SINGERS "THE LORD'S PRAYER"
OFFERTORY
THE PEACE
*** HYMN** "God in Your Grace" – Music: Per Harling; Words: Shirley Murray
*** COMMISSION and BLESSING**

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

God does nothing except in response to believing prayer. – John Wesley

Please remember as you pray. . .

- Next week, on 24 January, is the International Day of Education. This year's theme is 'Learning for Lasting Peace', which is appropriate and timely amid ongoing wars and conflicts today. Education is a transformative process that empowers learners to gain essential knowledge, values, attitudes, skills, and behaviours, enabling them to serve as catalysts for peace in their communities. It is supposed to be a fundamental human right, but there are still many challenges to achieving universal education. About 244 million children and adolescents worldwide are out of school, and 617 million children and adolescents cannot read and do basic math. Let us pray for the world's leaders to prioritize education and work towards ensuring that every child has access to quality education. May education be a force for peace, justice, and sustainable development and empower learners to build a better future for themselves and their communities.
- Nigeria's President Bola Tinubu has pledged to tackle the increasing kidnappings for ransom by implementing a massive education initiative targeted at the nation's youth. Tinubu condemned the abductions as "disturbing, ungodly and sinister" and touted education as "the antidote to the troubles agitating the nation." According to a statement from a presidential spokesman, Nigeria's security forces are already battling jihadi rebels in the northeast in addition to armed groups that often carry out mass killings and abductions in remote communities across the northwest and central regions. Let us pray that the youth in Nigeria may be blessed with the resources and opportunities to receive a quality education. May they be empowered to learn and grow, and may their education lead to a brighter future and bring peace and stability to Nigeria and beyond.
- BBC News reported that 2023 was the hottest on record, with the increase in Earth's surface temperature nearly crossing the critical threshold of 1.5 degrees Celsius. Climate change intensified heatwaves. The record heat made life miserable and sometimes deadly in Europe, North America, China, and many other places last year. Scientists say a warming climate is also to blame for more extreme weather events, like the lengthy drought that devastated the Horn of Africa, the torrential downpours that wiped out dams and killed thousands in Libya, and the Canada wildfires that fouled the air from North America to Europe. For the first time, nations meeting for annual United Nations climate talks in December agreed that the world needs to transition away from the fossil fuels causing climate change, but they set no concrete requirements. Let us pray that world leaders take concrete actions to save our planet for future generations. May they prioritize the well-being of our planet and its inhabitants over short-term economic gains.
- According to Reuters, 43 prisoners remain at large after escaping prison in northern Ecuador. The inmates escaped a jail in Esmeraldas, a city close to the border with Colombia. After some 2,000 members of Ecuador's security forces conducted a search operation in the prison on Sunday, five prisoners were recaptured. The recent explosion of violence – including the storming by gunmen of a live TV news broadcast, explosions in several cities and the kidnapping of police officers – appears to be a response to President Daniel Noboa's plans to address Ecuador's severe security crisis. Let us pray for the safety of the people of Ecuador, for the

situation to be resolved as soon as possible, and that the problem of drug-related crimes and gang violence can be suppressed.

- Hong Kong stocks have taken a sustained tumble, sinking below the important psychological benchmark of 16,000 on Tuesday due to concerns about China's economy. All the major indexes have dived, and the mainland Chinese CSI 300 fell to an almost five-year low after China's fourth-quarter gross domestic product growth missed estimates. The economy had enjoyed an initial post-pandemic rebound but ran out of steam within months as a lack of confidence among households and businesses hit consumption. In light of these developments, let's hope that the Government of Hong Kong will take appropriate measures to address the deep-seated issues surrounding people's, especially international investors and business people's, waning confidence in the One Country Two Systems. Let us pray for the Government of Hong Kong to have the wisdom and courage to make the right decisions for the people of Hong Kong.

For the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

We lift up in prayer the churches and people of all faiths in Cyprus, Greece, and Turkiye.

We are **thankful** for:

- the 2,000-year presence and witness of the church in Asia Minor (now Türkiye [Turkey], Cyprus, and Greece) – the region in which St Paul and other apostles first planted the seeds of the Christian faith – and for how Greek culture influenced the early church
- the Church Fathers who came from this area, along with many men and women who were Christian martyrs, and where seven ecumenical councils were convened
- the pioneering work of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople in the quest for Christian unity and the protection of the environment
- those who have reached out to assist people who have fled to and through these lands.

We **pray** for:

- the healing of memories and wounds inflicted by early 20th century genocides of Armenian, Greek, and Assyrian communities, and for current tensions in these lands
- enhanced respect for all minority groups and their claims,
- those who work for justice and reconciliation
- the people who struggle because of economic and political crises in these countries
- more stable democratic governments that further the good of all.

For the Congregation

- Pray for those facing health challenges that require body strength restoration: Paul Wong, Kevin Ng, Revd Bud, Jeanette Lee, Hend, Ng Kam Lee, Raymond Lau, Joy Babasa, Julianne Long and John. We continue to remember our senior members and friends: Mrs Samuel and the mothers of Alex Melwani and June Tang. May God heal the sick and give strength to those caring for loved ones at home and in care facilities.

Announcements

Today - A warm welcome to all who join our worship this morning. Please stay and join the tea and coffee fellowship after the service.

Thank you, Katie Ho, for sharing the Word of God with us this morning.

Dates For Your Diaries:

English Service for Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Date: 23 January 2024 (Tue) **Time:** 8:00 pm

Venue: St. Mary's Church (5 Dyer Ave, Hung Hom)

Speaker: Revd Eden Fletcher (The Methodist Church, Hong Kong)

Theme: "You shall love the Lord your God and your neighbour as yourself."

Starting in February 2024

As part of the KUC centenary celebrations, the Christian Education Committee will launch a new study series entitled 'Discipleship: Then And Now'. Every 1st Sunday after worship in the Upper Fellowship Hall.



Human Café: Parenting for a Peaceful World

This interactive parenting workshop is suitable for all, not just people with kids. Join us to be inspired and refreshed.

Dates: 27 Jan, 2 Mar, 6 Apr

Time: 4-6 pm Venue: KUC Space

Scan the QR code for registration.

(A collaboration of EDiversity and the Peacemaking Ministry)



	TODAY 21 January	NEXT WEEK 28 January
Liturgist:	Maggie Mathieson	Phyllis Wong
Preacher:	Katie Ho	Maggie Mathieson
Pianist:	Lucy Lim	Joshua Pang
Lector:	Carol Yuen	Adam Snyder
Intercessory Prayers:	Paul Lucas	Judy Chan
Family Talk:	Chan Beng Seng	Tong Chong Sze
Greeter:	Edith San Juan Rachel Wangari	Journaliz Badon Kevin Ng
Offering Rota:	Anjenette Bolanos Ronald Chui	Daddy Susan Babasa
Counting Rota	Judy Chan Lucy Lim	Hope Antone Joram Calimutan
Sunday School Leaders:	Mary Adesina Jailyn Tomitis	Mary Adesina Jailyn Tomitis
I.T. Team:	Jen Pang Bervinder Kaur	Jen Pang Bervinder Kaur

Freewill offering last week: HK\$32,874.90-

Promissory offering last week: HK\$3,350-