

Kowloon Union Church
“Where all are one”
4 Jordan Road, Kowloon
Tel. 2367-2585 • kuc@kuc.hk
Secretary: Candy Lam
Social Ministry Worker: Katie Ho
Minister: Maggie Mathieson
Minister-in-charge: Phyllis Wong



Third Sunday in Advent
17 December 2023
Morning Worship at 10:30 a.m.

(*: Congregation stands)

APPROACH

ADVENT LITANY

PREPARATION SONG “Light of Hope” – Music: T Chan; Lyrics: M Mathieson

*** CALL TO WORSHIP**

*** HYMN** “Tell Out My Soul” – Music: W Greatorex, Words: T Dudley-Smith

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ALL RESPOND “Kyrie Eleison” – Composer: Traditional Orthodox

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

THE WORD OF GOD

Lord, open our lips.

And our mouths shall show forth Your praise.

HYMN “10,000 Reasons” – Composers: M Redman and J Myrin

SCRIPTURE READING

Your Word, O Lord, is a lamp to our feet.

A light to our path.

Luke 1: 43 - 55 (N.T.)

Luke 1: 59 - 79 (N.T.)

Lord, may Your Word live in us.

And bear much fruit for Your glory.

HYMN “I’ve Got That Joy Joy Joy” – Composer: G W Cooke

FAMILY TALK

SERMON “Reasons for Rejoicing”

*** AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

THE OFFERTORY

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD’S PRAYER

ALL RESPOND “Wait for The Lord”

– Composer: Taizé Community

OFFERTORY

THE PEACE

* **HYMN** “O Bless the God of Israel” – Music: S S Wesley; Lyrics: H H Hopson

* **COMMISSION and BLESSING**

Concerns of the Church

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

- Tomorrow is International Migrants Day. The world observes it to shed light on the profound impact of forced migration caused by conflict, insecurity, climate change, and war, which affects close to 300 million worldwide. These individuals, irrespective of their reasons for moving, often find themselves among the most vulnerable and marginalised in society, facing abuse, exploitation, limited access to essential services, and xenophobic attacks fueled by misinformation. Many migrant workers endure temporary, informal, or unprotected jobs, exposing them to insecurity, layoffs, and poor working conditions. Despite these challenges, migrants contribute significantly to prosperity, innovation, and sustainable development in countries of origin, transit, and destination. As we observe this International Migrants Day, let us pray for the well-being, safety, and resilience of migrants worldwide, and may collective efforts, guided by initiatives like the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), create a more humane and inclusive world for those on the move.
- Our hearts are heavy with concern for the people of Honduras as they grapple with the challenging aftermath of measures taken by President Xiomara Castro. Initially elected with promises of addressing corruption, human rights issues, and crime rates, her declaration of a state of exception in response to rising insecurity has raised alarms. The suspension of constitutional rights, including freedom of movement and protection against arbitrary detentions, has led to documented human rights violations and abuses. We pray for the people of Honduras, especially those facing injustice and hardship during these challenging times. May the spirit of Christmas inspire leaders to pursue strategies that prioritize human rights, justice, and sustainable solutions, bringing hope and peace to the troubled regions.
- We are deeply concerned about the situation in West and Central Africa, where, according to the UN, a record 49.5 million people are expected to go hungry next year due to a combination of conflict, climate change and high food prices. The region also faces multiple disease outbreaks, including measles, cholera, malaria, hepatitis, meningitis and dengue. Lord, we lift up the people of Africa to you. We pray for your mercy and grace to reach them in their time of need. We pray for an end to the hunger, conflict, disease and oppression that they face. We pray for your healing, protection and provision for them.
- Tensions escalate in the South China Sea as the Philippines considers expelling China's ambassador following confrontations last weekend. Chinese ships reportedly used water cannons against Filipino vessels attempting to deliver supplies to fishermen at Scarborough Shoal and resupply sailors on the grounded Sierra Madre on Second Thomas Shoal. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr vowed to defend the nation's sovereignty, and the incidents drew criticism from the US and Europe. As the situation intensifies, we pray for calm and diplomacy in the region, asking for wisdom

to resolve disputes peacefully. May the leaders find common ground to foster stability and promote cooperation for the greater good.

- Hong Kong witnessed a historically low turnout in the local district election last Sunday despite a massive and expensive promotion campaign, signalling widespread disappointment with new electoral rules to curb dissent and diverse viewpoints. The diminished engagement reflects concerns about democratic values. In these challenging times, we offer a prayer for the Hong Kong government to heed the alarm call from its citizens, urging them to uphold principles that foster inclusivity, diversity, and the freedom of expression. May wisdom guide decision-making, and may a spirit of understanding and cooperation prevail for the well-being of all.

For the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

We lift up in prayer the churches and people of all faiths in Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, and Mainland China.

We are **thankful** for:

- the long and complex history of China, with its many artefacts, cultures and traditions that have developed over millennia
- those who established missions and churches in the past, and the determination of Chinese Christians to contextualize the church here and now
- those who boldly live out their faith, challenging injustices even when they fear persecution
- the economic growth and development that has lifted many out of poverty
- the steps China is taking to counter huge environmental challenges.

We **pray** for:

- those left behind and further marginalized by rising economic growth, especially women and peasants in rural areas
- the political and social tensions between the mainland of China and Hong Kong and the rest of the world
- a growth in prophetic witness of the Chinese church in society
- for greater understanding and cooperation between Taiwan and the Mainland of China
- spiritual meaning and freedom from captivity to economic growth and consumerism.

For the Congregation

- Pray for those facing health challenges that require body strength restoration: Edna Lai, Paul Wong, Kevin Ng, Revd Bud, Jeanette Lee, Hend, Ng Kam Lee, Raymond Lau, Joy Babasa and Julianne Long. We continue to remember our senior members and friends: Mrs Samuel and the mother of Alex Melwani. May God heal the sick and give strength to those caring for loved ones at home and in care facilities.
- We pray for three friends who have left Hong Kong for resettlement in Canada. Please pray for Poules, Aline and Oxana as they start this new chapter in their lives.
- We remember all in our community travelling at this time. May the Lord bless them and refresh and renew relationships with family and friends.

Announcements

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

Thank you to Dr Hope Antone for your message today!

Christmas Worship Services In KUC

24/12 Sunday Worship at 10:30am; Christmas Eve Service at 7:30 pm

25/12 Christmas Day Service with Holy Communion at 11 am, followed by pot-luck lunch. If you are joining us on Christmas Day, please add your name to the signup sheet on the notice board and add the dish you will bring.

"Recruitment of Part-time Caretaker"

Kowloon Union Church is recruiting a part-time caretaker working 32 hours during weekdays. Please refer to the poster on the notice board or through KUC's Facebook page. Please contact Pastor Phyllis or Maggie if you are interested or you have someone to refer.

Dates For Your Diaries:

English Service for Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

This year, the worship materials for the Unity gathering have been shared by the people and churches of Burkina Faso.

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" (Luke 10:27)

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 first Sunday after worship in the Upper Fellowship Hall.

Please scan the QR code for more details of the schedule.



	TODAY 17 December
Liturgist:	Maggie Mathieson
Preacher:	Hope Antone
Pianist:	Joshua Pang
Lector:	Paul Lucas
Intercessory Prayers:	Emmanuel Adesina
Family Talk:	Lydia Catedral
Greeter:	Kevin Ng Edith San Juan
Offering Rota:	Anjette Bolanos Rachel Wangari
Counting Rota	Rey Asis Judy Chan
Sunday School Leaders:	Jailyn Tomitis, Mary Adesina, Gabi Baumgartner
I.T. Team:	Jen Pang Bervinder Kaur

Freewill offering last week: HK\$5,924-
Promissory offering last week: HK\$7,000-