

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



First Sunday in Lent
18 February 2024
Morning Worship at 10:30 a.m.

(*: Congregation stands)

APPROACH

PREPARATION SONG “Oculi Nostri” (Our Eyes Are Turned)

– Composer: Taizé

* **CALL TO WORSHIP**

* **HYMN** “Great is Thy Faithfulness”

– Music: W. M. Runyan; Words: T. O. Chisholm

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ALL RESPOND “O Lord Have Mercy On Us”

– Composer: Timothy Chan

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

THE WORD OF GOD

Lord, open our lips.

And our mouths shall show forth Your praise.

HYMN “Lord, I Lift Your Name on High”

– Composer: Rick Founds

SCRIPTURE READING

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

A light to our path.

Isaiah 66:1-2 (O.T.)

Matthew 5:1-11 (N.T.)

Lord, may Your Word live in us.

And bear much fruit for Your glory.

HYMN “Who Am I”

– Composer: Mark Hall

FAMILY TALK

SERMON “Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit”

* **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

THE OFFERTORY

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD’S PRAYER

ALL RESPOND “O Lord, Hear Our Prayer”

– Composer: Taizé

OFFERTORY

THE PEACE

* **HYMN** “Community of Christ” – Music: LEONI; Words: S. E. 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 Tuesday is World Day for Social Justice. It aims to advance progress and social justice within the context of globalization. While momentum is building around the idea that advancing social justice should be the central goal that guides national and international policies, advocates highlight persistent injustices, labor insecurity, inequality, and social contract erosion exacerbated by global crises. We pray for a Global Coalition for Social Justice, emphasizing multilateral cooperation and impactful initiatives worldwide. May our collective efforts lead to a world where fairness, dignity, and opportunity prevail for every individual, transcending borders and barriers.
- In Argentina, the economic crisis fueled by monthly inflation topping 20% has led to a surge in hunger among vulnerable residents. The Sal de la Tierra soup kitchen in Villa Fiorito, a poor Buenos Aires suburb, now serves around 70 families, up from 20 families a few months ago. Relying on private contributions and volunteer work, the kitchen struggles to meet the growing demand. The country’s annual inflation rate reached 254%, and while economists expect some relief in the second half of 2024, the IMF predicts a 2.5% shrinkage in Argentina’s economy. As we pray for the well-being of those affected, let us also pray for the new government to rally the whole country to work together and implement wise economic policies to alleviate suffering and foster stability.
- The Security Initiative against the Proliferation of Weapons underscores the importance of South-South and international cooperation. The initiative garnered interest and commitment during a meeting last Tuesday attended by numerous participants from African countries. The event aimed to emphasize how nations, within the framework of South-South cooperation, can harness their unique strengths and resources to tackle common challenges. As we strive for peace, let us pray that the peace dividend will enable Africa’s precious resources to be wisely utilized for development, uplifting lives, and fostering prosperity.
- Prabowo Subianto, the son-in-law of the former dictator Suharto who was ousted in 1998 amid massive student protests and nationwide riots, has claimed victory in the Presidential Election in Indonesia held on Wednesday. In a scarcely believable twist, the spokesman alongside Prabowo is Budiman, a once-active student opponent of Suharto. Budiman’s transformation highlights the twists of Indonesia’s young democracy. Prabowo, once a military strongman with a controversial past, stands alongside Budiman in this democratic election. Indonesia, a nation of 17,000 islands and 700 languages, defies expectations with its stability despite its vast diversity. As the country faces its next chapter, let us pray for the preservation of democracy and wise leadership so that the people’s voices may continue to shape Indonesia’s future.
- In 2023, China’s total trade with Africa experienced a modest 1.5% growth, reaching \$282.1 billion. However, the trade deficit between Africa and China expanded, as Chinese exports to the continent increased by 7.5% to \$173 billion,

while imports from Africa decreased by 6.7% to \$109 billion. To address this imbalance, Beijing has pledged to grow its imports from Africa by opening “green lanes” for African agricultural exports and allowing more African products to enter the Chinese market duty-free. While these efforts are commendable, achieving a trade balance will require a long-term commitment and perhaps innovative approaches from Africa and China. Let us pray for the leaders to put people first, make decisions that benefit both the African nations and China, and foster mutual prosperity.

- Hong Kong’s Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) is taking a groundbreaking step by hosting UN anti-corruption workshops. The newly launched Hong Kong International Academy Against Corruption aims to create a global learning platform for law enforcement. With an overwhelming response, the academy will serve as a forum for experts worldwide to share their knowledge and experience in tackling corruption. As we pray for transparency, integrity, and responsible governance, may these anti-corruption efforts form the bedrock for Hong Kong’s continued economic prosperity.

For the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

We lift up in prayer the churches and people of all faiths in France, Germany, and Monaco.

We are **thankful** for:

- the rich historical and cultural legacies from these lands have come to the world.
- Franco-German friendship, reconciliation and cooperation that has emerged since the hostilities of the Second World War.
- how churches and governments in France and Germany have welcomed new immigrants.
- the generosity in supporting ecumenical, interfaith and development work in the world.

We **pray** for:

- overcoming fears and suspicions that still remain from 20th-century atrocities and more recent terrorist attacks.
- churches and governments to effectively counter anti-immigrant populist sentiments in these countries so that they truly will become more multi-ethnic.
- economic decisions that are accountable to those who are most vulnerable and not only to those making a profit.
- election of political leaders who will further the common good for their country and for the sake of Europe and the rest of the world.

For the Congregation

- Pray for those facing health challenges that require body strength restoration: Paul Wong, Kevin Ng, Jeanette Lee, Hend, Ng Kam Lee, Raymond Lau, Joy Babasa, Julianne Long, and Stephanie Mumbi. 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, Revd Judy Chan, for sharing the Word of God with us this morning.

100 Acts of Service

"What could I do today that could be the answer to someone's prayer?"

KUC has opened a Kudoboard for everyone to share their Acts of Service. Kudoboard is an online platform where we can record our experience in words, images or videos.

You can scan the QR code or use the link to open the Kudoboard.

<https://www.kudoboard.com/boards/LaXxotKG>



Dates For Your Diaries:

Every Sunday Morning

Contemplative Prayer – organized by the Christian Education Committee

“In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.” (Isaiah 30:15)

You are welcome to join the morning prayer to be with God through a journey to the heart and soul.

When: Sunday from 9:00 to 9:30 am

Where: Upper Fellowship Hall

Contact Pastor Phyllis if you wish to know more about the prayer time.

	TODAY 18 February	NEXT WEEK 25 February
Liturgist:	Phyllis Wong	Maggie Mathieson
Preacher:	Judy Chan	Paul Cooper
Pianist:	Lucy Lim	Eva Kwan
Lector:	Kenneth Ku	Chris Law
Intercessory Prayers:	Paul Lucas	Tory Caplan
Family Talk:	Mayson Fung	Chan Beng Seng
Greeter:	Susan Babasa Kevin Ng	Edwina Antonio Susan Babasa
Offering Rota:	Anjenette Bolanos Thapa Samjhana	Daddy Jacob
Counting Rota	Aimé Girimana Chan Beng Seng	Lucy Lim Edwina Antonio
Sunday School Leaders:	Mary Adesina Tong Chong Sze Gabi Baumgartner/Estella Yeung	Jailyn Tomitis Tong Chong Sze Estella Yueng
I.T. Team:	Amber Tong Bervinder Kaur	Jen Pang Bervinder Kaur