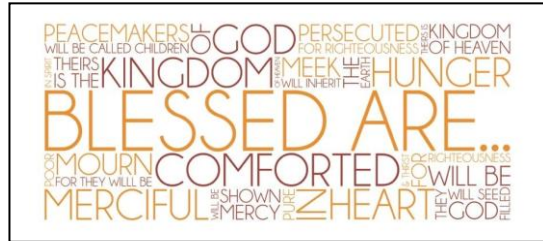


Fifth Sunday in Lent
17 March 2024
Morning Worship at 10:30 a.m.
(*: Congregation stands)



APPROACH

PREPARATION SONG “Our Eyes Are Turned” – Taizé

Our eyes are turned to the Lord Jesus Christ,

Our eyes are turned to the Lord, God our Saviour

Our eyes are turned to the Lord Jesus Christ,

Our eyes are turned to the Lord, God our Saviour --||--

*** CALL TO WORSHIP**

This is the day God has promised: the day of the new covenant.

We are here because our hearts are filled with love and a need for our God.

No longer carved on cold stone, this covenant is engraved on our hearts.

May our hearts be ready to receive God's Word for us.

*** HYMN “The Steadfast Love of the Lord” & “We Exalt You”**

– Composers: E McNeil & P Sanchez Jr

The steadfast love

Of the Lord never ceases

God’s mercies never come to an end

They are new every morning

New every morning

Great is Thy faithfulness O Lord

Great is Thy faithfulness

We exalt Thee, we exalt Thee
We exalt Thee oh Lord
We exalt Thee, we exalt Thee
We exalt Thee oh Lord

They are new every morning
New every morning
Great is Thy faithfulness O Lord
Great is Thy faithfulness
--||--

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O Heart that seeks our own, we yearn for your presence in our lives yet turn away from you time and again. We want to serve others but become obsessed with our own desires. We need your Word to fill our emptiness, yet let it be silenced by the noise of our world. Our hearts are clogged with the foolishness of our lives and often struggle to beat in rhythm with your own.

In this silence, and in the depths of our hidden souls, come to us and make us whole, Steadfast Love. Write grace upon our hearts, so we might be more forgiving people; write mercy on our hearts, so we might become more welcoming people; write hospitality upon our hearts that we might become more like Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, who came for all people, even us.

ALL RESPOND “O Lord Have Mercy On Us”

– Composer: Timothy Chan

O LORD, have mercy on us.

O Christ, have mercy on us.

O LORD, have mercy on us.

--||--

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

A new heart, a generous spirit, a fresh start: these are the gifts our God gives to us.

Through Christ, we are made new; through Christ, we are forgiven; Thanks be to God. Amen.

THE WORD OF GOD

Lord, open our lips.

And our mouths shall show forth Your praise.

HYMN “Praise I Will Praise You Lord” – Composer: C Frayssé

Praise, I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart.

O God, I will tell the wonders of your ways,
and glorify your name.

Praise, I will praise you Lord, with all my heart.

In you I will find the source of all my joy. Alleluia!

Love, I will love you, Lord, with all my heart.

O God, I will tell the wonders of your ways,
and glorify your name.

Love, I will love you Lord, with all my heart.

In you I will find the source of all my joy. Alleluia!

Serve, I will serve you, Lord, with all my heart.

O God, I will tell the wonders of your ways,
and glorify your name.

Serve, I will serve you Lord, with all my heart.

In you I will find the source of all my joy. Alleluia!

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SCRIPTURE READING

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

A light to our path.

Psalm 103:10-13 (O.T.)

10He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.

11For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;

12as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us.

13As a father has compassion for his children, so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him.

Matthew 19:14-15 (N.T.)

14but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs."

15And he laid his hands on them and went on his way.

Lord, may Your Word live in us.

And bear much fruit for Your glory.

HYMN “I Will Sing of the Mercies” – Composer: J H Filmore

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever,

I will sing, I will sing.

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever,

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord.

With my mouth will I make known

Thy faithfulness, Thy faithfulness;

With my mouth will I make known

Thy faithfulness to all generations.

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever,

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord.

All the hosts of the angels sing God's praise forever
for the things God has done.

All the hosts of the angels sing God's praise forever
all the hosts of the angels sing God's praise.

Who can be compared to God
in faithfulness, in faithfulness?

Who can be compared to God
in faithfulness to all generations?

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever,

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord.

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FAMILY TALK

SERMON “Are You Merciful & Pure in Heart? ”

*** AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son,
our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended into hell.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

THE OFFERTORY

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD’S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in
heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we
forgive those who sin against us.**

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now
and for ever**

ALL RESPOND “O Lord, Hear Our Prayer”

– Taizé

O Lord, hear our prayer;

O Lord, hear our prayer;

when we call answer us.

O Lord, hear our prayer,

O Lord, hear our prayer;

come and listen to us

--||--

OFFERTORY

THE PEACE

*** HYMN “Loving Creator”**

– Music: Trad Folk, Words: D T Niles

Loving Creator, grant to your children
mercy and blessing, songs never-ceasing;
grace to unite us, peace to unite us,
Loving Creator, parent and God.

Jesus, Redeemer, help us remember
your pain and passion, your resurrection,
Your call to follow, your love tomorrow,
Jesus, Redeemer, our friend and Lord.

Spirit descending, your light unending
Brings hope and healing, is truth-revealing.
Dispel our blindness, inspire our kindness,
Spirit descending, Spirit adored.

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* **COMMISSION and BLESSING**

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

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

Please remember as you pray. . .

- The International Day of Happiness, observed on 20 March annually, holds profound significance. The United Nations General Assembly established it to recognize the importance of happiness and well-being as universal aspirations for all people. In a world marked by diverse backgrounds, the call is clear: strive for an inclusive, equitable, and balanced approach to economic growth—one that fosters sustainable development, eradicates poverty, and uplifts the well-being of every individual, regardless of gender, race, political beliefs, or religious affiliations. Let us join in a collective prayer: May our world be where joy knows no boundaries, where kindness flourishes, and where the pursuit of happiness transcends borders.

- Haiti is grappling with turmoil, despair and anarchy as gang violence tightens its grip, leaving communities in fear and chaos. Political instability, economic woes, and natural disasters have woven a tapestry of suffering. The prime minister, who is exiled in Puerto Rico, has resigned, adding another layer of uncertainty. Meanwhile, a dire food crisis looms, threatening the biggest humanitarian crisis since the earthquake in 2010. Our hearts ache for the Haitian people, yearning for peace, order, and stability to reclaim their land. We pray that the winds of change blow gently, sweeping away strife and division. May leaders rise with compassion, guided by wisdom and empathy. May resilience flourish and hope bloom anew.
- As Senegal approaches its presidential election on 24 March, tensions run high. President Macky Sall, in power for 12 years, recently postponed the election, sparking protests and deadly unrest. The Constitutional Council now mandates the election by 2 April, and President Sall dissolved the government, allowing the ruling coalition's candidate to focus on the campaign while blocking prominent opposition leaders from campaigning. Amid accusations of a constitutional coup, Senegal strives for fair, transparent elections. Let us pray that wisdom guides leaders, justice prevails, and the people's voices resonate peacefully.
- Beijing has been struggling to restore confidence in the country's ailing real estate industry. It appears to be working flat out to prevent China Vanke, the biggest property developer in China, going the way of Evergrande and Country Garden, which both defaulted on their debts and are at risk of being liquidated. China's real estate sector faces a critical juncture as it grapples with a crisis that began in 2021. Evergrande, the world's most indebted developer, defaulted on its international debt, triggering a domino effect. The fallout has eroded confidence among homebuyers, businesses, and investors, posing broader economic risks. We hope the country will ensure transparency and fair legislation to protect homebuyers and restore confidence.
- The Hong Kong early education sector confronts a double challenge: emigration and a declining birthrate. With a record-high 19.1% turnover rate among preschool teachers and 17 kindergartens closing down, educators feel that kindergarten jobs are no longer secure. Many teachers are switching to primary schools or leaving the sector altogether. Despite this crisis, authorities maintain that there are no staffing issues. As graduates hesitate to

join the industry, nurturing the city's future generations becomes increasingly difficult. Let us pray for the government to collaborate earnestly with educators, parents, and industry experts, weaving a safety net for our little learners to ensure quality education for all. May they invest not only in infrastructure but also in the hearts and minds of those who shape young minds—the teachers, the caregivers, the unsung heroes.

For the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

We lift up in prayer the churches and people of all faiths in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

We are **thankful** for:

- preservation of these countries' distinct cultural practices, literature, music and natural resources.
- the faithful witness of Christians during times of persecution and for those who survived times of occupation.
- how these countries peacefully became independent after 1918 and 1991.
- new-found freedoms that the people here have experienced, that they might be used for the good of all.

We **pray** for:

- peaceful relations with Russia and among all the ethnic groups in these lands.
- the healing of old wounds remaining from 20th-century struggles.
- just economic development that benefits all citizens in these countries and for those who live and work abroad.
- governmental leaders and all people so that they might together strive for justice, peace, and the well-being of all.

For the Congregation

- Pray for Paul Wong, Kevin Ng, Jeanette Lee, Hend, Ng Kam Lee, Raymond Lau, Joy Babasa, Julianne Long, and Revd. and Mrs. Kwok, who are facing health challenges that require body strength restoration.
- 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, Pastor Phyllis, for sharing the Word of God with us this morning.

Every Sunday Morning

Contemplative Prayer – organised by the Christian Education Committee

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

Where: Upper Fellowship Hall

Today ‘Body As Home’ – Fundraising Activity for Kowloon Union Church

Organised by The Int’l School of Somatic Education

Venue: Lower Fellowship Hall

Time: 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

Please scan the QR code to register.



Today: The Art Workshop is cancelled today. A new date will be announced next week.

Date For Your Diaries:

Wednesday, 20 March

Peacemaking Fellowship Outing Activities

A Guided Tour is offered by Tai Kwun for us to visit the exhibition “Green Snake: Women-Centred Ecologies”.

The tour will be Conducted in English, and all are welcome to join us!

Date: 20 March (Wednesday) at 3pm Gathering time at KUC: 2:15pm

Exhibition venue: 1/F JC Contemporary & F Hall, Prison Yard, Tai Kwun, Central

The tour is free of charge. Please register by scanning QR code or contact Katie (9623 1976) for enquiries.



Thursday, 4 April

Congregational Retreat organized by the Christian Education Committee

Venue: Tao Fung Shan Christian Centre, Tai Wai

Time: 9 am – 5 pm

Fee : HK\$100

(this includes lunch and minibus fare from Tai Wai to the Centre)

Concession Fee: HK\$50



Scan the QR code to register. For more information, speak to Pastor Phyllis.

	TODAY 17 March	NEXT WEEK 24 March
Liturgist:	Maggie Mathieson	Maggie Mathieson
Preacher:	Phyllis Wong	
Pianist:	Joshua Pang	Lucy Lim
Lector:	Guy Syrette	Sunday School
Intercessory Prayers:	Venus Cheng	Sunday School
Family Talk:	Chan Beng Seng	
Greeter:	Edna Lai Jacob	Edwina Antonio Sunday School
Offering Rota:	Anjenette Bolanos Susan Babasa	Daddy Sunday School
Counting Rota	Chan Beng Seng Ramon Bultron	Joram Calimutan Ramon Bultron
Sunday School Leaders:	Mary Adesina Tong Chong Sze Gabi Baumgartner	Only Sunday School for youngest children
I.T. Team:	Amber Tong Bervinder Kaur	Amber Tong Bervinder Kaur

Freewill offering last week: HK\$2,587-
Promissory offering last week: HK\$4,050-