

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 Advent
3 December 2023
Morning Worship at 10:30 a.m.
Holy Communion Service

(*: Congregation stands)

APPROACH

ADVENT LITANY

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

*** CALL TO WORSHIP**

*** HYMN** “Be Still for the Presence of the Lord” – Composer: David J Evans

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 “He Came Down” – Music and Words: Cameroon Traditional

SCRIPTURE READING

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

A light to our path.

Psalm 80: 1 – 7, 17 – 19 (O.T.)

Luke 1: 1 – 23 (N.T.)

Lord, may Your Word live in us.

And bear much fruit for Your glory.

FAMILY TALK

SERMON

*** AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** – Revd. S Speed

THE OFFERTORY

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

ALL RESPOND “Wait for the Lord” – Composed: Taizé Community

OFFERTORY

THE HOLY COMMUNION

THE PEACE

HYMN “You Are Holy”

– Composer: P.G. Harling

INVITATION

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

SANCTUS

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

PRAYER FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT

THE LORD'S PRAYER

DISTRIBUTION

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

* HYMN “O Come, O Come”

- Music: Anon, Words: M Tirabassi v.1&2;v3 Trad

* COMMISSION and BLESSING

Concerns of the Church

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

- Today is the start of the Advent season which marks the beginning of the liturgical year in church. While many families and shops prepare for the Christmas season of presents, parties and feasts, let us prepare our hearts in anticipation for both the First Coming of Christ at Christmas and the expectation of His Second Coming, and reflect on the dual nature of Christ's role as Savior and Judge. As we embark on this season of reflection and hope, let our hearts be open to the messages of Advent, inviting peace, love, and joy into our lives.
- Yesterday was the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery. Let us reflect on the persisting challenges of modern slavery, encompassing trafficking in persons, child labor, forced marriage, and exploitation. Despite global efforts, these heinous practices endure, taking various forms, from traditional slavery rooted in discriminatory customs to contemporary manifestations such as forced labor and child exploitation. We fervently pray for the eradication of all forms of slavery. May governments, organizations, and individuals unite in their commitment to protect the vulnerable, combat human trafficking, and ensure the rights and dignity of every person. May justice prevail, and may our collective efforts contribute to a world where no one is subjected to the chains of exploitation.
- In northern India, all 41 construction workers trapped in a collapsed mountain tunnel for 17 days have been successfully rescued. After multiple rescue attempts faced obstacles, the workers were finally pulled out through a narrow steel pipe in a delicate operation. The low-wage workers from impoverished states had been stuck in the 4.5-km tunnel in Uttarakhand since its collapse on 12 November. The tunnel is part of a significant infrastructure project aiming to connect Hindu pilgrimage sites through an 890-km network of roads. Some experts express concerns about such projects' environmental impact and safety in the fragile Himalayan region. As we celebrate their safe rescue, let us offer a prayer for the well-being of these workers and express gratitude for the successful efforts of the rescue teams. We also pray that all future infrastructure projects undergo proper environmental impact study to protect both the workers and the locals affected by such projects.

- In Myanmar, ethnic minority armed groups, including the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, Ta'ang National Liberation Army, and Arakan Army, have intensified coordinated attacks against the ruling junta. The conflict has resulted in the rebels claiming control of a key trading post, displacing tens of thousands of people in the border region. The rebellion poses a significant challenge to Myanmar's military since the 2021 coup. The United Nations reports 335,000 people displaced since the rebel offensive, adding to the 2 million already affected by the 2021 coup. Let us offer a heartfelt prayer for the people of Myanmar, especially for their safety and well-being and for the restoration of democratic values in their nation.
- China is grappling with a surge in respiratory illnesses, particularly among children in northern regions, prompting concerns and calls for information transparency. Clusters of undiagnosed pneumonia have been reported, with hospitals overwhelmed by sick children exhibiting high temperatures and pulmonary nodules. As we reflect on the well-being of these affected children, let us pray for their health and effective treatment. We also pray that the Chinese government, having learned from the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, share crucial information promptly with the global community to foster collective understanding and response in the face of emerging health concerns.
- A recent study by the New Youth Forum, analysing the general household survey of the Census and Statistics Department from 2017 to 2022, revealed that the median monthly salary for graduates during this period was HK\$17,424, reminiscent of the level in 1997. Moreover, concerns arise as the research consultant notes the "depreciation" of university degrees in Hong Kong, with over half the population born between 1998 and 2002 holding such degrees. The study also highlights a rise in fresh graduates taking up low-skilled jobs, prompting a call for government support in continuing education and fostering emerging industries. As we reflect on the challenges the youth in Hong Kong face, we pray for their well-being, resilience, and the support they need to navigate the evolving economic landscape.

For the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

We lift up in prayer the churches and people of all faiths in Myanmar and Thailand

We are **thankful** for:

- the beauty of these countries and their people and their many distinctive Buddhist temples
- those who long have struggled that these countries might become more democratic
- the faithful witness of churches, which have advocated with others for greater justice
- efforts to protect the environment and resources in these countries.

We **pray** for:

- minority ethnic and religious groups who continue to experience discrimination, persecution or even genocide (such as the Rohingyas), and for greater interfaith understanding and tolerance for ethnic and religious diversity
- those victimized by sex tourism and exploitation and those who perpetuate such acts
- political stability and progress toward democratic rule
- economic justice for all people and environmental protection as these countries undergo development.

For the Congregation

- We continue to pray for the renovation of the church and the safety of the workers.
- 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 Pastor Maggie. 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.

Announcements

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

Christmas Services

24/12 Sunday Worship at 10:30am; Christmas Eve Service at 7:00 pm

25/12 Christmas Day Service with Holy Communion at 11 am, followed by pot-luck lunch.

Guitar lessons for beginners – organized by the Peacemaking Ministry

The lessons will cover basic chord sharps, simple songs, and self-study handouts. Please contact Katie for inquiries and registration at 9623-1976.

Tutor: Mr Cephas Shek, a professional guitarist from Worship Nations

Every Friday, 8/12/2023 to 26/1/2024; 1:30 – 2:30 pm @ KUCspace

Fee: HK\$900 for eight sessions.

	TODAY 3 December	NEXT WEEK 10 December
Liturgist:	Maggie Mathieson	Phyllis Wong
Preacher:	Phyllis Wong	Judy Chan
Pianist:	Lucy Lim	Jessica Tso
Lector:	Jennifer Chan	Caden Lam
Intercessory Prayers:	Robert Lam	Paul Cooper
Family Talk:	Mayson Fung	No Family Talk
Greeter:	Kevin Ng Tory Caplan	Lucy Lim Jacob
Offering Rota:	Rose Muiriri Ronald Chui	Thapa Samjhana Susan Babasa
Counting Rota	Edwina Antonio Hope Antone	Jennifer Chan Robert Lam
Sunday School Leaders:	Mayson Fung, Katie Ho Mary Adesina	Jailyn Tomitis Mary Adesina
I.T. Team:	Venus Cheng Bervinder Kaur	Venus Cheng Bervinder Kaur
Freewill offering last week: HK\$2,816- Promissory offering last week: HK\$1,350- Welfare Fund: HK\$5,000-		