

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



**Fourth Sunday in Advent**  
**24 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** “Light of the World”

- Composer: Tim Hughes

#### **CALL TO CONFESSION**

#### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**ALL RESPOND** “Kyrie Eleison” (Lord, have mercy)

– Trad. Orthodox Chant

#### **ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

### THE WORD OF GOD

Lord, open our lips.

**And our mouths shall show forth Your praise.**

**KUC SINGERS** “Christmas Song of Joy”

– Composer: J M Martin

#### **SCRIPTURE READING**

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

**A light to our path.**

Luke 2: 1 – 20 (N.T.)

Lord, may Your Word live in us.

**And bear much fruit for Your glory.**

**HARAMBE** “Sizalelwe Indodana”

## **‘JESUS IS BORN - A VERY SPECIAL CHILD’**

**HYMN** ‘Star Child’

- Music: C Gibson, Lyrics: S E Murray

#### **\* AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

### THE OFFERTORY

#### **CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH**

#### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

#### **THE LORD’S PRAYER**

**ALL RESPOND** “Emmanuel, Emmanuel”

– Composer: Bob McGee

#### **OFFERTORY**

**THE PEACE**

\* **HYMN** “When Out of Poverty Was Born” – Tune: Kingsfold; Lyrics: K Galloway

\* **COMMISSION and BLESSING**

**Concerns of the Church**

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

- As we come together on this sacred Christmas Eve to celebrate the birth of Christ, let us open our hearts to the spirit of love, compassion, and preparedness. Amidst our joy, we acknowledge the challenges faced by children in many regions of China still grappling with an outbreak of respiratory illnesses. Our thoughts and prayers extend to them, and may the healing touch of Christ's love be upon each affected child. The ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic underscores the profound impact infectious diseases can have on humanity. On this International Day for Epidemic Preparedness, we pray for global well-being and the strength to face the challenges of infectious diseases. As we welcome the birth of Christ into our hearts, may His spirit guide us towards compassion, resilience, and a commitment to the health and well-being of all.
- Amid the prospect of 2023 being the hottest year on record, a beacon of hope emerges from new research in traditional architecture. Indigenous communities, known for their adaptive building techniques, are inspiring a new generation of Pacific Islander architects. Recognizing the urgent need for climate adaptation, these architects blend traditional wisdom with modern principles to design energy-efficient, climate-resilient buildings. Projects in Fiji showcase the fusion of local materials with innovative cyclone-resistant features. This uplifting research signifies a shift towards sustainable and resilient construction, offering hope for a brighter, more environmentally friendly future. Let us celebrate these endeavors and pray for continued inspiration, wisdom, and collaboration to protect and heal our precious planet.
- A new deal has been reached at the UN climate summit in Dubai, marking a significant step forward as it calls on all nations to transition away from using fossil fuels, acknowledging the urgent need for deep and rapid reductions to limit temperature rises to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels. While not committing to the phase-out that many governments sought, the agreement represents a crucial acknowledgement of the challenges posed by burning fossil fuels and the imperative for change. In light of this positive development, let us offer a thanksgiving prayer, expressing gratitude for the collective efforts of world leaders to address the climate crisis. May their commitment to move away from fossil fuels foster global solidarity and inspire further decisive actions for the well-being of our planet.
- In the aftermath of a devastating earthquake in northwest China on Wednesday, survivors in Yangwa village are grappling with the destruction, mourning the loss of at least 134 lives and enduring frigid temperatures in makeshift shelters. The earthquake struck Gansu and Qinghai provinces, causing houses to collapse and leaving over 900 injured. In the remote mountains, residents face the daunting task of rebuilding their lives, with nearly 15,000 homes collapsing in Gansu. The harsh conditions, including freezing temperatures, add to the challenges for those affected. Rescue efforts are ongoing, with landslides complicating searches in Qinghai, and the death toll is the highest in China from an earthquake in nine years. The predominantly Muslim ethnic groups in this poor, rural area emphasize the immediate need for sustenance and warmth in the wake of this tragic event. In heartfelt prayer, we seek

solace for the departed, strength for grieving families and success in the ongoing rescue efforts. May hope shine through the darkness, bringing comfort to the afflicted and healing to the wounded.

- The national security trial of Hong Kong's renowned activist publisher, Jimmy Lai, has commenced this week. Lai, 76, faces potential life imprisonment under Beijing's national security law, accused of colluding with foreign forces and conspiring to publish seditious materials. His trial, linked to the now-closed pro-democracy newspaper Apple Daily, is viewed as a crucial test for press freedom and judicial independence in Hong Kong. The decision on the timing of the sedition charge is expected by the end of the week, with the trial projected to last around 80 days without a jury. We pray for justice and the upholding of the rule of law, seeking fairness and protection of civil liberties in the face of sedition charges, and that the legal proceedings reflect a commitment to judicial independence.

### **For the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle**

We lift up in prayer the churches and people of all faiths in Japan, North Korea, and South Korea.

We are **thankful** for:

- the distinctive temples, art and cultures in the region
- the education and economic developments that have improved the lives of many in Japan and South Korea
- how the Council of Churches in Japan has promoted reconciliation with the rest of Asia
- the prophetic witness of Christians in Japan and South Korea
- the persistent witness to justice for “comfort women” from the Second World War
- the Ecumenical Forum for Peace, Reunification and Development Cooperation on the Korean Peninsula, which, with others, has sought to reunify Korea, defend human rights, and work for peace and justice.

We **pray** for:

- an end to repression of people and to threats of military confrontation, especially on the Korean peninsula
- the reunification of Korea, that peace and justice might prevail
- women and other marginalized groups, and the inequalities they experience
- greater acceptance of immigrants that they might make a positive contribution
- new hope and meaning for the young amid pressures of competition 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, Julianne Long and John. 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 remember all in our community travelling at this time. May the Lord bless them and refresh and renew relationships with family and friends. We also remember those facing this time of the year alone, apart from loved ones and family.

## 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 all who have participated in leading our worship this morning, and a special thank you to our children and the Sunday School team 😊

### Christmas Day in KUC

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

### New Year Appeal from the Peacemaking Ministry

As we enter the new year, the peacemaking ministry is appealing to you all for donations of supermarket vouchers. These vouchers will enable us to provide for families and people in need within our community. For more details, please get in touch with Katie Ho.

### 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.



	<b>TODAY 24 December</b>
Liturgist	Maggie Mathieson
Pianist:	Lucy Lim
Lector:	Blessing
Intercessory Prayers:	Favor
Drama	Faith, Michael, Jenet, Precious, David, Divine, Bright
Greeter:	Angeline, Favor and Bright
Offering Rota:	Daddy, Divine
Counting Rota	Ramon Bultron,
Sunday School Leaders:	Mary Adesina, Gabi Baumgartner, Jailyn Tomitis
I.T. Team:	Amber Tong, Bervinder Kaur
Freewill offering last week: HK\$2,276- Promissory offering last week: HK\$2,450- Welfare Fund: HK\$5,000-	