

Twenty-Fifth Sunday After Pentecost

19 November 2023

Morning Worship at 10:30 a.m.

(*: CONGREGATION STANDS)



APPROACH

PREPARATION SONG “In The Lord” – Composer: Taizé

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful;

in the Lord I will rejoice!

Look to God, do not be afraid;

lift up your voices: the Lord is near,

lift up your voices: the Lord is near. --||--

*** CALL TO WORSHIP**

This is the Lord's Day,

the day of wonder and grace.

This is the day

to worship the One who calls us here.

This is the Lord's Day,

the day we are given joy and peace.

This is the day promised to us,
the day of healing and renewal.

This is the Lord's Day,
and it has come just in time!

This is the day we gather with hope,
with faith, with love!

* **HYMN** “Now Thank We All Our God”

– Music: J Cruger; Lyrics: M Rinkart

Now thank we all our God
With heart and hands and voices
Who wondrous things has done
In whom his world rejoices
Who from our mothers' arms
Has blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love
And still is ours today

O may this bounteous God
Through all our life be near us
With ever joyful hearts
And blessed peace to cheer us
To keep us in his grace
And guide us when perplexed
And free us from all ills
Of this world in the next

All praise and thanks to God
The Father now be given
The Son and Spirit blest
Who reign in highest heaven
The one eternal God
Whom heaven and earth adore
For thus it was is now
And shall be evermore
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CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Merciful God,
we come before You, trusting in Your kindness
hoping in Your faithfulness, abiding in Your love
Knowing You, not as harsh and fearful master,
but as a caring, guiding parent.**

**Our hearts are heavy with regret for what we have left
undone and for what we have left done.**

For when we have been harsh and dismissive.

We ask for Your courage to live another way.

**to sow and plant that which will flourish
to give generously without seeking return**

to share hospitality with strangers

**to care for the vulnerable and be humble to receive care in
our own times of need.**

ALL RESPOND “Kyrie Eleison” – Composer: Trad. Orthodox

Kyrie Eleison

Kyrie Eleison

Kyrie Eleison --||--

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Family in Christ,

It is to the caring and compassionate gaze of the Lord that we lift up our eyes, no longer hanging our heads under the weight of guilt and shame.

Let us choose to abide in God's amazing grace, as we enter into the joy of that deep mercy, trusting that we will never be expelled from the presence of the Lord.

AMEN

THE WORD OF GOD

Lord, open our lips.

And our mouths shall show forth Your praise.

HYMN "Open My Eyes"

– Composers: C Scott

Open my eyes, that I may see

Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;

Place in my hands the wonderful key

That shall unclasp and set me free.

Silently now I wait for Thee,

Ready my God, Thy will to see,

Open my eyes, illumine me,

Spirit divine!

Open my ears, that I may hear
Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
And while the wave notes fall on my ear,
Everything false will disappear.

Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready my God, Thy will to see,
Open my ears, illumine me,
Spirit divine!

Open my mind, so that I may read
More of Thy love in word and deed;
What shall I fear while yet Thou dost lead?
Only for light from Thee, I plead.

Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready my God, Thy will to see,
Open my mind, illumine me,
Spirit divine!

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SCRIPTURE READING

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

A light to our path.

Psalm 123 (O.T.)

1To you I lift up my eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens!

2As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the LORD our God, until he has mercy upon us.

3Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us, for we have had more than enough of contempt.

4Our soul has had more than its fill of the scorn of those who are at ease, of the contempt of the proud.

1 Thessalonians 5: 1 – 11 (N.T.)

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. **2**For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

3When they say, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape!

4But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; 5for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness.

6So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; 7for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night.

8But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

9For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him.

11Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

Matthew 25: 14 - 30 (N.T.)

14“For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; 15to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away.

16The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents.

17In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. 18But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

19After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. 20Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying,

'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.'

21His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

22And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying,

'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.'

23His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

24Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; 25so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.'

26But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? 27Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest.

28So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. 29For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.

30As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Lord, may Your Word live in us.

And bear much fruit for Your glory.

HYMN “Who Am I?”

– Composer: Mark Hall

Who am I, that the Lord of all the earth

Would care to know my name

Would care to feel my hurt

Who am I, that the Bright and Morning Star

Would choose to light the way

For my ever wandering heart

Not because of who I am
But because of what You've done
Not because of what I've done
But because of who You are

I am a flower quickly fading
Here today and gone tomorrow
A wave tossed in the ocean
Vapor in the wind
Still You hear me when I'm calling
Lord, You catch me when I'm falling
And You've told me who I am
I am Yours, I am Yours

Who am I, that the eyes that see my sin
Would look on me with love and watch me rise again
Who am I, that the voice that calmed the sea
Would call out through the rain
And calm the storm in me

Not because of who I am
But because of what You've done
Not because of what I've done
But because of who You are

I am a flower quickly fading
Here today and gone tomorrow
A wave tossed in the ocean
Vapor in the wind
Still You hear me when I'm calling
Lord, You catch me when I'm falling
And You've told me who I am
I am Yours

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FAMILY TALK

SERMON “Enter into the Joy”

*** 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. Amen.**

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 “Christ Be Our Light”

– Composer: B Farrell

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.

Longing for truth, we turn to you.

Make us your own, your holy people,

light for the world to see.

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.

Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in your church gathered today.

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.

Longing for hope, many despair.

Your word alone has pow’r to save us.

Make us your living voice.

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.

Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in your church gathered today.

Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

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*** COMMISSION AND BLESSING**

Let us go forth to be God's faithful servants.

We will not hide our gifts but share them with everyone we meet.

Let us go forth to be the followers of Jesus.

We will not hold back our compassion but will offer it to all.

Let us go forth to be the Spirit's hope and peace.

We will be the grace, the joy, the wonder others need in their lives.

Concerns of the Church

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

- We continue to remember the war in Gaza and Ukraine; we also remember fighting that is still ongoing in Sudan, Myanmar, and other parts of the world. Peace and stability are not a given, and we pray to God to give us the wisdom, patience and love to recognise and address the root causes of conflicts and work toward eliminating them.
- Last Thursday was the United Nations International Day for Tolerance to commemorate the adoption of the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance by UNESCO on 16 November 1995, which affirms that tolerance is neither indulgence nor indifference. It is respect and appreciation of the rich variety of our world's cultures, forms of expression and ways of being human. We are thankful for the world's diversity of cultures and pray that we recognize and treasure the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of others.
- Kenyans have been given a special holiday to plant trees as part of the government's goal to plant 15 billion trees in 10 years. The government is making available about 150 million seedlings in public nurseries for free. The initiative is intended to help fight climate change as trees help tackle global warming by absorbing carbon dioxide from the air while releasing oxygen into the atmosphere. We pray that world leaders continue to sustain such efforts, which are sorely needed to reverse climate change to ensure that our future generations can have a healthy place to live when we are no longer here.
- Authorities in the northern Indian state of Uttarakhand are racing to rescue around 40 workers who are trapped inside a tunnel that collapsed last Sunday. A nearby landslide caused heavy debris to fall on the tunnel, leading to its collapse. The mounds of debris cut off the oxygen supply to the trapped workers. We pray for the safety of the workers and their anxious families. We also remember the safety conditions for construction workers in Hong Kong, which had recently witnessed three fatal industrial accidents in just four days! As we strive for economic development, let us not forget to protect the safety of the workers in Hong Kong and worldwide and ensure that they are also given a fair share of the fruit of their labour.

- According to the statistics published by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention, the suicide rate for the 15 to 24 age group has risen sharply, with 12.2 deaths per 100,000 people, compared to 10.4 deaths in 2017 and 6.1 in 2014. The Samaritan Befrienders Hong Kong (SBHK) reported that 17 youths had died by suicide between July and October. Academic problems, relationships, and family issues were prime reasons behind youth suicide, and the youngest caller for help on their hotline was just eight years old. We pray for our youths' mental and emotional well-being and hope that schools, parents, and the Education Bureau heed adolescents' needs, alleviate academic pressure, and proactively address their emotional and mental health needs.
- Hong Kong hosted the Gay Games this month, which was originally scheduled for 2022 but was postponed due to the COVID pandemic. The Games were also split with Mexico's Guadalajara, which was appointed as a contingency then and now chosen as a co-host. This arrangement splintered the global attendance and was not helped by the poor public promotion for the event. Furthermore, the event had also been attacked by pro-China conservatives in Hong Kong's Legislative Council, arguing the Games were a "promotion of the gay movement". It could "involve national security issues involving bad ideologies". Such backward views and demagoguery sadden us. We pray that our community supports the promotion of diversity and inclusion through sports, arts and cultural activities, and remembers the struggle this year for LGBT people seeking marriage and housing rights in Hong Kong.

For the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

We lift up in prayer the churches and people of all faiths in East Timor, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

We are **thankful** for:

- the vital witness of churches in this region; the diversity of ethnicities, cultures and religious beliefs
- those who have resisted bravely and worked for human rights, justice, peace and reconciliation, especially the National Council of Churches in the Philippines
- those who protest exploitative mining, deforestation and other environmental damage.

We **pray** for:

- governments in Indonesia, the Philippines, and East Timor, that they will eradicate corruption, establish justice and peace, and work effectively for the wellbeing of all their people
- victims of violence, torture, drug and human trafficking, and human rights violations, that those responsible might be held accountable
- all those affected by earthquakes, tsunamis and other natural disasters, and for the rebuilding of communities afterwards
- ecumenical and interfaith cooperation to bring justice, peace and sustainability to these lands.

For the Congregation

- Pray for those facing health challenges that require body strength restoration: 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, the mothers of Alex Melwani and Sunita Suna. 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.

Thank you – Revd Judy, for her message this morning!

Interfaith Exposure Trip to Plum Village HK

– May the participants have a fruitful experience.

Tapestry Workshop – today at 1:30 -3:30 pm

Workshop organised by the Care & Fellowship Committee to help you design and complete your artwork for the KUC's Centenary Celebration!
Faciliator: Pastor Maggie.

Movie Sunday organised by MOE Committee: 26 November – 1:30 – 3:30 pm

“Sister” - 90-minute film A documentary about the life and work of death penalty abolitionist Sister Helen Prejean. The film examines her life and influences and delves into the evolving role of Catholic nuns in America.

A poignant piece, it follows Sister Helen (best-selling author of *Dead Man Walking*) as she counsels and fights for the stay of execution of Oklahoma death row inmate Richard Glossip.

Clean Up Day

Annual Clean up days will be arranged on 1 & 2 December (Friday & Sat), from 10 am to 4 pm. Come and join us to clean KUCspace and the church at no. 4. It is great fun and a joyful time being together to make our church shine after some deep cleaning. Let's get ready for the new church year on 1st Sunday of Advent.

Broadcast Service

RTHK Radio 4 Sunday today at 11:05 am. You may go to the archive to listen after that. May the Studio Broadcast we prepared and shared connect people to God and bring God all glory and honour! Pastor Phyllis has also recorded today's 8:25am message for "Thought for the Week". You may listen to it on archives on Radio 3, RTHK.

	TODAY 19 November
Liturgist:	Maggie Mathieson
Preacher:	Judy Chan
Pianist:	Katie Ho
Lector:	Ronald Chui
Intercessory Prayers:	Ramon Bultron
Family Talk:	Lydia Cathedral
Greeter:	Lucy Lim, Edith San Juan
Offering Rota:	Anjenette Bolanos, Susan Babasa
Counting Rota	Gabi Baumgartner, Ramon Bultron
Sunday School Leaders:	Mary Adesina, Gabi Baumgartner
I.T. Team:	Venus Cheng, Bervinder Kaur
Freewill offering last week: HK\$3,852.50- Promissory offering last week: HK\$6,350-	