

TRANSFORMING

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FOR

GREATEST

PURPOSE

**UNION
CHURCH**

**annual
report
2019**



**UNION
CHURCH**
佑寧堂



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Trevor Tam (Worship)
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Joanna Yau (Stewardship)

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Interim Senior Pastor's Message

by Michele Bland

The year of 2019 was a year to remember. At various times throughout the year, we were challenged, confronted and conflicted. The protests this summer and fall created a new dynamic and as a church we needed to be nimble. Some services were cancelled and we also needed to be grace-filled and understanding of people who had differing opinions. However, as I reflect on the year, I give thanks, as there were many times in which we celebrated. I give thanks and celebrate the many new ministries and events:



- *Celebrations*

We celebrated 175 years of ministry. The committee worked hard pulling together and honouring this great milestone. Thank-you Anson Wang, Charles Caldwell, Ken Morrison, Catronia Woodrow, Michael Birley, Simon Ng, Linda Ngan, David Ashton-Howorth and Chris Yorks. The theme was Rejoice, Remember and Return and former Pastor Rev. Bill Teng, Pastor Michele and Pastor Eden Fletcher from the Methodist Church (where the event was held) were speakers. We enjoyed hearing from the combined choirs of Hop Yat and Union Church, thank you Forrest Morr and Chris Yorks. To honour the occasion, we hosted the logo entry competition and new mugs were created with the design created by Jack and Jamie Ragless.

We rejoice that Alpha in Hong Kong was 25 years old this year. We give thanks to all the Alpha leaders who served faithfully over the years. Special thanks to Patrick Wilson and Jane Arnett who have championed this ministry.

We also hosted two ONE worship services followed by lunches. These off-site events are wonderful creative opportunities to gather as one large congregation.

- *New worship experiences*

In addition to our regular services, there were two Selah services (contemplative worship) facilitated by Juliana Rotmeyer. There were also two services held at 22A Kennedy Rd - Easter Sunday morning and Carols on the Green at Christmas time. These creative services were refreshing and exciting.

- *Commissioned Stephen's Ministers*

It was exciting to have recruited, trained and then commissioned 19 Stephen's Ministers. These are committed leaders who are giving pastoral care and support to hurting members of our congregation and community. Each leader has received 50 hours of training, meets regularly for supervision and is available for pastoral care.

- *Prayer*

There were more prayer initiatives this year. Weekly Discernment Group, Parents & Prayer, Prayer Walks and Prayer at 22A. There has been ongoing prayer on Tuesday

mornings 7:30am and leaders have regularly been praying for the church using the book Pray the Word.

- *New Leaders*

There was excitement, energy and new members added to various leadership teams, including COM, Missions and the Young Adult Leadership Team.

The Young Adult Leadership Team is a new ministry team that started this fall as young adult's director, Anto Ficatier moved to the UK. We are grateful to leaders Ken Morrison, KK Ip, Joshua Ng and Timothy Ng for meeting with the group and leading weekly studies at Recharge.

- *New Website*

We launched a new website this year using two members of our congregation who wanted to create something new. Thank you Yuya Funabashi and Sophia Jeter.

- *New initiatives*

It has been encouraging to see UC congregants become passionate about a ministry and 'run with it.'

Tess Lyons gave the congregation an opportunity to recycle clothing. Held over two Sundays, including our Filipina congregation, there was lots of participation in sorting, setting up and shopping. Money raised was allocated to FIN and the Ladies Retreat. It was exciting to see the congregation get behind one of our young asylum seekers and support his desire for University. Relationships were formed, money was raised, and he was encouraged in his faith. The fundraiser lunch and bake sale was a great success and it was exciting to see one of our youth, Elise Bland work with FIN to make this happen. It was encouraging to see Andrew Lo become passionate about the ministry of Halftime. He recruited participants and offered a weekend workshop.

- *Retreats*

We hosted an All Church Family Retreat in May, at the Methodist Retreat Centre, Lantau. This was a great connecting opportunity for all those who participated.

There were two day retreats with leaders and staff. Pastor Rob Penner led the teaching times and these were wonderful opportunities to come together as a leadership team. In January, the ladies travelled to Chiang Mai, Thailand for the fourth annual ladies retreat. The leadership team worked hard to create a wonderful experience and 41 ladies attended. It was a time of connection with God and creating community.

- *Maintaining ministries*

We have continued to offer our regular ministries -children, youth, young adult, Recharge, Small Groups, Alpha, mission trips. I am grateful to our ministry leaders and teams. I am grateful to the staff, Pastor Ruth, Chris, Joyce, Monte, Hunter, Jacklien and David. I am also grateful for our leadership teams, this includes members of BUFF, Committee of Management, Deacons, Trustees and HR. It is a privilege to serve alongside them.

We hosted two ladies' dinners, "Sowing Seeds" with speakers Carol LaCave and Diana Broennimann and "Rinse and Repeat" by Sonia Lee. These are encouraging, well attended events and great opportunities to bring a friend and meet a friend. It has been exciting to see leadership grow from these events and ministries.

- *Stewardship*

The people at Union have continued to remain committed to the mission and ministry of Union Church. This includes time, talents and treasure. Thank you for your generous giving of treasure, time and talents.

Union Church continued to host outside speakers and a preaching team was implemented. We have continued to use the sermon series to guide small groups and Recharge materials. The sermon series for 2019 included:

- Good and Beautiful God: Putting on the Character of Christ -Winter
- Crucified Life -Lent
- The Church is...series -May-July
- Prayer -August
- Great Commission, Greatest Commandment, Alpha, Creation Care -September
- Jonah -October
- Stewardship -November
- Names of Messiah -Advent

At a recent leader's retreat, I was encouraged to hear many leaders identify their view of Union Church. Union Church is

- a dynamic engaging place of worship
- a community with diverse worship styles
- a diverse international community
- an inter-denominational and theologically diverse community
- a well-resourced community -in terms of gifting, connections, finances etc.
- a missional church
- a generous church
- desiring to make an impact in the local and community

We have much to offer as individuals and as a congregation. God has placed a great call on all of our lives, may we be good stewards of all that He has given. May the Lord continue to lead us and guide us in 2020.

"May God cast His light into the darkness of our heart. Grant us the right faith, firm hope, perfect charity, profound humility, with wisdom and perception...so that we may always and everywhere seek to know and do what is truly your holy will, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen (adapted from Prayer of St. Francis)

Blessings,



Trustees' Report

by Geoff Lovegrove, Chairman

The Trustees for 2019 were: Mr G Lovegrove (Chairman); Dr Rosanna Chan; Mr A Law; Mrs I Morrison; Dr H Ngan; Prof J Nicholls; and Mrs M Wulfgram. Mrs Morrison retired as a Trustee in September and all are grateful for her 15 years of valuable service.

As described in our Ordinance, the Trustees are the body corporate of Union Church. The Corporation holds the church's property in trust for the purpose of a church for the public worship of God and for preaching the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the principles and usages of Protestant Christians, and for the sole object of spreading the knowledge of Christ, as shall seem most agreeable to the Word of God and not for the purpose of introducing or supporting Presbyterianism, independency, episcopacy or any other form of church order and government about which there may be difference of opinion, but under such form of church government as the members shall direct, and also, subject to such direction, for the instruction of children and adults, for religious and philanthropic purposes and for the providing of a residence for the Minister, provided that the Church shall always accept as its primary standards the Word of God as witnessed to by the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the Trinitarian Doctrine of the Christian Faith and the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. A day to day function of the Trustees is to oversee the management of investments Union Church is fortunate

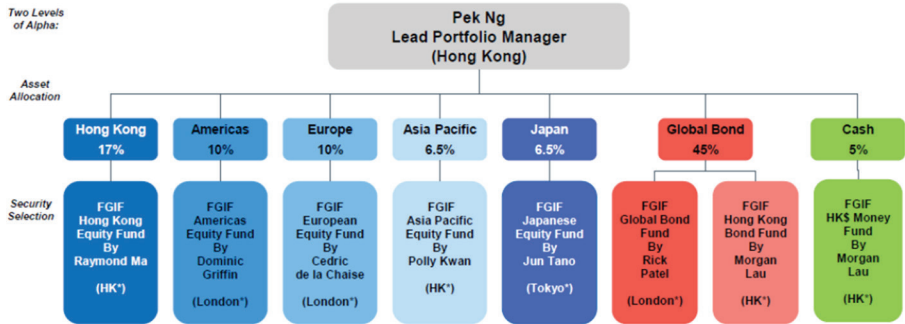
enough to possess through the foresight and good stewardship of our predecessors.

The Church has two main investment funds: the General Fund and the Three-Quarter Century Fund. There are no restrictions on the use of the former; however there are on the latter. The Three-Quarter Century Fund was established shortly after the First World War, about 75 years after the foundation of the Church, and any income or capital can be used only for specified expenses and outgoings connected with maintenance of the Church's Ministry. In effect, the Three-Quarter Century Fund is the investment set aside to ensure that we can continue to employ a Minister should we ever be unable to pay our way.

At the end of 2019 the market value of the General Fund was approximately \$17.300M and of the Three-Quarter Century Fund approximately \$9.766M, each showing a gain for the year of about 13.8%. The General and Three-Quarter Century Funds have gained about 26.0% (26.0%) in the past five years, and gained about 33% in the past 10 years.

The Trustees' objective for the two Funds continues to be to achieve long-term capital growth with a low to medium level of risk exposure. The two Funds are invested in Fidelity Global Investment (FGI) Fund – Stable Growth Fund (Class A), managed by FIL Limited. The FGI Fund is authorised by the Securities & Futures

Structure of the FGIF Stable Growth Fund



Commission and complies with Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority regulations and also meets the Trustees' criteria by having an asset mix of about 50% equities, 45% bonds and 5% cash.

The Trustees do not have personal control over the ethical nature of the companies in which the church's funds are invested so they are not able, for example, to screen out gaming or other stocks they consider inappropriate for the church to hold. However, the Trustees note that Fidelity is a signatory to the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment, a voluntary framework for incorporating Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) issues into investment decision-making and ownership practices.

The Principles for Responsible Investment are consistent with FIL's approach to Corporate Social Responsibility. The ESG concept evolved from Ethical Investing which started many years ago when religious organisations questioned their investments in companies that did not

align with their faith and began making moral choices about where they invested their funds. FIL's approach to responsible investment is as follows:

- always act to protect its clients' economic interests and to maximise their investment returns;
- actively integrate ESG considerations into the investment decision-making process;
- incorporate ESG issues into ownership policies and practices;
- seek appropriate disclosure on ESG issues by entities in which FIL invests; and
- be proactive in strengthening its links within the investment industries, governments, regulators and exchanges around the world in order to determine the most effective ESG initiatives for its investment process and set out a clear marker as to its

commitment to maintain a high ethical standard.

FIL participates in the debate over the development of appropriate standards for responsible investment through its membership in the following forums:

- International Corporate Governance Network (ICGN)
- Asian Corporate Governance Association (ACGA)
- Asia Securities Industry and Financial Markets (ASIFM)
- Hong Kong Investment Funds Association (HKIFA)
- The Association of British Insurers (ABI), the Corporate Governance Forum, Investment Association (IA), and UK Sustainable Investment and Finance Association (UKSIF) in the UK
- The Dutch Association of Investors for Sustainable Development (VBDO)

In addition, Fidelity is a signatory to the UK Stewardship Code and the Japanese Stewardship Code.

In overseeing the management of the Church's investments during 2019, the Trustees summarise the situation as follows:

- (a) the aim of the church's investments is steady growth and income with low to medium risk;

- (b) the funds are managed by FIL Investment Management (Hong Kong) Ltd; and
- (c) the funds are invested 50% in equities in five regional (worldwide) pooled funds, 45% in bonds in two regional (worldwide) pooled funds and 5% cash.

At the request of a member of the congregation, and with his considerable knowledge and assistance, the Trustees are looking into alternative fund options that give better returns and fall into the category of being SRI (socially responsible investing) or ESG (environmental, social and governance) factors. This is ongoing and a conclusion is expected within the next few months.

The Chater (Union Church) Endowment Fund is an endowment fund that is too small to be managed alongside the General and Three Quarter Century Funds. Invested in Hang Seng H Share Exchange Traded Funds (with a small amount of cash), the Fund was valued at \$90,546 at the end of 2019 showing a gain of about 3.4% for the year. No disbursement was made from the Fund to the Committee of Management which, in accordance with the Fund's Deed, is responsible for the use of any income.

The Trustees have been represented in redevelopment discussions (through the BUFF steering committee as reported elsewhere) by Dr R. Chan with professional advisors when required on matters relating to tax, land matters, charitable status,

agreements with the Developer and landlord of temporary premises, insurance and the reversion clause set out in the Church's Ordinance. On the advice of tax and legal advisors the Trustees have agreed to maintain control of the property up to the time when long leases for residential apartments are sold to third parties to pay the Developer's costs, profit and fees. The reversion clause in our Ordinance states that if we cease to use our premises (or any substituted for them) for the purposes of the trust outlined above for more than two years then instead the Trustees must hold the Church's assets in trust for the London Missionary Society in Hong Kong. The courts ruled (in 2016) that the implementation and completion of the proposed redevelopment and the granting of leases in respect of the flats/parking spaces of the proposed redevelopment would not trigger the reversion. Appendices to the Agreement

signed in April 2017 concerning long lease and management agreement pro-formas for the residential apartments being sold on long leases are still being finalised in consultation between the Church's and Developer's legal advisors. The Trustees wish to express their gratitude to the members of the congregation who are contributing their skills and time working on BUFF steering committee and who have overcome the many hurdles that are part and parcel of implementing a redevelopment such as the church is planning. The Trustees remain confident in the proposed redevelopment which means that today's congregation can leave a church for many future generations to come that is both financially secure and can remain independent.

Geoff Lovegrove

Chairman



Deacons' Court

by Charles Caldwell, Clerk

“Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom and continues in it – not forgetting what they have heard but doing it – they will be blessed in what they do.” James 1:23-25

During 2019 and early 2020, the Deacons Court consisted of Alexander Mak, Brian Woo, Catriona Woodrow, Charles Caldwell, Christine Wu, Ken Morrison, Roy Huang, Shlivya Dhavale, Steven Kim, Yan Yu, and Terri Appel. Early in the year both Steven and Roy stepped down from being Deacons. Towards the end of the year, Catriona and Christine stepped down. The Deacons are grateful for their service and commitment to the Lord and Union Church. Typically, the Deacons Court formally meets monthly, but 2019 saw the Deacons meeting more regularly to pray for the church and find ways to engage with the congregation.

As early as January 2018 a church-wide prayer commenced, initially for just thirty days, “Lord, change me and use me. Lord, change Union Church and use Union Church!” At time of writing, the Deacons and Prayer Chain have been keeping this prayer close to their hearts now for 868 days.

Since our last AGM in March 2019, Hong Kong has been marked by at least two significant challenges – months of protests, initially peaceful but subsequently morphing into violent demonstrations seldom seen before in Hong Kong; followed by a global pandemic identified in early 2020 and leading to virtual lockdown in much of the world up until the present. This time last year neither of these events could ever have been imagined, As the containment procedures for preventing further spread of COVID19 have met with some success here in Hong Kong, it is evident that the violent protests have been rekindled and are at risk of continuing.

The consequence of such challenges has required Union Church to think carefully about how we “do church” in these somewhat surreal times. This has resulted in innovative solutions including livestreaming of Sunday worship services, “Zoom meetings” for bible studies, Small Groups, prayer meetings and other virtual “gatherings” where physical meetings at Sunlight Tower have not been possible. We have clearly been reminded that church is not the physical location but rather the Body of Christ wherever located.

At the March 2019 AGM, members of the congregation were encouraged to join with Deacons to form a Prayer and Discernment Group to begin praying and discerning God’s leading for Union Church. The group began meeting weekly from March 2019 and, to a large extent, has been doing right

up until early 2020 when physical meetings at Sunlight were no longer possible. Through these regular and committed times of prayer several themes began to emerge:

- We discerned that God was calling us to a time of waiting and stillness before Him;
- That it was a time for humility rather than pride; for confession, repentance, healing; and for “putting our house in order” through greater alignment and unity amongst our leadership bodies and within the congregation;
- That it was a time to reject fear and to acknowledge our loving Father God as the true source of wisdom and joy;
- Consequently, it was a time to truly seek His wisdom and guidance for Union Church rather than relying on our own “human wisdom”.

At the congregational family meeting in June 2019, we informed the congregation of these themes and that we strongly believed that God was calling us to wait and to continue during this “interim period” with Pastor Michele in the role of Interim Senior Pastor.

During the latter part of 2019 and early 2020, the Deacons met with a number of Small Groups and some ministries, such as Youth and the Choir, to hear and discuss their “joys and concerns” for the

church. In addition, after much prayer and seeking God’s guidance, the Prayer and Discernment Group and Deacons discerned that the season of waiting was drawing to a close. This was further discussed among the Joint Leaders in early 2020.

In addition, at a Leadership Retreat in January 2020 there was clear consensus and appreciation of how the Lord had been moving and transforming Union Church. Joy and gratitude were expressed for the visible unity present amongst us. There was also grateful recognition and appreciation not only for the way Pastor Michele has led us during the interim period but also for how she has generously shared the “Father’s Heart and Love” amongst us.

In light of her giftings and the importance of a united Christ-centred community of faith during both the interim period and the forthcoming transition back to 22A Kennedy Road, the Deacons together with the Committee of Management strongly felt that God was calling Pastor Michele as our next Senior Pastor. (Pastor Michele had herself been seeking the Lord’s leading on this matter and she too believed that the Lord was calling her to serve Union Church as our next Senior Pastor.)

Consequently, and in accordance with the Ordinance, the Joint Leaders have recommended Pastor Michele to be approved as Senior Pastor by the congregation at the forthcoming AGM; we pray that she will receive the congregation’s strong support and endorsement.

In addition, embracing feedback from the March 2019 AGM, as early as August 2019 the Deacons embarked on seeking candidates to join the Deacons Court. Some of these individuals began shadowing the Deacons meetings as early as November 2019. We have nominated several new candidates for approval at the AGM and, if approved, for induction as Deacons, they are Grace Siu, Verena Mooser, Wanda Yuen, Joshua Ng, Malama Pilae and Cornelius Staalman.

Going forward, we encourage our congregation to join us in further prayer and discernment to seek God's leading for the way forward to the "New 22A and beyond". We can foresee significant challenges ahead for Hong Kong. May we be a people of hope in the midst of such challenges.

The vision statement of Union Church is "making mature followers in all nations for Christ, through our united lifestyle, witness and mission." May this be so. And may we always cherish and give thanks for the love and grace of God which we receive so freely, yet at such great cost to our Saviour!

On behalf of the Deacons' Court

Charles Caldwell, Clerk



Commissioning Stephen's Ministry

Committee of Management Report

by Anson Wang, Chairman

Serving God is one of the most important principles of the Christian faith, as believers are expected to serve the church with a joyful spirit Mark 10:45: “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

The 11 volunteers who serve on Union Church’s Committee of Management (COM) are responsible for managing the temporal affairs of the Church, ranging from human resources and stewardship to legal affairs and property. In addition, each member of COM serves either as a liaison for one or more of Union’s ministries, or as the point person for a functional area.

This year’s COM members were:

Anson Wang, Chairman and Property

Michael Birley, Vice Chairman and Missions

George Ding, Hon. Treasurer and HR

Timothy Ng, Deputy Treasurer and Young Adult Ministry

Bronwyn Alexander, Hon. Secretary

Doris Cheung, Deputy Secretary and Youth Ministry

Andrew Lo, Adult Education

Juliana Rotmeyer, Ladies Fellowship and liaison with BUFF

Trevor Tam, Worship

Jonathan Ah-Weng, Children’s Ministry

Joanna Yau, Stewardship

2019 was an exciting and eventful year. Union Church celebrated its 175 years of ministry in Hong Kong. A Special Celebration Service was held in October 2019. Rev. Dr. Michele Bland led the service along with Rev. Dr. Judy Chan, Rev. Eden Fletcher, Rev Bill Teng, Rev. Ruth Tablada and Rev. Dr. Daniel Hui. Choir directors, Forrest Morr and Elly Leung led the Hop Yat Church and Union Church choirs. In celebration of the service, a fund raising as an offering to support two of Union Church’s current mission partners, the Light of the World Church and pre-school in Myanmar and the Kun Sun Association in Hong Kong was a success. It is not surprising that, having been founded by the London Missionary Society, Union Church has always been a mission-focused church.

We thank the Methodist International Church for hosting us.

Also we thank the anniversary committee who met to pray and plan. Thank you, Pastor Michele, Ken Morrison, Dr. Simon Ng, Catriona Woodrow, Charles Caldwell, Michael Birley, Chris York, David Ashton-Howorth, Linda Ngan and Anson Wang.

Union Church is one of the oldest

institutions in Hong Kong. We have been blessed and sustained by the Grace of God over global wars, change in sovereignty, global financial crisis and through the Sars epidemic.

The redevelopment of 22A, Kennedy Road, continues apace, with completion of Foundation in March 2020 and commencement of superstructure in April as scheduled. The BUFF steering committee continues to manage relationships with Henderson and anticipates receiving the Occupation Permit in December 2022 and Handover to Union Church and the entire project in April/June 2023.

In 2019, our Interim Senior Pastor Michele Bland and team led and built a united God centered Church working together with God's plan for Union Church. We are one body with many parts, Staff Team, Deacons, COM and Trustees all working as one. Each one is a unique part of the body of Christ.

On the pastoral staff side, Anton Ficatier, Director of Young Adults/Men's Ministry departed for the UK and is continuing to serve in the ministry. He was replaced by Dan Tupps.

As I conclude my three-year term on COM and my year as Chairman, I would like to thank all the members of COM for their hard work and commitment. It has also been a great honor and privilege to work with the entire Union staff, especially Pastor Michele. Romans 12:11: "Never

be lacking in zeal but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. "

May the Lord continue to guide us and bless us in our work at Union Church.



Encourage

“Yet, LORD my God, give attention to your servant’s prayer and his plea for mercy. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence.” 2 Chronicles 6:19

Praise the Lord as we see God moving in and amongst the lives of our church family through our united prayers!

The Prayer Chain, with its corresponding Whatsapp group, remains the backbone of the Prayer Ministry Team at Union Church. However, we have experienced significant increased corporal prayer through other means this year as well.

The Prayer Chain has retained its level of email and Whatsapp participant numbers with over one hundred praying saints receiving a variety of prayer requests from the Union Church family. In the four-year history of the WhatsApp Prayer Chat, the busiest day of prayer was 10 April, 2020. The chat averages 13 prayers per day and each prayer averages just shy of twelve words each – God loves all types and lengths of prayer! Since January 2018 we have continued the daily scriptures in the “Change Me, Use Me” prayer and prayers for Union and Hong Kong. We have been praying “Change Me, Use me” prayers for well over two years and praying for our city for almost one year.

God has been revealing His plans for Union Church, in individual lives, families’ lives and the corporate life of the church, in mighty ways as we reflect upon the answers to prayer we have seen over this

Prayer Ministry by Charles Caldwell

year. The many messages have provided encouragement, inspiration, and revelation of spiritual truths for participants.

In 2019, we also saw continued growth within the prayer team activity after each Sunday Service with our team of volunteers at the ready to pray with members of the congregation for various prayer needs and requests. Each volunteer wearing a small tag reading “Need Prayer?”, stood diligently in various locations around the sanctuary looking for, and prepared to pray for, anyone who needed their ministry in this manner.

In 2019, we started our weekly prayer and discernment prayer group. Throughout the year up to 35 participants met weekly to pray and discern God’s will for Union Church as we move into our immediate future. This group met to share prayers, bible verses, words of knowledge and reflect on areas requiring repentance in intercession for our church. There were many invitations to the congregation to join in this prayer activity this year through the Acts@22A and in Sunday services. The group also shared some of the prayers and revelations discerned during these meetings with the congregation on a few occasions in both written and spoken forms, seeking broader input and participation from our church family over the year. Due to these efforts the group celebrated a wide representation of the Union family with members from each service, small group leaders, ministry team members, staff members, joint leadership members and

some younger Sunday School and Youth members joining in from time to time.

Despite social unrest and COVID19 shutdowns, we have seen many prayer groups spontaneously burst out and have been encouraged by the increasing number of people attending these sessions. Every Tuesday morning a small, intimate group of intercessors meet at Sunlight Tower to pray for Union Church, the congregation and many other local, regional, or global prayer items. The Wednesday evening group, small groups focusing on prayer training, the UC ladies' retreats Whatsapp prayer group, small group prayer sessions at the construction site at 22A Kennedy Road. God is on the move in the prayers of His People, but we invite everyone reading this to persevere in prayer, seeking the Lord's

will and listening for His voice in everything you do: giving glory to God - Father Son and Holy Spirit.

As a Prayer Ministry team, we are privileged to come alongside you in prayer. We encourage people to contact us with prayer requests or come and serve with us if you have a passion for prayer. We pray that the Lord will change us, use us, change Union Church and use Union Church. Join us in prayer and watch what astonishing things God has in store for our future.

“Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.” Jeremiah 33:3.

E-mail: prayer@unionchurchhk.org



4th Annual Ladies Retreat, Chiang Mai

Educate

Adult Education & Small Groups by Monte Peterson

At Union, we seek to help all our members and friends grow in LOVE of God as well as KNOWLEDGE of God, with the goal that it overflows into every part of our lives (Philippians 1:9). 2019 offered different kinds of challenges, but also the opportunity of learning to be flexible, to be creative, and to maintain unity in the midst of disagreement. Thanks be to God for all we have learned and are learning, together, for the glory of God and the sake of our city.

ReCharge: Wednesday nights were hoppin' in 2019! ReCharge involves food, fellowship, worship and study, and this year's class offerings included a series on prayer and a series on justice, The Good and Beautiful God, The Crucified Life, Job, Jonah, Revelation and Celebration of Disciplines. Guest speakers and teachers included: Brittney Tsang, Isabella Ng, Matt Peterson, Terri Appel, Juliana Rotmeyer, Catriona Woodrow, Erica and Wade Wollin, Josh Powell, and Chris Fung. ReCharge also included Stephen's Ministry training, young adult classes, youth classes as well as a prayer and discernment group.

Church-wide Studies: Several times throughout the year, the entire church participated in a study that included a sermon series, ReCharge classes and small groups. This year we studied The Good and Beautiful God by James Bryan Smith, a Lent study on The Seven Last Words of Christ and Tim Keller's The Prodigal Prophet, about Jonah.

Family Retreat: Rooted and Nourished in Christ. Last spring, a group of families and adults gathered at the Methodist Retreat center on Lantau for a time of intergenerational fellowship, worship, learning and fun.

Book Group: The Union Book group returned in 2019, and we enjoyed gathering to discuss Elinor Oliphant is Completely Fine by Gail Honeyman, Everything I Never Told You by Celeste Ng, The Reason, by William Sirls and Dearly Beloved, by Cara Wall.

Sunday lunches: In addition to the Sunday lunch studies following along with the sermon series, we also had several special speakers on Sunday afternoons. Catriona Woodrow brought us insights several times from the Jewish faith, Roger Lam spoke about stewardship, and Yan Yu led us in an Evangelism Workshop.





Bless the City: On May 4, 2019, Jesus' love was shared throughout Hong Kong in tangible ways:

- 225 Toiletry kits were packed, including 95 gift bags for Sons and Daughters to use in their outreach, 50 men's kits for Impact HK, and 75 women's kits for other organisations
- We shared peace boxes, lunch, fellowship and home visits with 50 elderly neighbours
- We shared a picnic lunch, fellowship and stories with 30 refugee women and their children
- A group learned about and prayed for vulnerable teens in Mong Kok with Teen's Key

- The art jam in Tamar Park offered cookies, conversation and the opportunity to paint to passers-by.

Right Now Media: This year we gave access to Right Now Media to all Union members, friends and guests. Right Now Media is an online library of Bible studies, speakers, training, Children's videos and more, and is a fantastic resource for small groups, families and individuals.

Small Groups continue to be an important place of connection and growth at Union. We have small groups for men, women, couples and mixed groups, as well as families. Groups use a variety of curricula, including church-wide studies, Bible studies, and topical book studies. This year Yan Yu also began a lunchtime study group, offering classes on the books of Revelation and Ezekiel.

Young Adults by Young Adults Ministry Team

YOUNG ADULTS

The past year has been a time of change and rebuilding in this important ministry. We saw the departure of the Young Adults Director, Anto Ficatier, and his wife Jess in July last year as they returned to UK to be closer to family and to begin a new chapter in ministry with an Anglican church in Surrey.

While advertising for a replacement director for Young Adults, a small team from the congregation – KK Ip, Joshua Ng, Timothy Ng and Ken Morrison – stepped in to support the ministry. This involved, primarily, encouraging young adults to attend ReCharge which recommenced in September on Wednesday evenings. We had a small but committed group of participants (all from very different backgrounds) and enjoyed engaging in a thought-provoking study on the Beatitudes by Rev Tim Keller. This led on to a further challenging Tim Keller study – The Prodigal Prophet. We are still in the midst of this study which, like many other meetings and ministries, has (temporarily!) been curtailed by the current coronavirus pandemic.

However, the good news is that at the beginning of March this year we have been able to welcome Dan Tupps as the new Young Adults Director at Union Church. Dan has considerable multi-cultural ministry experience, having previously served in ministry for 11 years in Hong Kong, 9 of which were with the Hong Kong Mandarin

Bible Church, involved in pastoring English-speaking youth and young adults; and for 2 years as Pastor of Discipleship at Alliance International Church in Hong Kong. Dan has a degree in Biblical Studies, an M.A. in Ministry Studies, and is in the final stages of a doctorate in Intercultural Studies. His passions include discipling, shepherding and teaching/preaching and to use these gifts in helping to transform the lives of others.

There is no doubt that with Dan joining us in his new full time role, this will add greatly to the Young Adults ministry at Union Church. We just need to get past this current coronary virus “hurdle” – or perhaps “opportunity”!

Report Submitted by

The Young Adults Ministry Team



Youth by Hunter Purvis

YOUTH MINISTRY

Overview

2019 has been a year of growth and adaptation for our Youth Group at Union Church

There have been no significant changes to **Youth Ministry Staff** – Hunter Purvis has continued as Youth Director and works alongside Youth Assistant, Justin Cheong, as well as numerous adult volunteers and leaders.

2019 was another important year for our **Confirmation Program**, with 4 youth undertaking the Confirmation process and affirming their personal relationship with Christ with the support of the congregation.

During the year an average of 27 youth came each week for our **Friday Youth Group**. There were some challenges with the disruption caused by the continued unrest in HK, but our Youth adapted and have remained committed. For **Sunday Youth Group**, there are now more than 32 Youth regularly attending weekly. We are encouraged by this rapid growth, especially on Sundays and continue to pray that God will sustain and inspire the young people of Union Church.

In terms of **Missions**, our Youth Group participated in several local initiatives with partner organisations (ICM, Impact HK, Sons and Daughters) and also travelled abroad for an annual **Mission**

Trip to the Philippines, in October, with Kids International Ministries (KIM). A team of **Union Youth also traveled to Hengyang, China**, in April to work with disabled children in cooperation with International China Concern (ICC). Finally, at the **Christmas Banquet** this year, we raised over \$120,000 HKD for KIM and Youth Missions, surpassing our ambitious goal! This is all down to the hard work of our Youth and adult leaders as well as the generosity of the Union Church congregation. Thank you for your continued support and encouragement!

Union Youth Group would not exist without our faithful group of **adult volunteers** who willingly give their time and energy every week to educate and connect with our youth. Their passion for mentoring and guiding young disciples is what makes the Youth Group work. As the Youth Director I want to personally thank each and every one for their dedication and commitment.

Goals for 2020

1. Continue to Equip Youth with practical and relevant skills/behaviours

Scripture is replete with down to earth, practical advice and examples of how to live our lives in a way that glorifies God and is dedicated to our neighbours. As in 2019, we will engage the Youth and equip them with skills and practices that they can utilise in their everyday lives in school, with

family, friends and more. **We want to sustain and expand a ‘tool box’ of healthy, Christ-oriented behaviours** that are useful and relevant in their daily lives.

2. Build a Passion for Scripture

In everything that we do at Union Youth we want to center ourselves on the revelation of God’s work through the scriptures. **This year we are looking to build a strong foundation in Old and New Testament** through multiple channels such as Small Groups, Bible Studies, ReCharge Series, Sunday Youth, one-on-one meetings and more.

3. Continue to Build up Student Leaders

One of the greatest successes of the last couple years has been the development and continuing growth of leaders from within the Youth. **We want to continue to build Youth up and equip them to be leaders in their faith** and give them opportunities to create curriculum, share testimony, lead Church activities and more.



Children's Ministry by Jacklien Lee

*“Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.”
Psalm 118:1*

We give thanks to God for he is good and faithful throughout all the good times and challenging times we had in year 2019. Despite the challenging times that our church families and our beloved city Hong Kong faced for the latter half of 2019, we can still see evidence of God's work in and through His people and these circumstances.

This evidence can be seen in the relationship that blossomed as children and their families continue to praise and worship God together with other families despite the logistical difficulties. Their desire to learn more about Jesus and His words through Sunday School lessons and in showing compassion and love for others by visiting and spending time with underprivileged families, people with disabilities and by reaching out to family members and



others who have yet to know Christ. Most of all, our children and their families have the desire to walk closer with Jesus and have His words be the lamp upon their feet.

In 2019, the Children's Ministry organised many programs for our families such as monthly Parents in Prayer meetings; where parents gathered together in a small group setting and prayed for each other's children while the children also gathered and prayed in a separate corner of the room. We also



organised monthly Senior Sunday School Students Outings for the oldest group of Sunday School. They met up once a month after Sunday School class and spent the whole Sunday afternoon bonding with each other over lunch and fun activities. This wonderful group of Senior kids finally graduated from our Sunday School in June 2019. We celebrated their achievements, blessed them and prayed over them as they continue on their journey to seek Christ through the Youth Group program.

Then we had EASTER Sunday, titled “Unconditional Love” where children learned about Jesus’s unconditional love for us through His death and resurrection. The children journeyed together in small groups through three interactive stations starting with Jesus Before Pilate, the Crucifixion and ending their journey at the Jesus Resurrection station. We closed off our Easter Sunday program with a fun Easter egg hunt.

As part of our annual family education program, we organised a Child Disrupted documentary movie screening which was followed by a talk of Theology and Technology by our previous Young Adult Director; Antonin Ficatier. Parents were shown facts and glimpses of the effects of technology that impact on children’s development through the movie. Both children and parents were given a safe space to brainstorm and engage in an interactive discussion regarding the topic. It was an informative, engaging, meaningful and helpful session for our families as they

found ways to make use of technology in a safe and responsible way and at the same time honouring God.

In 2019 Vacation Bible School (VBS), the children had tons of fun ROARing! A shout out to our wonderful Youth Group kids who



helped made ROAR VBS one of the most memorable times for our young children. Through ROAR VBS, the children also learned that God is Good even when life is unfair, scary, changing or sad and not only good when life is good.

Our 2019 Hallelujah Party had to be postponed for two weeks from the original date and with God’s grace it was able to proceed despite the challenging circumstances. The “Daniel in the Lion’s Den” theme of the Hallelujah Party was bustling with families and friends enjoying



a live performance by Dove Tales Theatre. The afternoon was also filled with lots of fun games and activities for children and families to enjoy together.

In December, our children shared the joy of the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ with their families and friends through a fantastic performance of “Christmas Under Construction”, the Children’s Musical. Their amazing acts and singing of the Nativity songs was thoroughly enjoyed by all. The children also shared the joy of Jesus’s birth with the local community by performing the Christmas Musical for the residents and workers at the Home of Loving Faithfulness. Then we continued with a Christmas Program for the children under the care of the St. Barnabas Society & Home.

In 2019, we gave thanks to God and bade

farewell to Pei Quan So who served Sunday School faithfully during her time with us. We also said goodbye to some of our Sunday School teachers who returned to their home countries in summer: Tinja Wright (Scotland), Jessica Ficatier (England) and Jacqueline Hirs (USA).

We also warmly welcomed Tingting Liu on board as our Children’s Ministry Assistant and Alia Eyres, Elizabeth Pang, Rachel Ye, David Tong, Jefferson Cheung, Joseline Chia, Julia Hu, Koon Wee, Philip Savio, LTS students such as Ling Naing and Langh Cin Kim and Youth Helpers such as Abigail Lee, Giselle Lee, Joy Tan and Jonathan Chan to our Sunday School teacher’s team and Arleen Teves, Cristina Yangkin, Kris Tine, and Michelle Bergabenia to our Creche team.

Our Sunday School teachers and all of our volunteers are the heart of the Children's Ministry. Their love and passion in sharing and modelling God's words with the children, their enthusiasm and energy to play and have fun with the children, their patience, dedication and commitment to the calling are what I call 'super heroes'! On behalf of Union Church and all of the families, I would like to thank each and

every one for their heart for Jesus and His little children.

It is our vision in Children's Ministry to raise our children for God's Kingdom and we want to do that by working together with our parents in helping our children to continue to grow in their faith in Jesus Christ and in their relationships with each other and their community for the coming year.



Evangelise

Alpha by Patrick Wilson, Alpha Course Administrator

We started off 2019 by running a Lunchtime Alpha course. This was our first lunchtime course and we had about 12 guests. While it was challenging to keep to the one-hour time slot, there is obviously a need for such a mid week course so we plan to repeat it in the future.

In May, Jo Yau and Jeff Cheung hosted our second “The Marriage Course”. Jo and Jeff had been guests on the previous TMC so it was very encouraging to see them step up to host this course. Again, we had 8 couples taking part and they enjoyed their date night in the Fellowship Hall which had been transformed into a cosy restaurant. We were pleased that the course was well received and so we plan to run it again in the future. Next time, we hope to use the brand new material that is due in early 2020.

In September, we ran another evening Alpha course and, like last year, we included

Alpha as one of the courses offered in the ReCharge programme on Wednesday evenings. However, with a bigger group this time, we ran it in the Sanctuary. Once more, we went to Tao Fong Shan for our Away Day and were blessed with the Holy Spirit’s presence on a perfect autumn afternoon.

In November during a One Worship service, we celebrated that Union Church had run Alpha continuously for 25 years. We marked the occasion with two very large cakes and remembered with gratitude how, over the years, Alpha ‘graduates’ had taken the course to over 20 countries in the world!

I would like to thank our Core Team members, group leaders and helpers, church staff and food donors who have helped so much with running The Marriage Course and Alpha last year. Finally, we thank God for his faithfulness and give Him the glory for all He has done and continues to do through these ministries. Here’s to the next 25 years!



Prison Ministry

MEN - NICK APPEL

Union Church has been partnering with the Hong Kong Christian Kun Sun Association and serving at Stanley Prison for 11 years serving the Other Nations (Non-Chinese) inmates meeting on the 2nd Saturday of every month. The classes started with an average of around 15 men joining the classes. Now each month we average 60 and have moved from one to two classes per visit. Highlights of the last year included two brothers who were baptised in the prison and shared their testimonies. The team took turns to share a message, and lead worship and discussion questions focusing on the book 'Learning to love God' by Navpress. For the 2019 Christmas service, Union Church partnered with the worship team from Youth With a Mission team to run a joyful communion celebration of Jesus glorious birth. In addition to serving with their hands and feet, Union Church volunteers actively

participated in assisting KSA promote their flag day fundraising and sell gold flags even though KSA had to cancel the flag day event itself due to safety issues related to the civil protests. Union Church further assisted KSA by a special offering at our 175th Anniversary Celebration service.

WOMEN - YAN YU

There are 14 ladies on the team, led by Yan Yu. We launched in December 2018 and visit on the first Monday morning of the even months. Each time a team of nine go, visiting two groups of female prisoners in the Tai Lam correctional institution. We sing worship songs with the prisoners, then one of us would share a short evangelistic message or testimony, before breaking into groups to pray. We have seen people committing their lives to Christ and we feel blessed by this ministry ourselves.

Prayer does not change God, but it changes him who prays. Søren Kierkegaard



Families In Need Ministry

The Families in Need (FIN) Ministry was originally set up during the financial crisis in 2008 to help and minister to families and individuals in our congregation who were facing financial, emotional, health issues and other difficulties. FIN's mission is to come alongside them in necessary and appropriate ways as brothers and sisters in Christ. Any assistance offered is temporary and a bridge to help people come to a place where they are able to manage their challenges independently.

Over the past five years, in addition to members of our church family, a number of refugees and asylum seekers have also sought the assistance of FIN for their very apparent and immediate need just to survive day to day (the Hong Kong government does not provide sufficient financial support or any other support and asylum seekers are not permitted to work except in very exceptional cases).

Jesus has a special place in His heart for the poor and marginalised. FIN believes that we would be derelict in our faith if we do not make a sincere and conscientious effort to minister to the most vulnerable in our community. Some of those we are helping are from non-Christian backgrounds and cultures. We see this as an outreach opportunity to introduce them to Christ. They have been attending our services on Sundays and some have been coming to ReCharge.

This past year our congregation, through FIN, has helped an asylum seeker attend

university in Hong Kong. In addition, this person has set up and been a part of several groups working to empower other asylum seekers and thereby change society's view of them as being totally dependent on others' support to becoming able to contribute to and enrich our community.

As we follow God's lead, we are seeing exciting possibilities that only He can create. FIN feels we are doing our part in answering God's call to meet people's needs where they are. FIN has also joined a city-wide effort to support refugees and asylum seekers as part of the Refugee Ministry Group and the new Refugee Concern Network.

FIN is comprised of Pastor Michele Bland, Charles Schmitt, Brian Woo and Isabel Morrison. We are funded through donations, one-off gifts and continuing gifts from our church family. Recipients and use of funds are subject to FIN's vetting process.

Thank you for your continued support!

‘Elderly Visit’ by Theresa Cheung

China Coast Community in Kowloon Tong is the only home in Hong Kong caring for 40+ English speaking seniors. Union Church’s Elderly visit commenced with their 1st visit on Sun, 22nd April 2018. We were given visiting days every 2-3 months.

The objectives of the visits were: reaching out, building friendships, caring, sharing and touching lives for Christ. Such joy to bless the elderlies and forgotten generation and much nearer to glory! Residents participate in various gentle activities and sing along to old popular songs. Our presentation of Christian songs or familiar hymns and sharing a short and light gospel message so encourages the believing residents. After several visits even a Hindu resident is praising Jesus!

Thank the Lord, young adults, the youth group, various musicians and members from Union Church visited and so blessed the residents. Bagpipe music was played on St Andrew’s day and was so appreciated and especially enjoyed by some Scottish residents there. Children’s participation are such a blessing to residents. Younger ones learning to relate to the older generation through connecting and conversing with them. Such joy to lift the spirits of the residents and so pleasing to hear one elderly gentleman say “come back again”. We also blessed the residents with specified and requested food gifts. Praise the Lord that fund raising through arts and craft sales in the church blessed various expenses of the Elderly Visits.

Lord, bless and lead our plans ahead as Catriona helps with planning. This year we aim to: 1) continue to bless the elderlies at China Coast Community, 2) pray for more elderly visitors to enable one to one visits for residents, strengthening love, friendship, trust and quality time to pray together, 3) involve other local elderly ministries more. Lord willing!

Thank and bless all who lovingly participated in touching the lives of the elderlies at CCC!

Missions by the Missions Committee

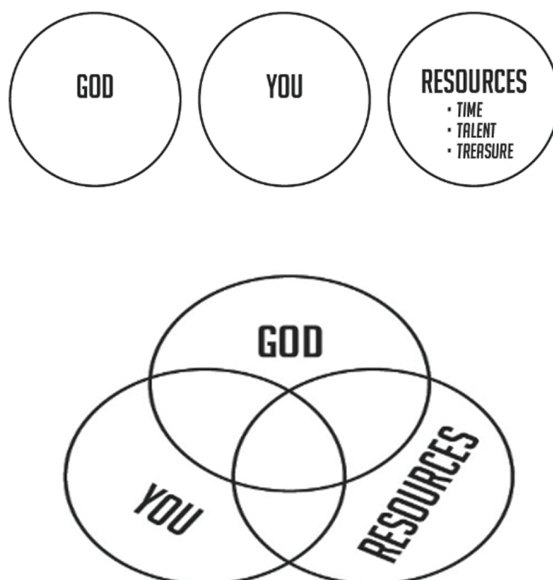
Following in the tradition of our founder James Legge of the London Missionary Society, Union Church is still identified today both locally and internationally as being a missional church. The commitment and engagement of our church membership in supporting both local and international Christian mission organisations and individual missionaries represents the core of who we are.

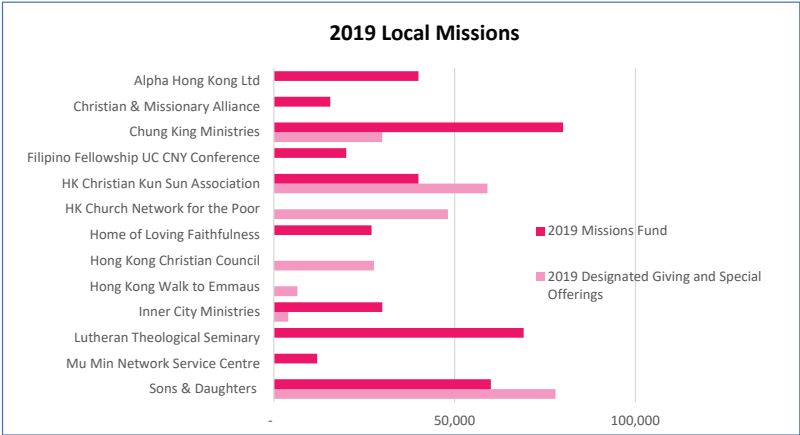
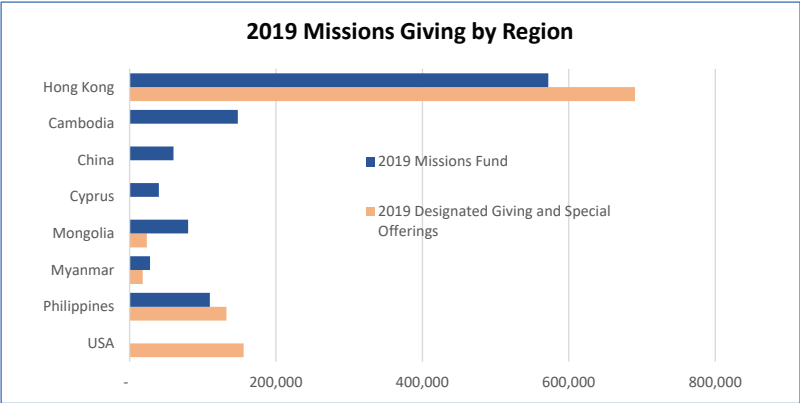
THE THREE T'S

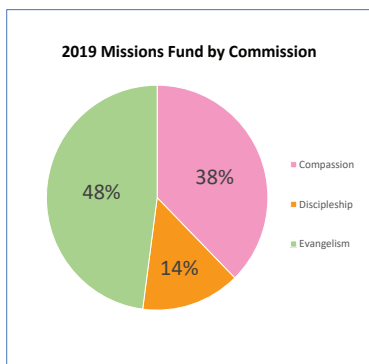
During Union Church's 175th anniversary year, the Missions Committee has taken up many new initiatives to engage our church family in the opportunities to use our Time, Talents and Treasures into what we can call "KingdomNomics". We apply these principles in the decisions that determine

how we invest our time, our talent and our treasure, the "three Ts" of kingdom advancement. As we take on this new life in Christ (Galatians 2:20), we do so with the understanding that how we expend those three Ts echoes in eternity.

The below diagram illustrates what lies at the core of how we interact with God in this concept of KingdomNomics. There is God, You, and then there are your resources—everything we can use or interact with in this world, including the 3Ts: time, talent, and treasure. Thanks to you, Union Church is blessed to have a congregation that can contribute all three of these resources in abundance.







INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL MISSIONS

This past year you may have seen some of our secret agents strategically placed in the fellowship hall before and after our services wearing their “Mission Possible” signage. Our mission? To engage and challenge each of us to get involved into any one of the many local and international mission organisations that UC Missions support, or even some that we learn about through you!

2019 saw the growth, and deepening of relationships with our mission partners. Union Church continues to equally emphasise our active support for, and participation in, both International and Local Missions. UC had many successful overseas mission trips last year including to Myanmar, China, and the Philippines. Although some planned International mission trips have had to be postponed of late due to COVID-19, UC Missions will continue to partner with our overseas partner ministries to provide a broad range of mission trip opportunities for all members of UC’s congregation, once

it’s safe and practical to do so. This year we anticipate possible trips to Cambodia, Mongolia, the Philippines, and perhaps some other destinations where all of us can employ our individually God given resources of time, talent, and treasure. Please stay tuned.

On the domestic side of missions, we grew deeper in our relationships with local mission organisations, helping some of them with food, clothing, and cleaning and personal hygiene provisions. Some of the organisations that benefited from these drives were Mu Min, Sons & Daughters, and the Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor. In these unprecedented times of COVID-19, our call to show God’s love to the world is needed now more than ever, to be salt & light, and to be the hands and feet of Jesus wherever we are (Matthew 25:31-46). This starts in our immediate neighbourhood. UC Missions will continue to look for opportunities to reach out to the vulnerable population amongst us, including the elderly, the poor and the homeless. We look forward with a collective great hope and anticipation to do our part in the furtherance of Jesus’ “Great Commission” (Matthew 28:16-20). Come and join us!

Worship by Chris Yorks

*“Behold, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs forth; do you not
perceive it? I am making a way in the
wilderness and rivers in the desert.”
(Isaiah 43:19).*

It was a year of worship, challenges, prayer, new initiatives and anniversary for Union’s worship ministries. Thank you all for your servant hearts and commitment throughout 2019!

WORSHIP MINISTRIES

The 8:45 Communion Service is in its tenth year averaging 40-50 people and has grown this year in attendance. It continues to bless our congregation through a committed group of attendees and still attracts new worshippers and early risers. This fulfills the need for family communion offered on a weekly basis in a fresh liturgical setting.

The 9:45 AM traditional service is well grounded in choral traditions and harmony thanks to Forrest, Selene and our gifted Union Church Choir. The choir remained strong and built up this year with the addition of some new singers and guests who join us for special services and cantatas. The sense of community and commitment continues to be nurtured through the common goals of worship, fellowship and excellence in music. The Advent cantata continues to be a highlight with the presentation of “Everlasting Light; The Promise of Christmas”. Highlights for 2019 also included, symbolic Good Friday

service, Easter Sunrise Service at 22A, The One ‘Gospel’ Service with combined choir, including our Filipino sisters and worship team! There was also the 175th Anniversary celebration with the Methodist and Hop Yat choirs, Carols and brass on the green at 22A and Christmas Eve Candlelight jazz and classic services! We are grateful to all our instrumentalists and singers who share their time and talent for the glory of God. If you sing or play an instrument, you are welcome to join us in 2020!

Our 11:15 Contemporary Service continues to grow and increase with new singers, players and worship leaders. We are ever blest with the commitment and excellence of our staff and volunteers. We are also blest with our Assistant Worship Director Dr. Joyce Wu who has mentored worship leaders, accompanied and conducted and assisted in all aspects of worship. Many thanks Joyce! Last year saw the continuation of our youth band under the leadership of Justin Cheong. They have expanded their leading of worship and are



also composing new songs for worship. We are grateful for our teams leading worship at various venues in both SLT and Indigo! It was a year of fellowship, prayer, and worship events for our leaders with both in-house worship gatherings and stepping out for the 'One Worship' in May and November in which we featured a new song by Anna Rees. God's creative Spirit is at work among us! ReCharge on Wednesdays continues to flourish with a short worship led by our worship leaders on rotation. Union's sixth annual Christmas Musical, "Christmas Under Construction" was enjoyed by all, thanks to our Children's Ministry team, Dovetails Theatre Co. and our many volunteers! We are also grateful to Rob and Betty Porter and their talented and expanding team keeping our AV needs running smoothly. Last but not least, thanks to our many volunteers for sharing their gifts and talent within Union and beyond these walls in mission and outreach to our local communities.

The U-Cafe service continues to meet at Indigo Hotel with a strong and committed congregation.

We are also grateful for a consistent staff and pastoral presence at that service as well. The worship leaders and teams remain strong with a variety of committed singers and players! Thank you all!

May U-Cafe continue to thrive and strengthen as we worship together!

The 5:15 PM Evening Service is led by



gifted teams of volunteer musicians and worship leaders. We continue to see new visitors and attendees changing the face of this established worship. In the face of the protests and times of uncertainty, this worship has remained consistent and strong even though some services, due to safety concerns, had to be cancelled. We have tried some new worship styles as well with the 'Selah Services', designed by Juliana Rotmeyer, focusing on prayer and worship in a meditative style. We also grateful for our youth leadership and strong teams participating at this service! May it continue to expand and grow, as is our prayer for all our worships in their many forms and liturgies!

"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." Colossians 3:17

Filipino Ministry by Ruth Tablada

*“Let me hear of Your unfailing love each morning for I am trusting you. Show me where to walk.”
(Psalm 143:8)*

This was my meditation at the beginning of the year, January 2, 2019. Thanks be to God for He has shown me where to walk and the way that I have gone! God is amazing in all His ways. Because God is forever – He always has been and always will be. God is Faithful!

FILIPINO MINISTRY

Every 1st Sunday of the month since the beginning of the year we start with prayer & fasting gathered at the small Park near my home. We proclaim the Lord Jesus Christ as the head over all, that in everything He might have the supremacy (Colossians 1:18). We prayed that we would journey with Him throughout 2019, to experienced His power in our lives and we did!

2019 February 2 day Winter Conference:

The Theme was based on the Lord’s Prayer: “Lord, teach us to pray.” Attendees



encountered God with high worship, deep repentance, forgiveness of sins and freedom from strongholds, being filled with the Holy Spirit and empowered for ministry! They learned three strategic Prayers: Protection, Direction and Revelation. Thank you Missions for financially supporting the Winter Conference especially for the members of the UC Filipino Ministry that attended. It made a difference in their lives.

We participated with the **2019 “ONE” Church Hong Kong Campaign**. I was involved in Tagalog translation, editing and



proof reading. I count it a great privilege to serve along with other volunteers. We thank God for the great and wonderful results out of the “ONE” Church Campaign!

We participated with the **ONE Worship** and the **175 Year Anniversary of Union Church**. We were blessed and very much encouraged for the unity, one in Christ!

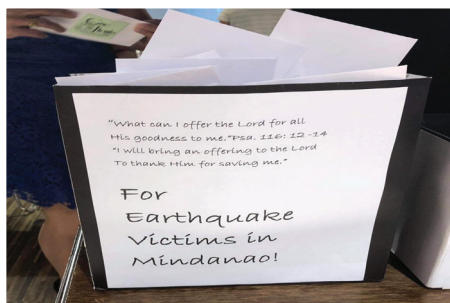
We held a water baptism at Repulse Bay, five were baptised.



Earthquake Evacuees Southern

Philippines: *"...I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me"* (Matthew 25:40)

Since we had some members in the Filipino Fellowship that were affected by the earthquake, the members sacrificially gave, this was used to buy plastic coverings for temporary shelters, water and food.



Walk the Wall (International China

Concern (ICC): December 2019 was our 7th year of walking for a cause under the leadership of Marga Wulfram. We count it a privilege to be involved in helping the orphans and abandoned children in China. Children are important to God. He loves them!



Christmas Celebration: We celebrated Christmas inside the Sanctuary with a beautiful set up which brought joy and encouragement to everyone with good and delicious food. To the anonymous donor - thank you!

There were 3,600 Gospel Tracts distributed, 50 have been shared with the Gospel, 2 leadership training and 2 training on Praise & Worship, attended 3 Conferences and visited one Church Planting in Camotes Island, Cebu.

I declare God is good and faithful, apart from Him we cannot do anything. All glory belongs to Him!



Administration

Building Union for the Future

by the BUFF Steering Committee

BUFF is grateful that God continues to lead the way forward on all aspects of the re-development.

On site progress, as of end 2019, the excavation and substructure works are over 90% completed, with some slippage in terms of timing due to the difficult site conditions as well as a desire to minimise the disturbance to our neighbours in terms of the noise level of the foundation works. Thankfully, the noisiest works are now behind us and we pray for our neighbours continued understanding during the construction phase. The developers plan to commence superstructure works from the Spring of this year and, to mark the important occasion, a Foundation Stone laying ceremony is being planned for Easter Sunday 12th April 2020. Based on this timetable, we now expect the interior fit out of the new 22A to commence from late 2022/early 2023 and a target move back to our new home in the Autumn of 2023.

Over the course of the year, the design team continues to work hard on refining the layouts and also complying with different building regulations. Good progress has been made. The design architects have also advised on the

selection of materials for the exterior of the new 22A and some of the interior, which selection has been presented to and received the approval of the Joint Leaders & Trustees. BUFF has also been working on a budget for the fit out of the interior of the new church. The next phase would be for the church as a whole to come together to raise funds for the fit out (to the extent that the costs are not covered by the subsidy from the developer). As it is a privilege to be able to contribute towards the building of God's house, BUFF appeals to all within Union Church be prayerfully consider and contribute generously when the fund raising campaign begins.



Stewardship by Joanna Yau



UNION CHURCH
STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

"In retrospect, the beginning of 2019 seemed to have been a "wait and see" year for us at Union Church, whilst at the end of the year, it changed to be more of a "turnaround" year.

The theme during Stewardship month was Thanksgiving and reflecting on God's generosity. Pastor Michele reminded us that "Stewardship begins with gratitude. Stewardship is an acknowledgement that everything we have comes from God and belongs to God." And so during Stewardship month, Union Church was reminded of how God has gifted time, talent and treasures to all of us. During our November One Worship, Pastor Michele invited all those who serve in any capacity in our church to stand, and in so doing, we took the opportunity to recognise and thank all of you for the time you have given in serving Union Church and our community as well as using your talents to enrich the lives of others.

When it comes to God's gift of treasures, Union Church is a generous church - this is despite challenges we faced at the beginning of the year as well as challenges within our city due to protests and

uncertainties clouding over Hong Kong and the world. We are pleased to share that the stewardship drive has resulted in \$8.5million, which is a 12.5% increase from 2018. This is truly a testament of your continued steadfast support and the spirit of generosity within all of us at Union Church. This also demonstrates how faithful God has been to us and Union Church, and how he continues to provide bountifully.

I feel that in 2020, we are turning a new leaf at Union Church with renewed energy and rekindled hearts. I pray that God's steadfast love and faithfulness will guide our congregation and this church as we continue to serve our community and to praise and thank God for all the gifts he bestows upon us."

2019 COMMITMENT CARD RESULT				
	NO. OF PEOPLE		AMOUNT (HKD)	
	2018	2019	2018	2019
PLEDGE				
NEW	5	1	252,000	12,000
EXISTING	66	72	4,036,800	5,015,400
			4,288,800	5,027,400
ONE-OFF				
NEW	7	1	92,550	10,000
EXISTING	28	33	2,318,908	2,545,672
			2,411,458	2,555,672
FOHKC				
NEW	1	1	12,000	20,000
EXISTING	8	10	849,000	906,400
			861,000	926,400
GRAND TOTAL	115	118	7,561,258	8,509,472

Human Resources by David Ashton-Howorth

The HR Committee at Union Church was reformed in 2019 and comprises of Charles Caldwell (Clerk of Deacons, Anson Wang (Chairman of CoM), George Ding (Treasurer), Pastor Michele and David Ashton-Howorth. We thank our committee members for their faithful service and giving of their time during the last 12 months.

2019 was a truly transformational year at Union Church in many ways, severe challenges occurred throughout the year and the staff are to be praised for their resilience, flexibility and positivity. We had fewer staff changes than in recent years and so have a settled team that are supporting and working collaboratively for the congregations of Union Church.

Pastor Michele moved into the Interim Senior Pastor role. Anto Ficatier and his wife, Jess, moved to the UK and a new role in July. Fortunately, we have a strong group of leaders who took on the Young Adults Ministry; thank you to Timothy Ng, Joshua Ng, KK Ip and Kenneth Morrison for your wisdom and service. We are fortunate to now have Dan Tupps on board to take this ministry forward. We also said farewell to Cary Yim as she moved to Canada with her husband. Liza Sumagaysay joined us as Cary's replacement bringing her talents to the Administrator role. Finally, we thanked Pei So Quan for her hard work and dedication as temporary Children's Ministry assistant and we welcomed Tingting Liu as her permanent replacement.

We are still looking for a couple of new staff members but are fortunate to be in a position of being able to wait for the right people rather than being in dire need of someone now. Hopefully we will be able to bring you good news before long.

We thank God for the staff of Union Church, both past and present, for their dedication and ability to cope with the stresses and challenges that 2019 brought. We ask that He blesses them in all their endeavours on behalf of our Union Church family.

The Union Church Team



NAME	POSITION	JOB INTRODUCTION
The Rev. Dr. Michele Bland	Interim Senior Pastor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Works with Ministry Teams• Head of staff• Preaching, teaching, equipping - Stephen's Ministry• Pastoral Care
The Rev. Ruth Tablada	Filipino Ministry Pastor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pastor for the Filipino Congregation• Provides counselling, Shelter-Pastoral care, and discipleship
Mr. Chris Yorks	Director of Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designs and coordinates worship services• Serves as Worship Leader and support to volunteers• Directs children's music and instrumental activities
Ms. Jacklien Lee	Director of Children's Ministry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children's Ministry Programming for children between 0-10 years old
Mr. Dan Tupps	Director of Young Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Young Adults Ministry Programming• Men's Ministry

NAME	POSITION	JOB DESCRIPTION
Mr. Hunter Purvis	Director of Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Programming
Ms. Monte Peterson	Director of Small Group & Adult Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small Group & Adult Education Programming
Dr. Joyce Wu	Assistant Director of Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist the Worship Director
Mr. Justin Cheong	Youth Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assists programs for the Youth Ministry
Mr. David Ashton-Howorth	Director of Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages the overall daily church operations
Ms. Ting Ting Liu	Children's Ministry Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist the Children's Ministry Director
Ms. Irene Lau	Accountant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handles all church accounting matters
Ms. Josephine Lee	Office Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General administration & church operations support
Ms. Liza Sumagaysay	Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General administration & church operations support
Ms. Fanny Cheng Mr. Wilson Wong	Full-time Janitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes care of the maintenance & cleaning of the church compound Performs & maintains the overall church housekeeping duties

The Union Church Family

PREACHING

- Revd Canon Dr G. Howard Mellor - Jan 2019
- Revd Canon Dr G. Howard Mellor - Feb 2019
- Rev. Dr. Judy Chan - March 2019
- Rev. Dr. Jeff Greenman - March 2019
- Rev. Dr. David Wang - March 2019
- Dr. David Swarr - July 2019
- Rev. Dr. Darrell Johnson - Aug 2019
- Dr. Peter Lim - Aug 2019
- Jason Young - Sep 2019
- SELAH Services [facilitated by Juliana Rotmeyer] - Sep 2019 & Dec 2019
- Dr. Jonathan Moo - Sep 2019
- Roger Lam - Nov 2019
- Dr Jeff Greenman - Nov 2019
- Catriona Woodrow - Nov 2019
- Dr. Michael Lindsay - Dec 2019



CHILDREN/INFANT BAPTISMS

1. Ling, Jonah
2. Shaw-Perona, Gwendolyn

CHILDREN DEDICATIONS

1. Chan, Elodi

ADULT BAPTISMS

1. Ng, Elon





YOUTH BAPTISMS

1. Lee, Isaac
2. Ng, Lucian
3. Ng, Vanessa

YOUTH CONFIRMATIONS

1. Allison, Daniel
2. Haddad, Reja
3. Lee, Isaac



NEW MEMBERS

1. Allison, Sasha
2. Jeyarajah, Aneesha
3. Jeyarajah, Chito
4. Ip, Kim Kuen
5. Lai, Ricky
6. Ng Elon
7. Peterson, Matt
8. Yeung, Christine



UNION CHURCH CELEBRATING YEARS



Treasurer's Report

by George Ding

Financial Highlight

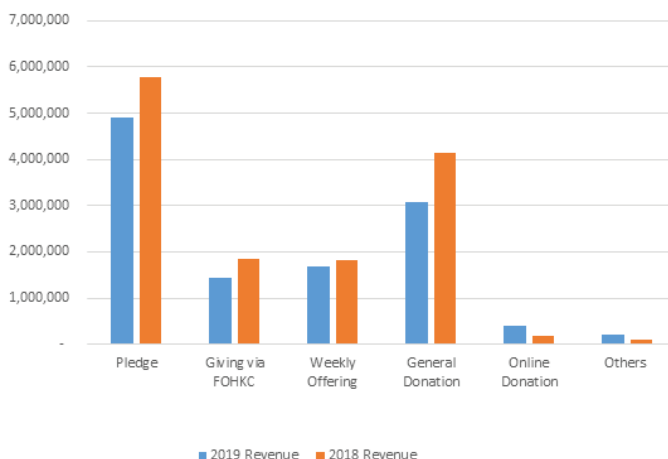
Union Church strives to be a good steward of the financial resources entrusted to us by our Lord. We are grateful to report financial results in an unprecedented year during which the church community and Hong Kong society have faced social unrest unseen for almost half a century. The General Fund, our main operating fund, records a surplus of HK\$2.4 million¹. This reflects a \$0.3 million surplus from operating activities and a \$2.1 million gain from our investment portfolio. The net assets of the church have increased 4.4% from last year and stands at \$35.4 million at the end of 2019.

Revenue

Thanks to our Lord's abundant blessings and your generosity, we received \$11.5 million in offerings in 2019. Our congregation expanded support to missions and ministries beyond Union's four walls. We received \$2.8 million in Designated Offerings, an increase of 6% from last year. However, we no longer receive revenue generated from premise related programs as 2019 is the second year we operated out of the Sunlight Tower. Our overall revenue (excluding BUFF) decreased by 16% from 2018.

The breakdown of general fund revenue in 2019 and 2018 is as follows.

Total Revenue: \$11,704,615



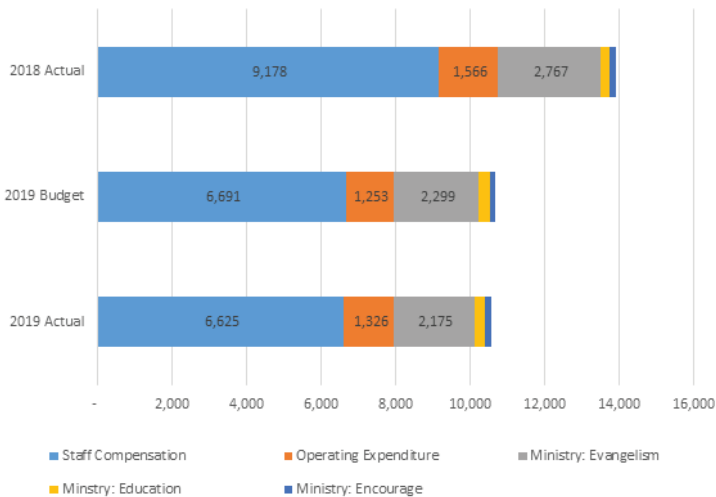
¹ All figures provided herewith are in Hong Kong Dollars and based on the unaudited financial reports by the finance staff as of December 31, 2019.

Expenses

This year’s operating expenses recorded a 24% decrease from actual in 2018 and is 1% lower than our budgeted amount. Expenses related to Staff Compensation, Operating and Evangelism Ministry are the major contributors to the reduction.

The breakdown of the general fund operating expenses (excluding depreciation) and comparisons to budget and prior year’s actual are as follows (HK\$ in thousands).

Total Operating Expenses: HK\$10,575,971



BUFF and Redevelopment Reserve Fund

The Building Union for the Future (BUFF) project proceeds as scheduled. BUFF team successfully negotiated a credit of \$0.5 million on façade design from the developer. BUFF records revenue and expenses at \$593,135 and \$1,462,211 respectively in 2019. The balance of the Redevelopment Fund stands at \$2,308,068 as of December 31, 2019.

We are delighted to report that our annual stewardship campaign in 2019 concluded with 12% increase from last year’s and our online donation keeps growing in numbers and amount rapidly.

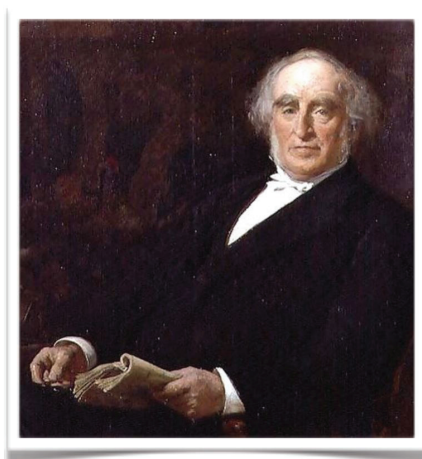
A Brief History

by Greg Anderson, David Bunton,
Brooke Himsworth and Geoff Lovegrove

Union Church was founded in 1844 by the Rev. James Legge, a Scottish member of the London Missionary Society. Then known as Union Chapel, the first building was constructed in 1845 on Hollywood Road. An English service was held in the morning and a Chinese service in the afternoon.

Legge served as Pastor from 1844-1867 and from 1870-1873. He translated the Chinese classics into English and the Bible into Chinese. His translations are used to this day and are still in print. He was a major figure in early Hong Kong and the founder of the very first government school (now called Queens College). The Legge Lectures have been named in memory of James Legge.

In 1866, Union Church relocated to a new site on



The Rev. Dr. James Legge

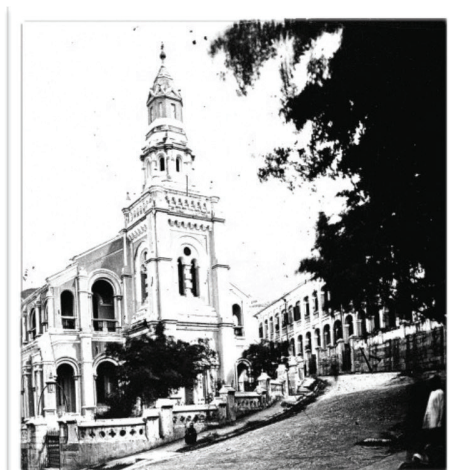
Staunton St. near Hollywood Road and Lyndhurst Terrace. It was called “the handsomest building in the colony.” In 1873, Dr. Legge returned to the UK where he became Oxford’s first Professor of Chinese.

In 1890, the Church was moved stone by stone to the present Kennedy Road site. Meanwhile the Chinese service became a sister church, Hop Yat, which has produced over 1000 daughter churches. Union’s only daughter church is Kowloon Union (1924).

The Japanese occupation of Hong Kong during WWII saw the forced closing of the Church. The events surrounding its total physical destruction remain a mystery. (The most intriguing thesis is that the Church’s wooden beams were used to rebuild the Japanese tower in Government House especially.)

The survivors began fund-raising and the existing Fellowship Hall was built in 1949, then used for worship until the sanctuary

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Union Church on Staunton Street (c.1868)

was finished in 1955. The education annex was built in 1970 and later named after the Rev. Dennis Rogers, perhaps the most significant 20th century Union Church pastor, following his death in 1977.

In recent years, the Church has changed from a predominately European expatriate congregation to a church that is 60% Asian.



The Annex and the Bell Tower

It has gained a reputation for strong lay leadership and launching new ministries (Alpha, Emmaus) that have greatly blessed the wider community.

Gregory Anderson, arriving in 2007, is Union's 21st senior pastor. Michele Bland is Union's 3rd associate pastor; and Ruth Tablada is the 1st pastor to the Filipino fellowship.

Union Church has matured from a ministry of the London Missionary Society to an independent congregation. Three bodies govern the Church: The Deacons' Court, Committee of Management, and Trustees. A
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First non-royal to be depicted on a HK postage stamp

charter member of the Hong Kong Christian Council and active in the Network of International Churches, Union faces the future with a firm sense of its founding charter.

After twenty years of groundwork, the church moved from 22A Kennedy Road to a temporary location at Sunlight Tower, 248 Queens Road East, Wan Chai. The Kennedy Road will be redeveloped in collaboration with Henderson Land. There will be a beautiful new free-standing sanctuary as well as a tower with church offices and residential flats. This will be the third church on the Kennedy Road site.

But with all the change, our purpose remains the same. It was reflected in a document first written by James Legge in 1849:

**“We differ in small matters,
we agree in great realities.
We trust that we are one
in Christ Jesus. We all love
Him who died for us. On
the fact of this great unity,
our Union as a church is
based.”**

-JAMES LEGGE 1849

Acknowledgement

We thank God for providing us with these wonderful people:

All the ministry leaders, Deacons and CoM members who wrote the reports.

Office Staff: David Ashton-Howorth, Irene Lau, Josephine Lee and Liza Sumagaysay

Content Editor: David Ashton-Howorth

Cover Designer: Brian Woo, for his creativity and brilliance

Photos: Brian Woo, Patrick Wong, David McInTyre and all who captured the great shots at Union

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL!



**From him the whole body,
joined and held together by
every supporting ligament,
grows and builds itself up in
love, as each part does its
work.**

Ephesians 4:16 NIV