

I am making  
everything  
new ! Rev 21:5

# UNION CHURCH

annual  
report  
2020



UNION  
CHURCH  
佑寧堂



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Geoff Lovegrove (Chairman)  
 Rosanna Chan  
 Henry Ngan  
 Alan Law  
 John Nicholls  
 Jane Arnett  
 John Li

#### DEACONS

Charles Caldwell (Clerk)  
 Terri Appel  
 Shlivya Dhavale  
 Alexander Mak  
 Kenneth Morrison  
 Brian Woo  
 Yan Yu  
 Joshua Ng  
 Grace Siu  
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 Malama Piliie  
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 Juliana Rotmeyer (Vice Chair and Stewardship)  
 George Ding (Hon. Treasurer and HR)  
 Joanna Yau (Honorary Secretary)  
 Trevor Tam (Worship and Property)  
 Jonathan Ah-Weng (Sunday School)  
 Emilie Banfield (Missions)  
 Po Cheung (Communications)  
 Christine Yeung (Small Groups)  
 Koon Wee (BUFF)  
 Tariq Dennison  
 Ellen Demuynck Ahn (Young Adults)

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# Senior Pastor's Message

by Michele Bland

Recently I came across this quote, "It is not the most intellectual of the species that survives; it is not the strongest that survives; but the species that survives is the one that is able best to adapt and adjust to the changing environment in which it finds itself." Dr Leon C. Megginson

With the COVID-19 pandemic upon us, in so many ways, we spent 2020 adapting. With the help of God's grace, technology, and the ability to be nimble and creative, we adapted and moved to meet people where they were at – home. All of our ministries shifted to, or deeper into an online presence - worship services, classes, small groups, connecting events, Sunday School, Youth Ministries, Young Adult ministries, Alpha, meetings and ... the list goes on. We learned new skills and to be flexible.



Fluctuating restrictions began in March, and 26 of the year's services were held online only. Another 26 weeks were spent in the new norm of a hybrid format of in-person/online services.

As a staff team we enjoyed working together to create variety in our worship services. We tried new things like Fun Facts in Acts with Hunter, Bless the City videos and the More than Conqueror series with Monte. We also created a Blue Christmas Service - for those who struggle during the Christmas season, Zoom Communion and Zoom Coffee hour for those looking to connect between services. We seized the opportunities when able to meet and launched an additional contemporary service at 12:45pm to accommodate more people and even offered lunchtime art therapy in November with Crystal Lo.

We have continued to offer long-term pastoral care support to those in need through our Stephen Ministers. Care receivers are from our church, but we have also been able to support people who have reached out to us online. This ministry team meets twice a month for ongoing supervision and training, and it has been such a joy to work with them. Our church is blessed to have a strong, committed team available for one-to-one pastoral care. Our Stephen Ministers are: Maurice and Sylvie O'Brien, Cor and Trudy Staalman, Ken and Isabel Morrison, Tess Lyons, Catronia Woodrow, Susan King, Ellen Ahn, Carrine Wong, Sonia Lee, Barbara Yorks, Crystal Lo, Jane Arnett, Teresa Fox, Verena Mooser, and Yan Yu. This year we have been intentional in reaching out to those in quarantine by sending quarantine baskets.

We held two in-person Staff-Leader retreats in 2020; with John Yates in January and Jackie Pullinger in November. These were tremendous opportunities for us to worship together, build community and to reflect on our ministries both past, present and future. As leaders we were also intentional in reading the book The Good and Beautiful God. Union Church continues to be involved in Christian radio ministry with frequent worship



service broadcasts and radio programs.

I greatly appreciate working closely with and am thankful for the leaders of COM, Deacons, Trustees, Missions, Grace of Giving and FIN. It has been encouraging and vital to the ongoing health of our church to pray weekly on Zoom with Michael Birley, Chairman of COM, and Clerk of Deacons' Court, Charles Caldwell, as well as others.

I continue to enjoy connecting with leaders and am blessed to work with Ellen Ahn in the Friday Ladies Bible study and Juliana Rotmeyer in the Ladies Get 2 Gather in November, with speaker Joanna Yau. Additionally, working with the Ladies leadership retreat team - Lindy Fok, Tess Lyons, Sonia Lee, Ellen Ahn, Jane Arnett, Joanna Yau, Juliana Rotmeyer, Susan King, Monte Peterson and Terri Appel for the 5th Annual Ladies Retreat in Penang from 28 Feb to 2 March was a joy! There were 39 ladies in attendance - amazing.

This year our sermon series included:

- 4G's of Biblical Peacemaking
- Book of Ruth
- Book of Ephesians
- Resurrection Series
- Book of Acts
- More than Conquerors Series
- By Faith - Stewardship Series
- Advent

Our preachers were:

- |                           |         |
|---------------------------|---------|
| • Dr. Kenneth Gerada      | 2 Feb   |
| • Rev. Wade Wollin        | 1 March |
| • Rev. Dr. John Snelgrove | 25 Oct  |
| • Alia Eyres              | 15 Nov  |
| • Rev. Steve Gaultney     | 22 Nov  |

Numbers of sermons:

- |                  |    |
|------------------|----|
| • Monte Peterson | 13 |
| • Dan Tupps      | 8  |
| • Hunter Purvis  | 2  |
| • Pastor Michele | 32 |



## Senior Pastor's Message

In March, we welcomed Dan Tupps to our ministry team. We are grateful to have him on board working with our young adults and men. Bronwyn Alexander also joined the team in November to work part-time for Grace of Giving and part-time communications. I am grateful for our staff team who stepped up and were willing to go the extra mile - to be stretched and try new things during this challenging year. Pastor Ruth's WhatsApp prayer ministry, Monte's Quiz nights and Love Your Neighbour events, Jacklien and Ting in their frequent mailings and Hunter's video contests - all creative examples the staff used to reach out during challenging times. We give thanks to Chris, Joyce, our worship leaders and choir. We are blessed to have the faithful ministry and expertise of Forrest, as well as Rob, Betty and their team. Additionally, we are thankful for our admin team for their partnership and dedication. They make things happen! Thank you David, Liza, Josephine, and Irene.

We are living in exciting times and we never know what new situation we will face, but what we do know is that Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. We do know that God has placed a calling on all of our lives. He has gifted us and given us the Holy Spirit. He has given us His mission - to go into all the world to preach, teach, baptise and make disciples. That is our focus and our mandate. As we embark upon 2021, we do so with excitement and anticipation. We look forward to this new year as we prepare ourselves for all that is needed to move back to 22A. We are so grateful for the BUFF team and their expertise to make this happen. Together we are entering a new season – and with God's grace we will be prepared to embark on this adventure together. *"Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."* Isaiah 43:19

Blessings, Pastor Michele



# Deacons' Court

by Charles Caldwell, Clerk

*“Then Jesus said to his host, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbours; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.” Luke 14:12-14*

During 2020 and early 2021, the Deacons Court consisted of Alexander Mak, Brian Woo, Cornelius Staalman, Charles Caldwell, Grace Siu, Joshua Ng, Ken Morrison, Malama Pilae, Shlivya Dhavale, Wanda Yuen, Verena Mooser, Yan Yu, and Terri Appel. In mid-2020 Verena returned to Portugal with her family. Meanwhile, in late 2020 Yan stepped down to pursue further studies after completing her Masters of Divinity. The Deacons are grateful for their service and commitment to the Lord and Union Church. Typically, the Deacons' Court formally meets monthly, but 2020 and early 2021 saw the Deacons meeting regularly to pray for the church and identify ways to engage the congregation as the global pandemic kept its hold on Hong Kong.

Readers will remember that in early 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 for 1,233 days.

Since our last AGM in June 2020, COVID's grip on Hong Kong has been unabated, preventing people from meeting in-person as a church. In almost all aspects of church life, people have resorted to online technology to study the Word, worship or enjoy fellowship. We have once again been reminded that church is not the physical location but rather the Body of Christ wherever located.

Indeed, this has been a very challenging time for all. As the pandemic persisted, the Deacons discerned that hope was receding for many and wellbeing a concern. Into this space the Deacons have been praying. *“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer.”* Romans 12:12

Throughout the year, it has been on the hearts and minds of Union Church leaders to focus on the future direction for Union Church. During the brief break from COVID in November 2020, the joint leaders participated in a retreat as part of seeking the Lord's will for Union Church in preparation for our new beginning at 22A. Jackie Pullinger spoke to the joint leaders during the retreat. Since then, the Deacons spent many hours praying, reflecting, discerning and sharing our thoughts about the future.

Also on our hearts was Pastor Michele Bland's call for us to be an Acts Church, as in the Book of Acts: the first official history book of the New Testament. “What is



an Acts Church?” An Acts Church meets regularly, learns about God’s Word, prays, fellowships, holds Communion, sacrifices themselves for others’ needs, disciples, witnesses and brings people to Christ and above all else: loves people. We have seen ample evidence of Union Church being this type of church through Kindness Walks (including on Christmas Day), supporting people in quarantine, the BUFF committee outreaching to construction workers at 22A, and for all these acts (and many others) we are grateful. We also believe that the Lord is calling us to be, do, surrender more.

The Deacons saw a distinction between being a consumer church (that inhales and intakes sermons, prayer, fellowship, worship, for example) vs. doing things the way Jesus would do them: exhaling the Holy Spirit and knowing Christ as an

essential part of the here and now. Let’s do what Jesus would do, ministering to the one in front of us, in such a strong and passionate way that Christ burns inside us so much that we can’t help but be disciples – and we wouldn’t be happy until everyone was at the banquet. What banquet?

An idea emerged of **The Banquet Table** (Luke 14:12-14). The Deacons asked themselves, “Who do we invite to The Banquet Table?” Do we invite those who are similar to us – our friends, family and colleagues? Or do we invite those who are truly disenfranchised: the poor, the downtrodden, the widowed, the orphaned, the different – those we are leery of speaking to? What would Union Church be like, what would the world be like, if everyone was invited to The Banquet Table: reaching out not just to the tangibly poor but the spiritually poor.



Where do we start? We can pray for people including those immediately in front of us. Harkening back to the global COVID pandemic, the role of the church is to be a refuge for people. To give people HOPE. **If you know anyone** who is disheartened by the global pandemic or current situation in Hong Kong, invite them to any church activity – either in-person or online. Hope will spring forth. They will become a **new creation**; the old will be gone and the **new will come!**

While the current environment is fluid with uncertainty, one thing that is certain is Christ – Jesus is certain. In many places around the world where there is devastation, Christians are at peace because Christ is the conqueror who has already defeated. In all of our faith journeys, at some point along the way we come to understand that Christ is greater than the circumstances we encounter. The Lord shows this to us all the time. The Deacons are excited to see “God at work” and invite everyone to join Him in His work. A recent prayer has been “Show me, Lord, the people to help.”

What does that look like now? God is doing a new thing at Union Church with many people connecting via technology or in very small, socially-distanced clusters to be together. This past year has very much been a season of preparation and scattering seeds. Even though almost everything has been online for the majority of time, there are amazing opportunities to connect to the Union Church community. Fortunately, as we approach the AGM we

have been able to return to small services while our online presence remains strong.

Finally, embracing feedback from the March 2019 AGM, as early as the fall of 2020 the Deacons embarked on seeking candidates to join the Deacons Court. Some of these individuals began shadowing the Deacons meetings as early as December 2020. We have nominated several new candidates for approval at the AGM and, if approved, for induction as Deacons; they are Eric Fung and Juliana Rotmeyer.

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”. There might be challenges ahead as we navigate the pandemic in Hong Kong. May we be a people of hope in the midst of these challenges, inviting all people to The Banquet Table.

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

# Committee of Management Report

by Michael Birley, Chairman

What a year! What a year for Hong Kong!  
What a year for Union Church! What a year  
for our community!

St. Paul said in Romans Chapter 5:3-5 *Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.*

Due to the restrictions on meeting it wasn't possible to hold last year's AGM until June 2020, during which the congregation confirmed Pastor Michele Bland as our new Senior Pastor.

At the same time it allowed Anson Chan our retiring Chairman, Timothy Ng, Doris Cheung and Andrew Lo to step down and pass the baton to our current Committee. We would all like to record our great appreciation for their service over the preceding years.

This year the Committee of Management (COM) has comprised:

Michael Birley - Chairman

Juliana Rotmeyer - Vice Chair and Stewardship

George Ding - Hon. Treasurer and HR

Joanna Yau - Hon. Secretary (taking over from Bronwyn Alexander in August 2020)

Trevor Tam - Worship and Property

Jonathan Ah-Weng - Sunday School

Emilie Banfield - Missions

Koon Wee - BUFF

Po Cheung - Communications

Christine Yeung - Small Groups

Tariq Dennison

Ellen Demuyne Ahn - Young Adults

With Bronwyn Alexander moving into a consulting position with the church and then subsequently joining the staff as Director of Communications, she resigned from COM in August and Joanna Yau kindly agreed to take on the position as the Hon. Secretary.

Our church has only able to meet in-person for 26 Sundays in 2020. Online worship at Union Church has gone through a renaissance and I can only commend and congratulate Pastor Michele, the AV team lead by Rob and the tireless work and effort put in by Chris and his worship teams to put together two online services each Sunday. The pivot both into and back out of and back into online worship has stretched everyone. The results though have been awesome and we have developed not only a local but an international online following as word has spread over the internet and person to person.



Our COM meetings were no different! We have Zoomed each month to hold our monthly meetings and I'd like to thank all of the committee for a very strong attendance record and for their input with the areas they had responsibility for, as well as support and encouragement for the staff and leadership generally.

We were happily able to hold a Joint Leaders and Staff retreat at Sunlight Tower at which we heard a very encouraging message from Jackie Pullinger. She asked us to focus on the opportunity to serve that is right in front of us! Across the church we have seen local initiatives, Kindness

Walks, deliveries of quarantine baskets to returnees, gifts to the workers at 22A amongst so many more individual acts.

I must also commend the work that the Missions Team and Joanna Yau have put in to codifying our church policy relating to giving and for the vetting of our Missions partners and individual Missionaries. In these days of increasing scrutiny from official departments we can be sure that our Church is fully compliant and secure in our charitable status.

The news from the BUFF team that they expected the completion date for 22A

Kennedy Road to come forward by 6 months to early 2023 came as a welcome surprise and a challenge. This meant that the fundraising period for the fit-out of the new church was reduced by 6 months. Led by Ken Morrison, The Grace of Giving committee are progressing this after studying a reflection on the Spirituality of Fundraising, which places the greatest emphasis on developing relationships. That has been a challenge since we have not been able to meet in-person every Sunday. So we are mindful of looking into ways to reach and connect with all parts of the Union community.

We do not take our very generous congregation for granted and after reflecting and discussing with COM on the status of our reserves, we were able to recommend to the Joint Leaders that the Church make available up to \$15 million as matching funds for The Grace of Giving campaign. The progress made since we launched the campaign has been wonderful.

As we start to plan for our move back to 22A we are also looking at what the Lord wants us to be as a church and what we will need to grow and put in place to facilitate that. We have a wonderful leader in Pastor Michele who majors in spiritual formation and relational opportunities and a very well-equipped Committee of Management who are really pulling together as a team to ensure that we hold Jesus as Lord and ask Him to guide our deliberations and work.

I thank each member of the Committee for their time and commitment. Given the number of new members, I have been very impressed by their commitment. It takes time to get to understand what makes Union tick on a day to day basis. Having members sit in on the weekly staff meetings assists as does having members of staff join the monthly COM meetings. We hope that more of our community will put themselves forward as potential candidates to join the Committee of Management as we will have more to cover in the run up to and once we return to 22A Kennedy Road.



# Trustees' Report

by Geoff Lovegrove, Chairman

The Trustees for 2020 were: Mr. G Lovegrove (Chairman); Ms. Jane Arnett; Dr. Rosanna Chan; Mr. A Law; Mr. John Li; Dr. H Ngan; Prof. J Nicholls; and Mrs. M Wulfram. Mrs. Wulfram retired as a Trustee in June and all are grateful for her 20 years of valuable service. Ms. Arnett and Mr. Li were elected at the AGM (27 June 2020).

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, and 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

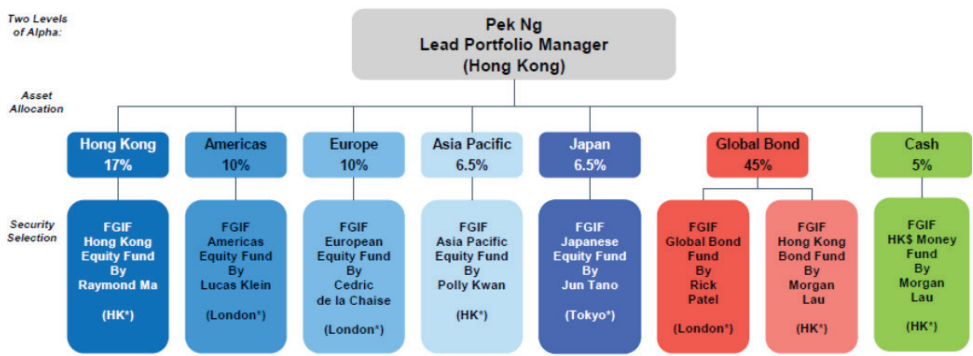
of investments Union Church is fortunate enough to possess through the foresight and good stewardship of our predecessors.

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 2020 the market value of the General Fund was approximately \$19.619M and of the Three-Quarter Century Fund approximately \$11.074M, each showing a gain for the year of about 13.4% (General) and 11.6% (Three-Quarter Century). The General and (Three-Quarter Century) Funds have gained about 46.3% (46.2%) in the past five years, and gained about 43.1% (42.7 %) 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

## Structure of the FGIF Stable Growth Fund



is authorised by the Securities & Futures 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 evolves 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 2020, 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 considered during the year 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. The Trustees decided to continue with the status quo for the following reasons:

- the church's funds would be considered too small for customised benchmarking to deal with SRI, ESG and Green investments opportunities with no fee concession;
- operational risk and regulatory issues in dealing with overseas operators without personal contact and subject to foreign regulations and compliance issues;
- the need to have a smooth administration capability that will not be too daunting to Trustees now or in the future;
- the need to consider draw down of

the Funds to support BUFF costs in the near future; and,

- taken overall, the performance of the two Funds currently managed by Fidelity and the fees paid are acceptable.

While this is the view of the current Trustees they believe that the matter should be kept in view after the move back to 22A Kennedy Road in 2023.

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 \$94,607 at the end of 2020 showing a gain of about 4.5% 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. Rosanna Chan, Ms. Jane Arnett and Mr. John Li 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 the BUFF steering committee/ working groups 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



# Encourage: Prayer

by Charles Caldwell

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

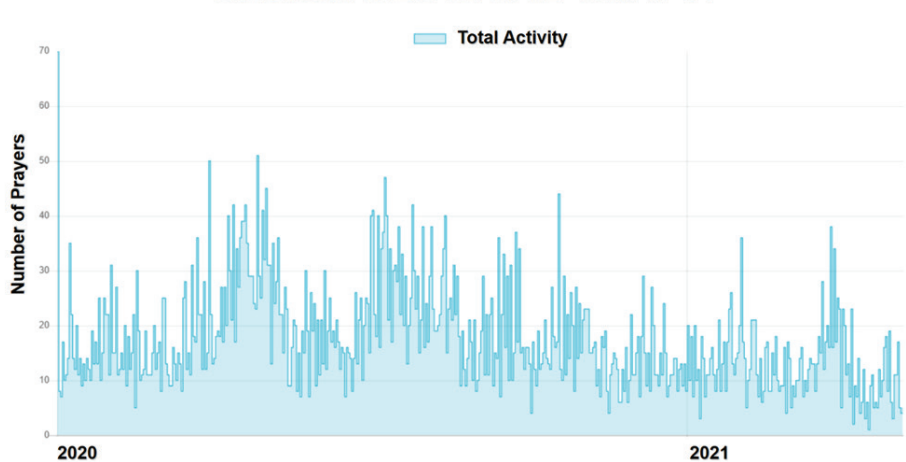
This year we could focus on what we lost, but instead in prayer we can glorify God for what we gained! COVID did not stop the power of prayer at Union Church! We witnessed the power of prayer as God moved in and amongst the Union Church family wherever we were located. Abba united this family through our prayers!

The Prayer Chain, with its corresponding WhatsApp Prayer Chat group, maintained a true pivotal position. While we could not meet together to pray in community, or at Sunlight Tower, our prayer lives deepened this year and the anchor, empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit, near and far was the Prayer Ministry Team through the WhatsApp Prayer Chat.

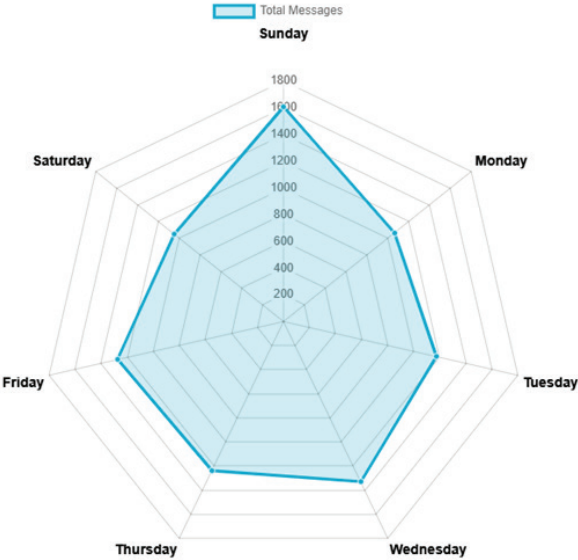
While the prayer chain has been in existence for years – through prayer meetings, prayer emails, etc., the WhatsApp Prayer Chat began on Valentine’s Day, 2016. As we just passed the fifth anniversary of using WhatsApp to share prayers, readers will be interested to know that during those five years, over 25,440 prayer messages have been sent. With the migration to WhatsApp, we have seen an explosive growth in prayer. Infographics are provided below for 2020 and early 2021.

Intercessors pray every day, but the highest prayer activity takes place on Wednesdays and Sundays. On a daily basis, prayer activity takes place in the mornings between 8:00 – 9:00am and evenings around 11:00pm.

## CHRONOLOGICAL GRAPH



# MESSAGES PER WEEKDAY



PRAISE THE LORD He met us in our prayers through healing, revelation, comfort, wisdom and discernment, provision, connected relationship and discipleship.

During the past year, weekly prayer meetings have taken place. Every Tuesday morning a dedicated group of intercessors has shifted their weekly meeting at Sunlight Tower to a virtual platform where they continue to pray for Union Church, the congregation and many other local, regional, or global prayer items. Participants include Union Church congregants who have moved overseas but still join for prayer. In addition to mostly bi-weekly Deacons meetings, 7:45 on Friday mornings the Deacons meet for prayer using Zoom. We also have the Wednesday evening group, the UC Ezers WhatsApp

prayer chat group and small group prayer sessions at the construction site at 22A Kennedy Road.

A major prayer initiative launched this year was the 24-7 Prayer Hong Kong web presence. With our global prayer support, we have established a 24-7 virtual prayer room to pray for our city, our leaders, churches, families and all sectors of society. We want to see Jesus’ name lifted high in Hong Kong. Our hope is that with 24-7 Prayer Hong Kong more believers throughout the city and worldwide will join together to pray. Anyone can sign up for a time slot at <https://www.24-7prayer.com/signup/705233>

In spite of persistent COVID, we have seen many prayer groups spontaneously burst

out and have been encouraged by the increasing number of people participating in these sessions. 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 continue to encourage people to contact us with prayer requests or to join us virtually and now at Church 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 amazing ways God will move in and among us in the future.

E-mail: [prayer@unionchurchhk.org](mailto:prayer@unionchurchhk.org)

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



# 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). 2020 continued to offer more and different challenges, but God sustained us through it, and many of us can say that we now know more about ourselves, each other and God's gracious love. It has been a year of perseverance! 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:** We may have gone back and forth between online and in-person, but through it all we have managed to have opportunities for prayer, fellowship, study and learning--both online, in-person and even in hybrid form.

Resolving Everyday Conflict (in person)

Evening Prayer (online)

Lord's Prayer course (online)

Contemplative prayer (in-person and online)

Goliath Must Fall (co-taught by Dan Tupps and myself) (online)

Revelation (led by Chris Fung, online)

Generosity (online AND in person!)

### Other classes:

Faith in Trying Times--Dan Tupps, Michele and I led this on Sunday mornings in August, taking advantage of our flexibility while being online.

Lunchtime Alpha--in the spring, entirely online. People joined us who would not have otherwise--so the online format was a blessing in some ways!

Philippians--lunchtime study, during autumn, online.

**Book Group:** Reading was not cancelled during 2020! We continued to read and discuss books, sometimes online and sometimes in person.

Change of Heart, Jeanne Bishop

The Wife's Tale, Aida Edemariam

Rosie Project, Graeme Simsion

Love Does, Bob Goff

The Hiding Place, Corrie Ten Boom

Sensible Shoes, Sharon Garlough Brown

Hope Heals, Katherine and Jay Wolf

The Inner Voice of Love, Henri Nouwen

**Small Groups:** Small groups for the most part continued seamlessly throughout the year, meeting online or staying connected



through chat groups or other means. Even when God's people are apart, we can still be together in spirit, supporting each other, praying for each other, and learning together.

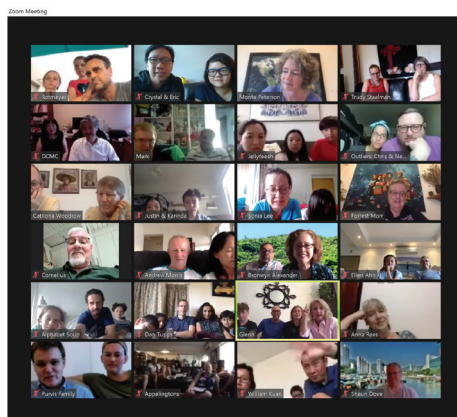
Our groups studied a variety of material, from the Resolving Everyday Conflict study, The Life You Always Wanted by John Ortberg, The Minor Prophets with Warren Weirsbe, Ray Vander Laan studies, Living by the Book by Howard and William Hendricks, Sensible Shoes by Sharon Garlough Brown, Goliath Must Fall by Louis Giglio, The Good and Beautiful Community by James Bryan Smith, and of course plenty of straightforward Bible study--Ephesians, Acts, Isaiah, Colossians, John, to name a few.

**Right Now Media:** We continue to offer Right Now Media as a resource for small groups, individuals and families, with Bible studies, talks and animated videos. Check it out next time you are at a loss what to watch!

## Fellowship:

**Coffee Hour:** In the fall, we began meeting for "coffee hour" between services, just for a chance to chat and catch up with people that we would normally get to see in person.

**Love Your Neighbour:** Groups were formed all over Hong Kong, connecting people with their Union Church neighbours. Some groups were able to meet in-person, and others joined for the 3 church-wide quiz and game nights. Lots of trivia, lots of laughter, lots of competitive spirits!



## Young Adults by Dan Tupps

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### YOUNG ADULTS

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It was amazing to see God at work in the Young Adults ministry during this very challenging year. After pausing our ministry during the early stages of the pandemic, we relaunched Young Adult ReCharge online in April. Our first in-person gathering wasn't until the end of May and we started with three young adults. About six weeks later we had 10 young adults attending ReCharge.

Unfortunately, we had to go back online for nearly four months. It was disappointing to lose our momentum and not be able to meet in-person, but we persevered with online ministry. At the end of October, we finally had a ReGathering Night and had our highest attendance of the year with 12 people! This kind of numerical growth

during a normal year would be exciting, but during a pandemic is incredible - a real testimony of God at work!

Of course, numbers aren't the only way to measure growth. We also grew spiritually through study and discussions together. Our studies included the following video-based series: Psalm 23 by Matt Chandler, a study called "Your Comeback" by Tony Evans and "Goliath Must Fall" with Louie Giglio. Each of these studies touched on different struggles we might face during the pandemic, and biblical truths we can hold on to in order to overcome and persevere through challenging circumstances. Our final study of the year was a combined in-person series entitled "Choosing Generosity" during stewardship month. We focused on how we can be generous with our talents, resources, time, and



compassion. One of our young adults led the first session by sharing his inspiring testimony.

We also grew in relationship with one another by serving on Kindness Walks together and had a few chances to have some fun events, highlighted by a hike in Discovery Bay. We hiked for a couple hours enjoying the beautiful scenery and fellowship, followed by dinner at the plaza and tea/dessert at the Tupps' home. It was great to finally host the young adults after a long year of social distancing. We had a great time of getting to know each other better. As one of our young adults put it, "Best day I have had in a long time!"

One other highlight of 2020 was the start of a Young Marrieds fellowship in November. Pastor Michele graciously hosted a lunch for six young adult married couples who connected really well with a strong desire to meet regularly. One couple has already



agreed to host the next time it is safe to do so. We look forward to gathering again regularly in the coming year.

Much time was spent nurturing and caring for individuals this past year through many text messages, one-on-one meetings and conversations. William Kuan joined our ministry as a volunteer leader alongside Ken Morrison and Joshua Ng. We are very grateful for their investment in our young adults.

We celebrate how God worked to rebuild this important ministry. Lives were touched and encouraged and we welcomed new young people to our fellowship. We are excited for what God has in store for 2021!



## Youth by Hunter Purvis

### YOUTH MINISTRY

#### Overview

2020 has been a year full of unique challenges, changes and opportunities. We thank God that Union Youth continued to meet, learn, serve and have fun together throughout it all.

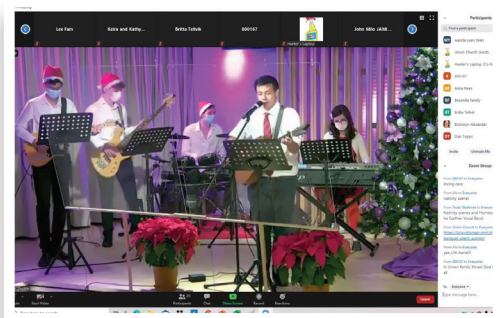
In the spring we had a great short-term addition to Youth Ministry Staff – Ian Weathington, a graduated youth, served as our Youth Intern from February to July before leaving for university in the US. Meanwhile Hunter Purvis continued as Youth Director, working alongside Youth Assistant Justin Cheong as well as numerous adult volunteers and leaders.

2020 was another important year for our Confirmation Programme, with 3 new youth beginning the Confirmation process towards affirming their personal relationship with Christ with the support of the congregation – we expect the Confirmation Ceremony to take place Spring 2021.

During 2020 an average of 22 youth came each week for our Friday Youth Group. While COVID-19 restrictions and cautions definitely changed how we do Youth Group for significant periods, our fellowship and connection with Christ has proven unshakeable. We had a great time with a bunch of online events – at-home scavenger hunts, an amazing Talent Show, cooking competitions, testimonies from our leaders and congregants, and more. In the periods where we were able to hold in-person

gatherings we took advantage to hold team-building workshops, Bible studies and joint events with other international churches like the dodgeball tournament in July. Sunday Youth Group saw an average of 17 Youth regularly attending. We are especially excited to see a great number of Children's Ministry graduates making the transition into Junior Youth, and have been blessed to have several newcomers join our weekly gatherings. On Wednesdays we've had Youth attend numerous classes and discussion series like the book of Acts, Church History, Sticky Faith and more, with an average attendance of 9 Youth each week.

In terms of Missions, our Youth shifted our focus to helping as much as we can in our local community, as international travel became difficult as a result of COVID-19. Youth and Adult Volunteers led regular Kindness Walks around Wan Chai throughout the year to reach out to our neighbours in need. We held an Online Christmas Banquet and Auction this year, where together we raised \$32,000 for HK Impact and Kids International Missions. 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 Youth Group work. As the Youth Director I want to personally thank each and every one for their dedication and commitment. Many thanks to Wanda Yuen, Charles Caldwell, Dale Weathington, Karinda Chuntavorn, Kathy Foley, John Jamison, Jennifer Lau, Teresa Fox and Tess Lyons for all your work this year.

### Goals for 2021

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 2020, we want to 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 centre 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

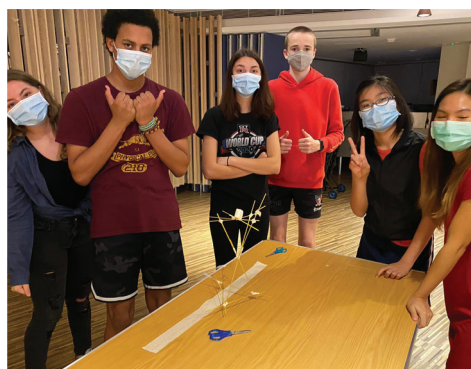




Studies, Recharge Series, Sunday Youth, one-on-one meetings and more.

### 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

*“In their hearts human beings plan their lives. But the Lord decided where their steps will take them.” ~Proverbs 16:9*

Proverbs 16:9 reminds us of the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty of our Lord, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is His. We make a lot of plans and ultimately it is our Lord who decides and directs our steps...Praise the Lord indeed.

COVID-19 brought about lots of challenges for our Children's Ministry in ways we have never anticipated before. The way we share the Gospel, the way we connect to our families, the way we run our ministry programme and, ultimately, we need to adapt and change in a short timeframe which was definitely not easy. However, when we commit our ways to the Lord, He opens the way and makes our plans succeed.

Since the nature of Children's Ministry programmes are mostly through in-person format, God has enabled us to re-think, re-plan, and re-shape our ministry in creative ways that would enable us to still share the Gospel and connect with our families despite the restrictions caused by this pandemic.

Some of the new initiatives that we put in place since the start of the citywide lockdown from mid-February and intermittently throughout 2020 were:

### 1. Sunday School and Programmes

packages mailed home

- Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday School packages
- Mother's Day packages
- Father's Day packages
- Summer Holiday Sunday School packages
- Vacation Bible School (VBS) packages
- Hallelujah Party packages (collected from church)
- Christmas Sunday School packages

### 2. Online Sunday School

- Senior Sunday School Students Online study, every Saturday, from mid-March to end of June.
- Age-group-wide Online Sunday School, every Sunday, from May to end of December.

### 3. Kingdom Kids Sunday Edition, pre-recorded Children's messages which aired every Sunday immediately after the end of the church service, starting from end of March to the end of 2020.

### 4. Pre-recorded Festivities Greetings Video

- Mother's Day greetings video



- Father's Day greetings video
  - Domestic Helper's Appreciation video
  - Sunday School Teacher's Appreciation video
5. Online Children's Ministry Programme
- "Rocky Railway" Online Vacation Bible Study (VBS), which ran for 5 Sundays in the month of September and the first Sunday of October, with an attendance of 46 to 60 children every Sunday.
  - "Joseph and His Dream Coat" Online Hallelujah Party, held on Saturday, 31 October, attended by more than 66 children.
  - Online Christmas Party, where children enjoyed interactive games and activities held online.
6. "ZOOM INTO CHRISTMAS" Children's Christmas Musical Film Production
- Conducted online auditions over two Saturdays in October.

- Conducted online rehearsals over two Saturdays in November.
- Organised and recorded our "ZOOM INTO CHRISTMAS" Children's Christmas Musical production over two Saturdays in November.
- Children's Christmas Musical Film shown as part of Online Sunday Service on Sunday, 13 December at both the 9:45am and 11:15am services.

In between the lockdown and intermittent closure of our church service, we were able to have in-person Children's church for a total of 11 Sundays. During these times, we offered Children's Church and Veggie Tales movies for children with families who attended church services in-conjunction with our Online Sunday School.

In addition, our Senior Sunday School students were able to go for a Kindness Walk and share the love of Christ with the street cleaners and people who are homeless in the Wan Chai area. We are also thankful that God allowed us to have our Senior Sunday School Students graduation in-person, whereby 14 out of 25 students



attended the graduation blessings.

This year, we bade farewell to the Lloyd and Sebby Ushe family, Melissa Lin family, Harry and Anja De-Pree family, Jeffry Lim and Joseline Chia family, Sung-Min Chung and Pamela Tseng family, Joseph Ma and Iris Lam family, who have moved back to their home countries or relocated to other countries for various reasons. We give thanks to God for these families who faithfully served Christ in various ministries at Union Church and we sent them off with our blessings and prayers.

Children's Ministry was not able to visit our charity partners this year, and instead we encouraged our families to organise

Love Packs for St. Barnabas' Society and Home Kids Programme. As a result, 50 Love Packs were collected and delivered to St. Barnabas' centre to be distributed to the children of the under-privileged families.

By God's grace, we were able to achieve things that we never knew possible, and we are thankful for the opportunity to collaborate with various Union Church ministries. We are especially thankful to Rob Porter and Betty Liu from our AV Ministry, for their creative inputs, wisdom and encouragement throughout our brainstorming, planning and executing many of our new initiatives.

Special thanks to all of our Sunday School



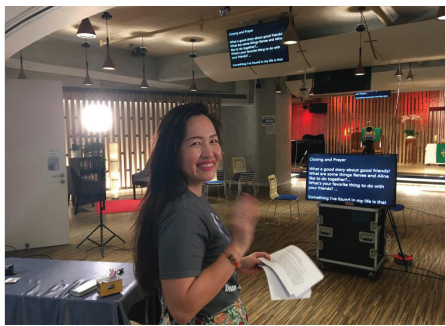


teachers who faithfully shepherded our children during this pandemic. Their love of Christ for the children is evident in the love, energy, enthusiasm, perseverance, the creativity in telling and sharing of Bible stories, and in making Bible crafts. We are deeply thankful.

As we enter the new year of 2021, we invite all of our Kingdom Kids families to focus your eyes on Jesus.

*“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful.” Hebrews 10:23*

Let us continue to faithfully raise our





# Evangelise

## Alpha by Patrick Wilson, Alpha Course Administrator

After running Alpha as part of Wednesday's ReCharge programme, we moved the course to Thursdays so as not to clash with their classes. However, the arrival of COVID-19 in early 2020 prevented us from running Alpha as usual at church and brought about a rapid rethink as to how to run the course in future. Thankfully, the platform 'Zoom' proved to be just what we needed. As a result, we ran our first online lunchtime course from May to July with guests joining us from their homes, their offices and even as passengers in cars. Sadly we missed getting together for our away day at Tao Fong Shan but were comforted to see the Holy Spirit still works through online prayer.

In October, we started another evening course. However, some guests who were travelling over the Christmas period became caught up in the changing worldwide quarantine restrictions but, because we were online anyway, they were still able to join from where they were located. As such, over the weeks, we had guests join from the USA, Portugal, the UK,



Dubai as well as Hong Kong. Our American guest is a friend of a current Union Church member and didn't mind starting Alpha at 7am! Ulises Espinosa and Verena Mooser joined us from their new home in Portugal. Even before our course ended, they had begun as helpers in a team running Alpha in Portuguese! The bonds of international friendship grew so strong over the weeks that the group is going to continue as a small group in 2021. It has been interesting to note that attendance with this online course has been consistently higher than with previous 'in person' courses.

Looking to the future, we wish to hone our skills at running Alpha online as we are unsure of when we can resume in person courses again. In any case, we may well offer an online course for those who would prefer it.

I would like to thank our group leaders and helpers who helped with running 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 Alpha online!



## Prison Ministry

### MEN - NICK APPEL

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the prison visitation classes for Stanley Prison and Tai Lam Centre for Women had to be on hold. So we have not had any in-person visits. However, volunteers have been keeping in touch through writing letters to the inmates. This has been an ongoing activity throughout the year. The Hong Kong Christian Kun Sun (prison) Association (KSA) has also been running various activities in partnership with rehabilitated persons (ex-inmates) such as outreach to the community distributing masks and hand sanitisers.

Members of Union Church have participated in an outreach to Tin Shui Wai in June 2020, distributing anti-epidemic supplies, leading the worship and sharing the gospel to recipients. Members of Union Church attended and supported the Hope Shines exhibition of prisoner art held at the Maritime Museum in October 2020, and shared encouraging comments with the artists.

Union Church volunteers have also met with prisoners who left Stanley Prison in the past year and kept in touch with other rehabilitated persons. Union Church also invited KSA to run a stall at our annual Christmas fair which displayed products made by rehabilitated persons. KSA has held 2 Zoom gatherings with volunteers to pray for the inmates and the ministry and share updates about how volunteers can serve.



### WOMEN - YAN YU

There are 13 ladies on the team, led by Yan Yu. Unfortunately, we were not able to physically visit the prisons this year due to the COVID-19 outbreak, but we continued to pray for the inmates and for the pastors at KSA.

Some of us joined Zoom gatherings with other volunteers, praying together; some of us enjoyed catching up with Pastor Esther at the Missions Fair; whilst some of us had the privilege to participate in wrapping Christmas gifts for the inmates in December. We look forward to resuming physical prison visits again in 2021.

## Families In Need Ministry by Pastor Michele

Typically, this report is written by the Chairman of the Families in Need (FIN) ministry team. Sadly, Charles Schmitt went to his heavenly home on 4 April 2021. Charles chaired this ministry team for many years, and he was well loved by the FIN community. Charles was always ready to extend grace - he willingly opened his pockets, his heart and his listening ear especially to those in the family in need of ministry. Charles also served as the chairman of the Refugee Ministry Group in Hong Kong. He is dearly missed.

I am grateful for our team - Isabel Morrison, Brian Woo and to you, Union Church, who participate in this ministry through your discretionary giving.

The Families in Need ministry helps those in our congregation who are in need of some support, usually financial, in a holistic way to try and help them back on their feet.

It is a privilege and Biblical to help people in very practical ways. Jesus said, *"For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick, and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."* Matthew 25:35-36

This ministry also assists the needs of our refugee and asylum seekers who are a part of our community. This past year we have had opportunities to support people in many different ways including helping in the area of education - supporting a child with regular tutorials and a University student.

## Missions by the Missions Committee

Undeterred by the global pandemic, the Union Church Missions Committee kept busy this past year providing financial and practical help to the many local and overseas missions organisations that our church family so generously supports.

### Governance

It is critically important that Union Church maintain compliance with all Hong Kong government regulations concerning dispersal of funding to mission organisations and missionaries as a registered Section 88 charitable organisation. This past year, the Missions Committee worked closely with the COM in developing a new policy that carefully vets both donees and significant donors that are the beneficiaries of Union Church financial support that ensures we are in legal compliance with all AML (anti-money laundering), anti-terrorism, and tax matters. What began as an exercise to better understand the process of our giving to ministry partners ended up with the COM putting forward a new policy document on giving that will allow UC Missions, church staff, and all stakeholders to be accountable and in line with all government regulations.

### New Ministries

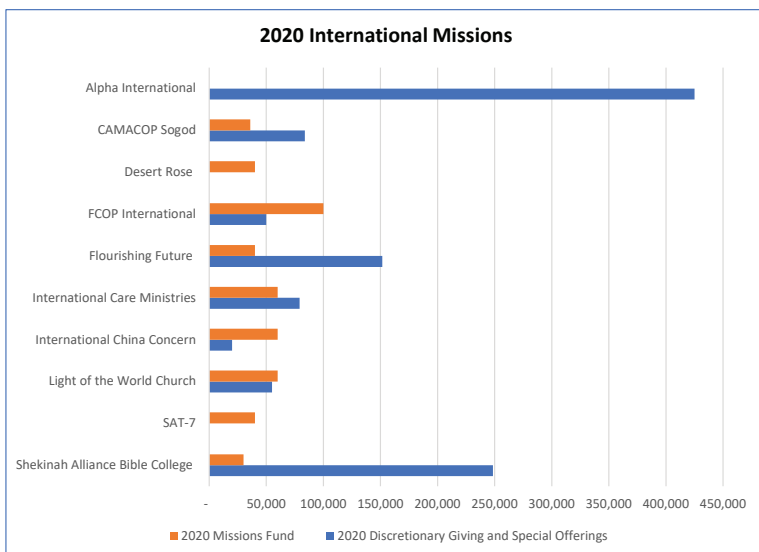
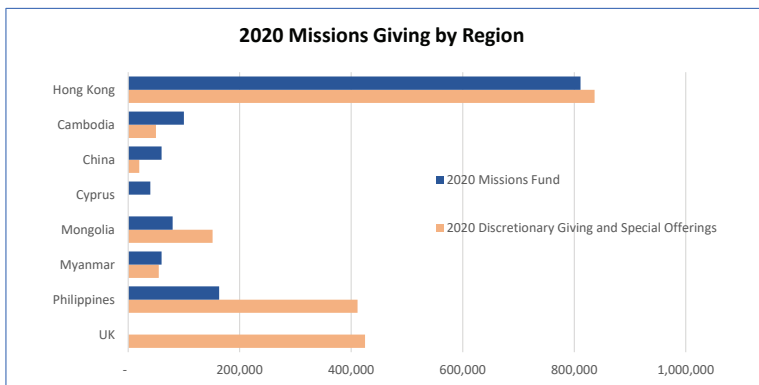
UC Missions is always open to partnering with new organisations that meet the three critical areas of missions that meet our mandate of Compassion, Discipleship, and Evangelism. This year we are pleased

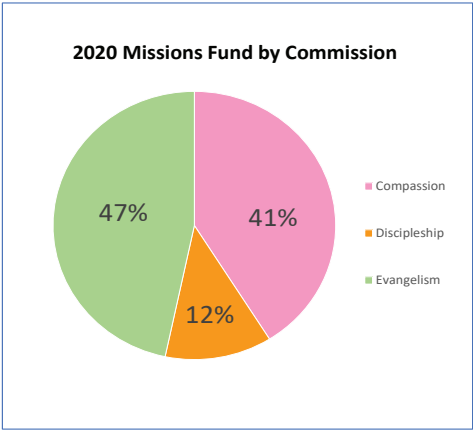
to have brought on board through our new vetting procedures three new organisations:

**AIM (Cambodia):** Agape International Missions (AIM) is a Christ-led, non-denominational, not-for-profit organisation that exists to glorify God through their dedicated efforts to love, protect, and care for survivors of trafficking as well as other vulnerable and exploited individuals. Through a holistic approach of rescuing, restoring and reintegrating survivors of trafficking and preventing sexual slavery, AIM seeks to meet survivors' spiritual, emotional, social, educational and physical needs. AIM's intention is that survivors may come to know their worth and value in Christ, develop a dependence on Him, and develop skills for a sustainable life.

**Alpha Asia Pacific (Malaysia):** One of the pioneer churches in Hong Kong to promote the Alpha Course, Union Church is now helping to equip the propagation and facilitation of this amazing Kingdom building programme throughout the Asia Pacific region.

**Young Life (Hong Kong):** Young Life's motto is "Every Kid for Christ". YL carries out that motto by evangelising youth by building teams of staff and volunteer leaders to go into the world of our youth. They do this by meeting youth where they are, whether it be at schools, in cafes, or on basketball courts. YL HK invite youth to "a party with a purpose," where they can hang out, have fun, and hear a simple message about





Jesus. YL help youth to actively follow Jesus through study and service, in partnership with local churches and organisations.

**Outreach - Being Christ’s hands and feet**

Wan Chai is home to Union Church. It’s also home to a community of people living on the margin including the homeless, and the living poor. Recognising the need to be Christ’s hands and feet in Wan Chai in the midst of the pandemic, Union Church Missions was blessed by our congregation to bless those living on the margin in the midst of the global pandemic. Partnering with St. James Settlement and Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor, Union Church was able to continue ordering for distribution “Love Packs” including sanitary supplies, masks, rice and other dry goods for the poor and needy in our community.

Inspired and mentored by Union Church member Jeff Rotmeyer and his charity ImpactHK, UC congregants continued to faithfully carry out Kindness Walks in Wan Chai, distributing simple food, water, and food coupons with a partner restaurant in Wan Chai that agreed to provide a

sumptuous hot meal in a box to those who had been given the coupons paid for by the generosity of UC congregants. Special thanks is expressed to the Cheung family, the Foley family, Union Church Youth, and Young Adults ministry for faithfully carrying out the Kindness Walks in the past 12 months. Many friendships were made, and seeds of faith were sown through these interactions with our neighbours in Wan Chai.

Through UC’s “Bless the City” campaign, UC Missions was able to communicate to the Church through videos shown at Sunday services the impact that Union Church organisations are having both here in Hong Kong and abroad. We will continue to provide these glimpses of our partner organisations to our church in a similar format going forward.

**Special Offerings**

In addition to the annual budget that is afforded UC Missions by the COM, UC Missions is given permission by COM to approach the congregation from time



to time to meet urgent needs that arise from our partners' missions organisations. International Care Ministries (Philippines), the Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor, Flourishing Future & Desert Rose (Mongolia), and St. Barnabas' Society and Home were among our partner ministries blessed by the outpouring of love and support to meet of our UC family to meet urgent needs that emerged in the midst of the pandemic.

How you can help UC Missions this year?

- UC Missions is always looking to partner with ministries that fit into our focus on Compassion, Discipleship, and Evangelism. Please consider making an introduction to a ministry organisation that God has prompted you to help.

- Mission Trips: There is no better to way to be inspired to what God is doing in the vineyard than to go out and see what our partner organisations are doing in the field. While international travel restrictions have prevented us from overseas missions trips, there are plenty of UC partner ministries in Hong Kong where we/you can participate in a Missions trip. Consider joining or even leading one of our Kindness Walks in Wan Chai.

- Provide professional skills. In this past year UC Missions has been able to build websites for our partner organisations that don't have on staff resources to do that. Consider offering your professional talents in administration, accounting, counselling,

film and video production et. al. "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few".

Matthew 25: 37-40 *"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"*



## Worship by Chris Yorks

*“Put all your trust in the Lord and do not rely on your own understanding. At every step you take keep him in mind, and he will direct your path.”  
Proverbs 3:5-6*

The Lord did indeed direct our paths in 2020 in surprising and creative ways in the face of COVID-19 and social distancing. Praise be to God for His steadfast love and guidance throughout the year and the commitment and resilience of our worship team and choir members!

### WORSHIP TEAM

2020 commenced with a normal service schedule which included choir/worship team rehearsals, and worship gatherings. We were also preparing for a joint choir presentation with the Methodist Church scheduled in March. That all changed as February approached; COVID-19 increased and special worship services and ‘live’ services were put on hold. Everything changed.

With the winds of change came the introduction of disposable communion sets averting any unnecessary health risks. We continued gathering for worship and were all introduced to ‘Zoom’ as we began the journey to virtual services and meetings. The choir and worship teams persevered as some were unable to lead or sing for extended periods of time. Where there was a gap, others stepped in. I thank God for the talent and ability we have here at Union! As other churches began to close, Union continued to meet through February

and March. Ash Wednesday was our first “live” Zoom service and took some getting used to without a congregation present at Sunlight Tower.

In March, we saw choir rehearsals put on hold, but were able to rehearse some throughout the month. Then on Sunday, 22 March we suspended in-person services at Sunlight Tower and presented our first recorded service, thanks to Rob Porter and his team. Much discussion ensued as we discussed style, quality, traditional, blended, and contemporary options. Decisions were made to continue both 9:45 and 11:15 service styles online as opposed to one blended service. Contemporary services were recorded Saturdays and traditional services were presented ‘live’ with a quartet on Sunday morning. We were grateful for the commitment of our choir and teams going the extra mile at this time and beyond.

Many creative elements were introduced last year from April onward in order to keep the services fresh and alive for our congregation. Use was made of combinations of instruments and voices. We introduced classical guitar, viola, and other instruments to enhance the worship along with poetry, hymn stories and varied combinations of singers and instruments with new arrangements of hymns. Good Friday and Easter continued on livestream with a lovely string quartet accompanying the Easter service as numbers became increasingly restricted.



In April, as COVID-19 numbers began to decrease the music ministry once again increased! We were able to bring the choir together in limited numbers for recording of anthems and special music in order to create a library of anthems for future use, if needed. The same approach was taken with the worship team as we rehearsed on Thursday and recorded on Saturday. Our AV team began refining and developing the system of recording, mixing, and presenting our singers and players online for maximum viewing presentation.

Hooray for May! We were able to meet “live” once again on 31 May Pentecost Sunday.

We resumed U-Café and all services including 8:45 and 5:15 as this helped spread out the congregation as our capacity was restricted. How special it was to be back together again complete with plexiglass protective screens for choir,

congregation, and worship teams. This Sunday also hailed the calling of Pastor Michele as the Senior Pastor of Union Church.

July marked yet another step backward as we entered a third wave of COVID-19 but a step forward in entering another season of creative worships, hymns, teams, presentation, and styles! Both 9:45 and 11:15 services are now pre-recorded. We moved forward once again in creating fresh vibrant worships with the introduction of interviews, Fun Facts in Acts, and other elements that made for exciting online worships as we “worshipped” from the comfort of our homes.

As it goes, the COVID numbers declined and Union returned to worship “live” once again on October 11th. We did, however, meet together on 4 October for an 8:45 communion service. It was a blessing for those who were able to attend and be



nourished with the Lord's Supper. Worship teams and choirs returned for this short season. U-Café was able to resume as well while Union remained at 50% capacity.

We then entered into the celebratory season as we came together for the installation of Pastor Michele on 25 October Reformation Sunday; we saw the introduction of the Green screen as the bagpipes played in the Scottish Highlands for Saint Andrew's Sunday; we presented the Children's Christmas musical "Zoom into Christmas" in video format with special effects and music thanks to the talents and abilities of all our staff and teams; we added a 12:45 - 1:30pm contemporary service beginning 15 November to help ease the numbers restrictions during this period of social distancing. This service was well received by those who attended and we gained a few new families. This led us up to the 4th wave of COVID-19 when live worship ceased once again from 6 December. Sadly, we were not able to present the Christmas Cantata this year but

we were still able to "Zoom" into Advent and Christmas with some special anthems and carols along with our first "Blue Christmas" Service online.

Christmas arrived online in 2020 with one Christmas Eve and one Christmas Day service and some special moments for all!

*"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

### FILIPINO MINISTRY

The Chinese New Year January 2020 Seminar yielded fruitful results among Filipino Community participants. We had a seminar on “Empowered to Influence.” We learned that living a worshipping life brings pleasure to God in two ways:

1. Our lives of living wholeheartedly for Him brings honour to God.
2. God is pleased when others are drawn to Him by what is displayed in our lives.

From the time our fellowship had taken the seminar, they always say and remind one another that we need to live Kingdom values. Before they see their work as a way to earn money to support their families. They learned that their work even if it is difficult will be a joy as they do it for the glory of God. They learned to

live the Kingdom values: righteousness, peace and joy. Righteousness includes acting justly, loving kindness and humility. Peace includes peacemaking, helping and mending what is broken. Joy is manifest in our attitude and hope. They learned that worship is not only on Sundays but it is 24/7 which is a lifestyle. Praise God for this once-a-year event that gives them the opportunity to learn new things to help them grow more in their walk with God and to be a Kingdom witness to others and to their families.

2020 has been a difficult year that has affected the lives of domestic helpers and ministry to the Filipinos. I continue to reach out to them through pastoral care by walking along with them in their difficulties, struggles and loneliness. They were not able to go home to see their families due to the cancellations of flights.





We praise the Lord that prayer became their strength, comfort and power to overcome fears and the challenges the pandemic has brought. Philippians 4:6 says *“Do not worry about anything but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”*

We have limited ministry due to restrictions imposed. However, the ministry of prayer has no limit. Many battles had been won through the faithful and persistent prayers of the Filipino women such as the testimony of one of the leaders down with fever and sore throat. She was alarmed and thought she had COVID-19. She did home remedy every 20 minutes, steaming herself with hot water with salt. She knelt before God in prayer, asking the Lord Jesus Christ to just let even a drop of His blood fall in her glass of hot water. She drank and was immediately relieved of her sore throat and the fever was gone! Her employer told her I think you got the virus but God healed you! Wow, what a great testimony to her non-believing employer.

God has kept each one safe and continues to protect each one. We continually claim God’s promise in Isaiah 41:10 “Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid for I am your God, I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my VICTORIOUS hand.”(RSV) We also rejoice that no one among the Filipino women in the congregation lost their job in the midst of the pandemic. God is good! Indeed, God upholds us with His victorious hand.

*“But thanks be to God who gives us with the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 15:57*





# Administration

## Building Union for the Future by the BUFF Steering Committee

The re-development of the new 22A premises progressed smoothly in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic notwithstanding. The foundation and basement works were completed in April and the superstructure works began in May. As at the end of the year, the concreting works have reached the fifth floor level and is expected to top out by August 2021. Some of the time lost during the difficult foundation works stage has been recovered and the occupational permit is now expected by June 2022. After that point, the refurbishment of the interior of the new church will proceed in earnest with our return to 22A currently scheduled for early 2023, some six months earlier than projected in last year's annual report.

The pandemic did interrupt some of the planned activities. A foundation stone laying ceremony planned for Easter 2020 had to be shelved. The regular on-site prayer meetings have also been put on hold. However, our visits to the site did not stop. BUFF felt it was important to reach out to the construction workers on site, who number more than 100 at times and labour to build the new church. Starting from September, we have reached out to the workers on site three times, each time with a gift and a biblical message. The first being boxes of face masks, then mooncakes for the Mid-Autumn Festival, and Union Church mugs and Alpha pamphlets for Christmas. Our next outreach will be at Chinese New Year. Anyone interested in joining the outreach to the workers, be



it contributing ideas, preparing gifts or participating in the visits, would be most welcomed. Please pray for the health and safety of all the workers on site and also that they would hear, understand and believe the good news.

Work on optimising the interior layout design and choice of materials for the new 22A has been continuing. We have met regularly with our church user groups in the development of the plans to ensure that their needs will be catered for. We are also engaging independent consultants to cater for our specific design needs with lighting, acoustics, audiovisual, kitchen design as well as employing a project manager to coordinate the whole fit out contract.

We have also obtained preliminary feedback from contractors on the possible fit out cost for the interior of the new 22A. Based on this feedback, and other projected costs, in May, the budget for the fit out of the new 22A was presented to and approved by the Joint Leaders & Trustees, which resulted in a targeted fund raising amount of \$32 million. After much prayer and deliberation, a Grace of Giving team was launched to take forward not only the fund raising initiative but to lead the church on a faith-building mission as we learn to put our faith and trust in God to lead and provide out of His abundant love. We pray that everyone will be “in” (no matter the amount) and participate in the Grace of Giving.



## Stewardship by Juliana Rotmeyer



UNION CHURCH  
STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

As a new decade began, the world was not expecting the outcome that 2020 brought into each of our lives. This was a year that will always be remembered + many will want to forget. 2020 was a year where we all felt stretched as we were forced to leave our old ways of doing everyday life behind. Despite the limitations + extreme challenges that 2020 introduced, Union Church stepped forward, navigating a new normal with online zoom classes, online Sunday worship + Sunday school. With limited space available in our temporary home at Sunlight Tower + a large portion of Sunday services online our generous congregation continued to reach out to each other with prayer + support as we learned together how to navigate Zoom + isolation.

With this unusual year in stride the theme for stewardship month was By FAITH turning to GOD to lead us + guide us. We explored Hebrews 11, which so beautifully reminded us how Prophets, Disciples, Apostles + Kings all walked by faith in trying seasons. As a church we were encouraged to come together, stand firm + walk By FAITH supporting each other with our time, talents + treasures. Throughout the month we heard incredible testimonies from Union members that encouraged us to give generously by FAITH.

We are pleased to share that the stewardship drive for 2020 stood firm resulting in nearly \$8.2 million aligning closely with the results of 2019 at \$8.5 million, which was a 12% increase from 2018. What an incredible way to glorify God as we rarely gathered together in person corporately over the last 52 weeks. The result of this campaign not only glorified God, but also allowed each of us to witness faithful giving. It was a blessing to witness members standing firm By FAITH as each continued to send their monthly pledges throughout this very trying year. This is truly a testament of walking by FAITH + how we can look to SEE God leading the way forward. I firmly believe God was preparing our hearts to walk By FAITH with this campaign to then lead us into an incredible season of giving with The Grace of Giving campaign.

Union Church has demonstrated God's light in a dark season throughout 2020. The generosity of our members continues to be a joyous gift to celebrate God's Kingdom as HE leads us By FAITH with encouragement + excitement HIS way. May we each give thanks for the abundance that HE has bestowed upon us in this trying season. May we as a church continue to stand firm walking By FAITH giving generously of our time, talents + gifts serving God with open hearts.

2020 COMMITMENT CARD RESULT				
	NO. OF PEOPLE		AMOUNT (HKD)	
	2019	2020	2019	2020
PLEDGE				
NEW	1	4	12,000	108,000
EXISTING	72	67	5,015,400	4,445,520
			5,027,400	4,553,520
ONE-OFF				
NEW	1	2	10,000	6,000
EXISTING	33	19	2,545,672	2,157,000
			2,555,672	2,163,000
FOHKC				
NEW	1	0	20,000	-
EXISTING	10	12	906,400	1,451,650
			926,400	1,451,650
GRAND TOTAL	118	104	8,509,472	8,168,170

## Human Resources by David Ashton-Howorth

Following Anson Wang's stepping down from the Committee of Management (COM), Michael Birley took his place on the Human Resources (HR) Committee. We would like to thank Anson for his dedication and service during his time on COM and as the COM HR representative. The HR Committee now consists of Charles Caldwell, Michael Birley, George Ding, Pastor Michele and David Ashton-Howorth.

After a transformational year in 2019, this last year has been very stable in terms of staffing. We are pleased to be able to say that we have not had anyone resign from our team and that we have also added a new position of Director Of Communications, welcoming Bronwyn Alexander to the role. Many of you will know Bronwyn from her many years at Union Church and previous service as the Honourary Secretary for the COM.

There have been many challenges thrown at the team this last year as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, but hopefully you will agree that we have coped with them admirably. The team has demonstrated remarkable resilience and an amazing willingness to flex and be nimble in all that they do. We have moved seamlessly from in-person worship to online worship and back several times and this is very much due to their hard work and dedication. We have also managed to keep the Church office open throughout this time.

This year also saw Pastor Ruth celebrate her 70th birthday. Hopefully, we managed to convey the respect and admiration we all

feel for her as we celebrated with her. We are actively looking for a replacement for her as she looks to take her well deserved retirement.

Staffing plans are advancing for our return to 22A and we will be looking to firm these up in the coming year. It is an incredibly exciting time to be part of Union Church!

We give praise to God for the team at Union Church and ask for His guidance, wisdom and protection as we move forward in our ministries.

## Communications by Bronwyn Alexander

In August, the Grace of Giving team brought me on in a part-time capacity to help strategise, plan and communicate The Grace of Giving campaign. Following a series of interviews, I was offered the Communications role in November – in part to support The Grace of Giving and in part to help with strategic church-wide communications, including communications support to Missions and other ministries.

### The Grace of Giving

The initial Communications priority was to work together with The Grace of Giving team to launch the “quiet phase” of the campaign with Union Church leadership. While raising funds to pay for the new church fitting-out works is clearly important, we believed The Grace of Giving is ultimately about faith-raising. This is an opportunity for the entire church to abide in the Lord and allow Him continue to transform and unify us.

We developed campaign plans, leader communications and videos, promotional

collateral including new webpage. By the end of 2020, we were poised for a launch in January to the full congregation, public and our lively Union Church alumni.

### Strategic church-wide communications

Partnering with Liza Sumagaysay and the Administration team, we have made initial improvements to the weekly Acts@22A newsletter and focused on keeping the website up-to-date, more visually engaging, and responsive for increased mobile use. We have also continued our whatsapp communications through men’s and women’s groups, small groups, choir and worship teams, young adults, youth, missions and other ministry teams.

We boosted social media engagement significantly at the end of the year with Facebook page likes and page followers increasing 22% and 11%, respectively. In the new year, we will increase the reach of our ministries, outreach and programmes online through Instagram, as well as LinkedIn. There is an opportunity to interact with and minister more to our online followers.

### Missions communications

We are raising the profile of Union Church’s 25 local and international missions partners.

The Missions Committee’s focus in November and December was to increase visibility in Acts@22A of our partners’





impact. We also worked to gain support for our designated partner for the Advent and Christmas love offering – Flourishing Future. Jeff Cheung of the Missions Committee produced two videos that spoke to the dire need for fuel and food in the Mongolian winter during COVID-19. Jeff then started on a series of videos about Missions at Union Church that would air in January 2021. We are grateful for this partnership!

### **What's next?**

Our plans for 2021 aim to continue to reach and engage all segments of our church population – across different generations, ministries, cultural backgrounds and languages, including our growing online congregation. God is indeed doing a new thing at Union and there are many stories to share as He continues to build our church community.

# The Union Church Team



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

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

# The Union Church Family

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## PREACHING

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- Dr. Kenneth Gerada - 2 February
- Rev. Wade Wollin - 1 March
- Rev. Dr. John Snelgrove - 25 October
- Alia Eyres - 15 November
- Rev. Steve Gaultney - 22 Nov

- Monte Peterson - 13
- Dan Tupps - 8
- Hunter Purvis - 2
- Pastor Michele - 32

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## CHILDREN/INFANT BAPTISMS

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1. Dennison, Tara Anne

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## ADULT BAPTISMS

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1. Kuan, William

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## NEW MEMBERS

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1. Kuan, William
2. De Alwis, Victoria
3. Hexter, Jessica
4. Lee, Cecilia
5. Luxton, Nick

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## MISSED BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

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1. Whittington, Clive
2. Sutherland, Neil







# Treasurer's Report

by George Ding

## Financial Highlight

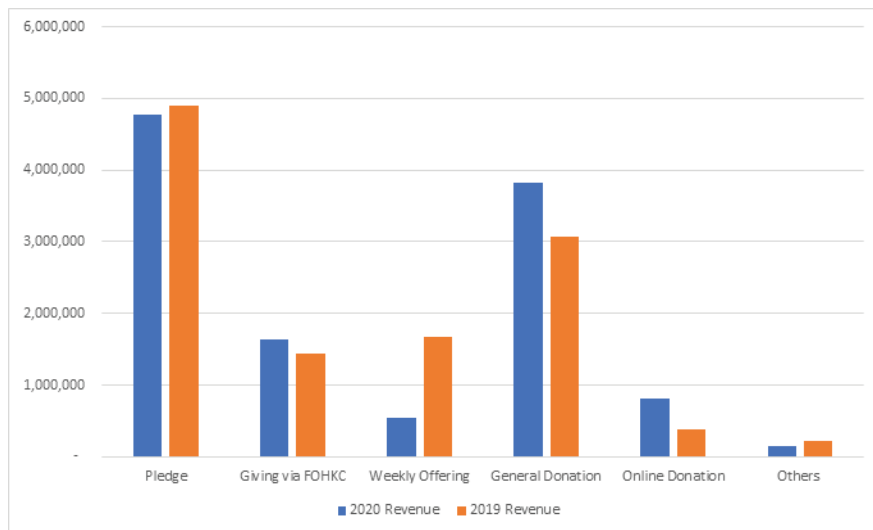
As we prepare this year's annual report, the world is confronting one of the greatest health threats of a generation, one that profoundly impacts communities and economies around the world. Union Church has weathered this unprecedented challenge well. The General Fund, our main operating fund, recorded a surplus of \$2 million<sup>1</sup>. This reflects a \$0.3 million deficit from operating activities and a \$2.3 million gain from our investment portfolio. The net assets of the church have increased 8.5% from last year and stood at \$38.4 million at the end of 2020.

## Revenue

Thanks to our Lord's abundant blessings and your generosity, we received \$11.6 million in offerings in 2020. Our congregation upheld their support to missions and ministries beyond Union's four walls in a very challenging year. We received \$2.4 million in Discretionary Offerings. Our overall revenue (excluding The Grace of Giving) increased by 0.4% from 2019.

The breakdown of general fund revenue in 2020 and 2019 is as follows.

### Total Revenue: \$11,756,749



<sup>1</sup> All figures provided herewith are in Hong Kong Dollars and based on the unaudited financial reports by the finance staff as of December 31, 2020.

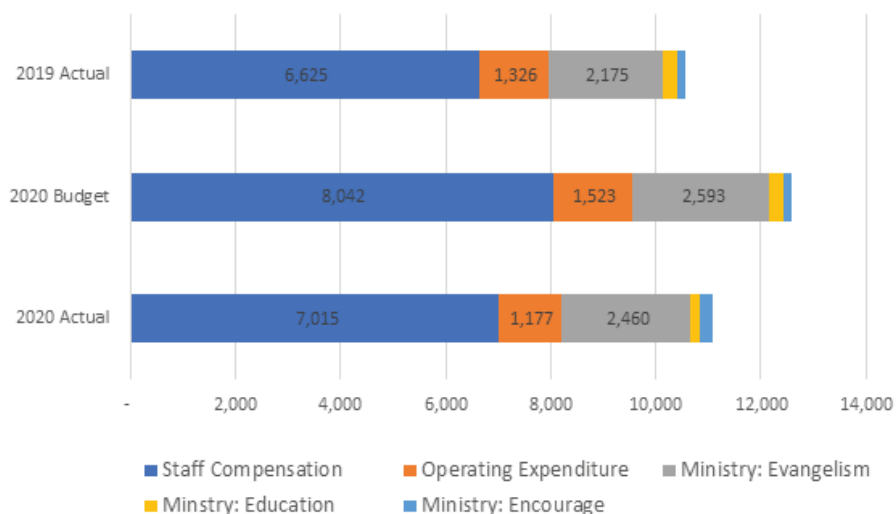


## Expenses

This year's expenses recorded a 5% increase from the actual in 2020 and is 12% lower than our budgeted amount. The church leadership decided to expand our support to Missions (as reflected in the Expense of Ministry: Evangelism below) as our financial position holds relatively well while many mission organisations suffer or are even in distress financially in 2020. Operating Expenditure recorded an 11% drop while Staff Compensation had a 5.9% increase.

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\$11,087,802



## BUFF and The Grace of Giving

The Building Union for the Future (BUFF) project proceeds well. The superstructure of the new church building broke ground in 2020. The BUFF team expects that the project will receive the occupational permit by June 2022.

The Grace of Giving, the faith-raising and capital campaign to cover the fit-out costs of the new premise was introduced at the AGM in June 2020. The total fit-out costs are forecasted at HK\$60 million, in which Union Church needs to raise \$32 million. Kenneth Morrison chairs The Grace of Giving team, which also includes Michael Birley, Anson Wang, Bronwyn Alexander, Tess Lyons and George Ding. The team decided to roll-out the campaign in the “silent” phase in 2020 and the “public” phase in 2021. To build a solid spiritual foundation, the team studied Henri Nouwen’s “A Spirituality of Fundraising” in November 2020.

The BUFF records net expenses at \$1,065,348 and The Grace of Giving raised \$1,944,900 in 2020. The balance of the Redevelopment Fund stands at \$3,187,649 as of 31 December 2020.

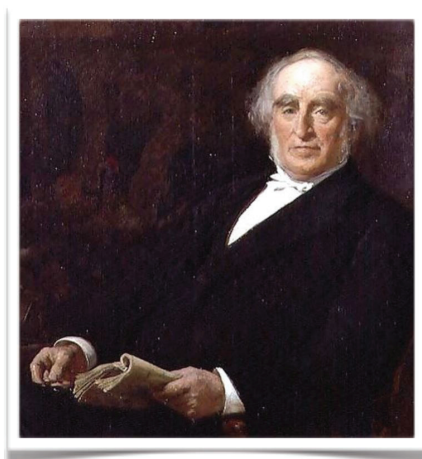
# A Brief History

by Greg Anderson, David Bunton,  
Brooke Himsworth and Geoff Lovegrove  
(Updated in 2021)

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 Staunton St. near Hollywood Road



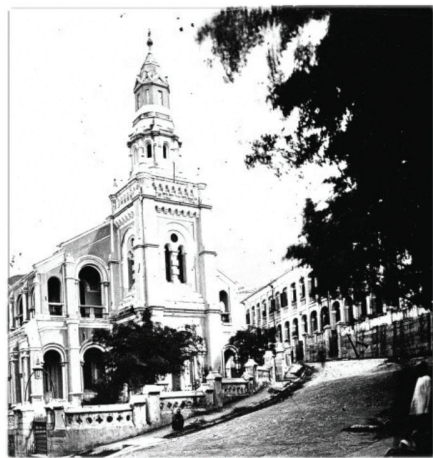
The Rev. Dr. James Legge

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,



Union Church on Staunton Street (c.1868)

then used for worship until the sanctuary 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



The Annex and the Bell Tower

congregation to a church that is 60% Asian. 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, was Union's 21st senior pastor. Michele Bland is Union's 22nd senior 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,



First non-royal to be depicted on a HK postage stamp

Committee of Management, and Trustees. A 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 site is being 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 and Bronwyn Alexander

Cover Designer: Brian Woo, for his creativity and brilliance

Photos: Brian Woo, Steven & Sophia Jonatan 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