



"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall **love your neighbour** as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Mark 12:30-31

UNION CHURCH

annual
report
2021



UNION
CHURCH
佑寧堂



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Geoff Lovegrove
(Chairman, 2021)
John Nicholls
(Chairman, 2022)
Rosanna Chan
Henry Ngan
Alan Law
Jane Arnett
John Li

DEACONS

Charles Caldwell (Clerk)
Terri Appel
(Clerk, Sept 2021)
Shlivya Dhavale
Alexander Mak
Kenneth Morrison
Brian Woo
Yan Yu
Joshua Ng
Grace Siu
Wanda Yuen
Malama Piliae
Cornelius Staalman
Juliana Rotmeyer

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

Michael Birley (Chair and Stewardship)
Koon Wee (Vice Chair and BUFF)
George Ding (Hon. Treasurer and HR)
Jonathan Ah-Weng
(Honorary Secretary and Sunday School)
Trevor Tam (Worship and Property)
Emilie Banfield (Missions)
Po Cheung (Communications)
Christine Yeung (Small Groups)
Tariq Dennison
Ellen Demuynck Ahn (Filipino Ministry)
Shaun Dove (22A outfitting and move)
William Kuan (Young Adults)
Cecilia Lee (Youth)
Ester Li Chung (Sunday School)

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Senior Pastor's Message

by Rev. Dr. Michele Bland

Sir Isaac Newton, the famous English scientist, once said, "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." Union Church has rich history, 177 years of active ministry in Hong Kong. We stand on the shoulders of giants and have benefitted from those who have gone before us - those who have fanned the flame, those who have remained faithful, those who used their time, talent and resources, those who have prayed and those who gave witness and testimony to God's grace. We are indeed grateful - and give God all the glory, honour and praise.

Some of those giants who come to mind are our present and former Deacons, Committee of Management members, Trustees, Pastoral staff, Sunday School teachers, Small Group leaders, Missions Committee members, Walk to Emmaus champions, the Choir, the Worship teams, and Youth leaders. We are grateful to individuals like Geoff Lovegrove, who faithfully served as a trustee for 32 years; Stephen and Hannah Miller for their work with Alpha (& Patrick Wilson who still facilitates Alpha – for 25 years); Forrest Morr who directed the choir for 20 years; for Pastor Ruth's 31 years of leading the Filipino Ministry, and Eugenie Payne who secured a James Legge postal stamp. We are also grateful for the Building Union for the Future team - Kay Ian Ng, David Runciman, Patrick Wilson, Rosanna Chan, John Li, Jane Arnett, Maurice O'Brien and Koon Wee, who have been working behind the scenes for years creating the new church at 22A Kennedy Road. Additionally,



we are grateful for the Grace of Giving team who this year were intentional in giving thought, study and prayer to the fundraising campaign - Kenneth Morrison, Michael Birley, George Ding, Tess Lyons, Anson Wang, Bronwyn Alexander, and David Ashton-Howorth. The body of Christ has indeed been working together - each using their gifts to build His kingdom.

We continued to adapt to changes and challenges this year as we embraced the eReformation. Worshipping online has changed the way we do church, just as the printing press gave us Bibles. We started the year 2021 with online worship services and remained online for 14 weeks - resuming in-person worship Easter Sunday at a 7:00am sunrise service. We are grateful to our small group leaders and facilitators who embraced online teaching and learning. I am also grateful to our staff team who looked for creative ways to teach, preach and lead online. Rob, Betty and team - for your expertise - thank you. Some in-person worship highlights

included Blue Christmas, Carols on the Green - a service at 22A Kennedy Road, and Christmas Eve Family and Traditional Services.

This year we farewelled four beloved staff - Chris Yorks after 11 years of worship ministry returned to the United States with his wife Barbara. Monte Peterson, after serving 4 years in Small Group ministry and Christian Education, returned to the United States with her family so she could be ordained, Tingting Liu our Children's Ministry Assistant moved back to Korea, and David Ashton-Howorth moved to Paris with his family. We were sad to see them depart but grateful for the contributions they made to building God's kingdom here in Hong Kong.

I am truly grateful for each of the leaders and teams that I work with closely - COM chaired by Michael Birley; Deacons led by Terri Appel; Missions chaired by Nick Appel; HR Committee; Stephen Ministry; Grace of Giving and Family in Need (FIN). Sadly Charles Schmitt, chairman of FIN, went

home to be with the Lord this year. He was a very active member of this team, deeply loved and appreciated. Other committees within the city that I am involved with include the Hong Kong Christian Council and the radio committee for broadcasting on RTHK.

It was an exciting year and God has a call on all our lives. He said, *'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.'* The second is this, *'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'* Mark 12:30-31. One of the themes that we have become passionate about is loving our neighbour - I am excited about the new year ahead of us as together we discover and create opportunities to love our neighbours in Wan Chai, Online and at 22A Kennedy Road. May the Lord lead us in this next new season.

Blessings, Pastor Michele



Deacons' Court Report

by Terri Appel, Clerk

He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road. When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you. Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house. When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is offered to you. Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' ~Luke 10:2-8

Much has happened over this last year within the Deacons' Court, Union Church and throughout Hong Kong. We are blessed to see the Holy Spirit move in and through our church body, as well as quite a few physical moves among our deacons, staff and church members as the ebb and flow of new seasons of ministry occurred. Since our last Annual Report from May 2021 much has changed and some things have remained the same.

For 2021 and part of early 2022, the Deacons' Court consisted of Alexander Mak, Brian Woo, Charles Caldwell, Cornelius Staalman, Eric Fung, Grace Siu, Joshua Ng, Juliana Rotmeyer, Ken Morrison, Malama Piliae, Shlviya Dhavale,

Terri Appel and Wanda Yuen. Within the 2021-22 season, the Deacons experienced a few changes as members were called to different ministries. In May 2021, Eric Fung and Juliana Rotmeyer joined the Deacons' Court. In August 2021, Charles Caldwell stepped down as our Clerk and decided to take time to rest from his ministry on the Deacons' Court. In December 2021, Juliana Rotmeyer, took a position on Union's staff as Director of Creativity and Women's Ministry, stepping away from her service on the Deacons' Court at the time. Also in December 2021, Cornelius Staalman moved out of HK (to USA and ultimately to Europe) with his wife, Trudy, to reunite with family and friends after many years in the mission field. In January 2022, Brian Woo, moved into a full-time ministry position at Saddleback Church, leaving the Deacons' Court to pursue that call to lead their men's outreach ministry. We are confident all the Union Church family remain grateful for these brothers and sisters, for their love of the Lord as witnessed through their dedicated and diligent ministry service to our church.

In keeping with our commitment to deepen the membership of the Deacons' Court through the process we started in 2019, the Deacons have been praying and seeking new candidates. In August 2021 a few members have been shadowing the Deacons; this allows candidates time to observe, pray and discern their calling by joining our meetings and prayer groups. These individuals are still discerning whether to join the Deacons. If they agree, their names will be put forward at the next AGM.

The Deacons were also active last year in seeking a new pastor for the Filipino Fellowship, as Pastora Ruth Tablada announced her desire to retire years ago. With the challenge of COVID and travel restrictions throughout last year, the recruitment activity was bathed in prayer by the Filipino Ministry and Deacons. In June 2021, the Deacons had a final interview with Pastora Fe Warlyn and voted to offer her the position. Unfortunately, travel restrictions and immigration delays continue to plague us; we have been patiently awaiting Pastora Fe's arrival from Leyte, while preparing for Pastora Ruth's departure after decades of ministry at Union Church. We now have a date and Pastora Fe will be coming to HK to hopefully shadow Pastora Ruth for a short while. The Deacons are grateful for Pastora Ruth; she is an amazing woman of God who has led this congregation diligently and into deeper maturity of faith in Jesus. We are also thankful that God provided Pastora Fe, who will take over the vibrant Union Filipino Ministry. We continue to pray that God will bless them both as each enters a new season of ministry.

An obvious one....Covid is still with us, and impacts our lives daily. Also daily we have been encouraged to pray for Union Church through the "Change me - Use me" prayer scripture series which has run for 1480 days at the time of this writing. Also remaining the same - weekly, on Tuesday and Friday mornings, Deacons gather via ZOOM to pray for Union Church's joys and concerns and those of our wider HK community and world. These sessions have been faithfully attended by not only Deacons, but also individuals who are shadowing the Deacons while considering their individual calls to serve. Prayer time

with the Tuesday morning session is set aside for all members of the congregation to join together with Deacons to pray.

The Deacons' Court continued to meet formally every month, and throughout the year we participated in a few leadership retreats along with the other church leadership boards and staff members to pray and plan for our move to 22A Kennedy Road, while discerning our continued role in the area of Wan Chai we have occupied for the last 5 years. Together the church leaders met to pray for the church and identify ways to engage the congregation and our new broader virtual community as the global pandemic maintained a grip on Hong Kong. Off and on this year we have been forced in and out of meeting virtually, or meeting at a decreased capacity. As a result of this situation our online community has grown organically; our prayer to the Lord is how He wants us to minister and engage this congregation intentionally.

Throughout the year we continued to be pressed to view our church as living stones, being thrown into Hong Kong to make positive ripples for Christ. We are not being built into a static wall, but called to action as the living, breathing Body of Christ...being His hands and feet to our neighbours. We continue to seek direction from the Lord in prayer, while discerning opportunities to make this a palpable reality. During successive leadership prayer retreats in August and October 2021, Pastor Michele encouraged us to think of ourselves as a Luke 10 church, one that is sent out, goes into homes and towns meeting people in their situations, not waiting or expecting them to come and meet us in our space. We were challenged

to move out of the comfort zones, re-imagine who our neighbourhood mission is and redefine our parish based on Luke 10. We go out! Deacons continued to pray about what a Luke 10 church would look like - with a word of discerned wisdom: "That the deeper we go into Christ, the wider we will go into the world."

To that end we are looking at ministries and examining areas where our church members have expressed interest in serving, and/or learning more about; we jumped in to lead activities if no apparent leaders were present. Since our last May 2021 AGM, Deacons have been active incubators, participants and leaders in Prayer Walks, the Grace of Giving campaigns, Bless the City outreach, Youth, Worship, Young Adults, Marketplace, Missions, Filipino, Small Group, Stephen Ministry, and Women's and Men's ministries.

As COVID continued to try to push us apart, we relied on the Spirit of God to bring us together through our collective service activities, midweek worship and prayer services, periodic weekend trivia game virtual meet ups, small group dinners in support of various mission organisations, prayer walks around Wan Chai, and to the 22A building site, and outdoor hikes with the Grace Race. We, as deacons, will continue to pray, discern, wrestle in faith, collaborate with, challenge ourselves, love through Christ and serve this church community in unity with our fellow leaders. Our prayers for creating dynamic connections in the absence of large gatherings were answered and yet...more can still be done. Thankfully, we serve, and have an indispensable relationship with our God of "more".

We must also cast our eyes to our return to 22A Kennedy Road and our new church building in a very short time. We pray that the congregation will continue to join us in prayer, and action, as we discern our path back to 22A, while growing and serving important ministries in our expanded neighbourhoods - both physical and virtual.

At the beginning of 2022, when the 5th wave of Covid reared up in Hong Kong, we found ourselves remaining socially distanced, locked down and still gathering virtually. Once again, we must continually rely upon the Spirit of the Living and Loving God to forge us together in unified hope. He, who is greater than this situation; having overcome the whims of this world is with us and will never leave us without a way to bear up. We walk together as a people of hope, believing in a Sovereign Strong God of miracles. As Deacons we will stand with the congregation shoulder to shoulder, persevering in faith, standing on Our Cornerstone - Christ, filled with the hope and joy of the Holy Spirit, as we witness God continuing to build up this church.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
~Romans 15:13

On behalf of the Deacons' Court
Terri Appel, Clerk as of Sept 2021

Committee of Management Report

by Michael Birley, Chairman

See, I am doing a new thing!

*Now it springs up; do you not
perceive it?*

I am making a way in the wilderness

~Isaiah 43:19

The last 12 months have seen a lot of changes at Union Church – both wonderful and challenging. We have sadly had to say goodbye to several key members of our staff as well as see changes amongst the leadership.

In my report a year ago, I quoted the Apostle Paul in Romans 5 speaking about perseverance, character and hope. Over the last year as individuals and as a community, we have needed all these characteristics and have had plenty of opportunities to hone them. At the same time, my personal view is that we have shown ourselves to be an immensely light-footed, adaptable and involved community. Looking back, we have much to be thankful for and to celebrate. Looking forward we have a lot to do, but with a sense of excitement about the opportunities and yes, challenges, that lie ahead of us.

During the year the members of the Committee of Management (COM) have been:

Michael Birley (Chairman and Stewardship)

Koon Wee (Vice Chair and BUFF Liaison)

George Ding (Hon Treasurer)

Jonathan Au-Weng (Hon Secretary and Sunday School)

Trevor Tam (Worship and Property)

Emilie Banfield (Missions)

Po Cheung (Communications)

Christine Yeung (Small Groups)

Tariq Dennison

Ellen Ahn (Filipino Ministry)

Shaun Dove (22A outfitting and move)

William Kuan (Young Adults)

Cecilia Lee (Youth)

Ester Li Chung (Sunday School)

I would like to extend my thanks to each member of COM for the time and input they have given to both their role on the Committee of Management and to the individual portfolio items or ministries they are responsible for. COM has continued to hold monthly meetings on Zoom throughout the year. I should record that this has enabled a very high level of attendance and engagement. The newly elected members, Shaun Dove, William Kuan, Ester Li Chung and Cecilia Lee all settled into their roles quickly and added helpful insights and complementary depth to our discussions.

Christine Yeung and Tariq Dennison stepped down. Christine moved with her

husband KK Ip to EFCC-International Church where he now serves as senior pastor. Tariq and his family relocated to Switzerland. They take our best wishes and thanks for the roles they have played over the last two years with COM.

We have also said goodbye to several long-serving members of staff – Chris Yorks, our worship director who had been with Union for 11 years who retired to the US; Monte Peterson who returned to the US with her family to serve in the church there; and our operations director David Ashton-Howorth who has moved to Paris. They are all greatly missed. They left with our thanks and appreciation for the contributions they have made.

Pastor Ruth will also be moving back to the Philippines after 31 years, shepherding the Filipino Fellowship at Union Church. I cannot adequately express the very special place she holds for us all at Union and the community she has built around her.

Within the church leadership, Geoff Lovegrove has stepped down as Chairman of the Trustees after 32 years' serving as a Trustee (21 years as Chairman) and Charles Caldwell has retired from his position as Clerk of the Deacons. We thank them for their exemplary service. I have had many occasions to tap into their wells of wisdom and deep knowledge of the workings of our Church. We welcome Dr. John Nicholls as Chairman of the Trustees and Terri Appel as Clerk of the Deacons Court.

Despite all the issues surrounding Covid, as I write this, I am reminded of the fun we've had in serving. A standout for me was the Grace of Giving campaign, which was so ably and enthusiastically led by Ken Morrison, quite a bit of the time by Zoom from Edinburgh. The level of participation was astonishing - The Grace Race as well as the online Union Reunion with local dinners and international participation. A special mention and thanks to our Filipino Ministry who were right at the forefront



in their giving and participation, at every level.

The wonders of how we can communicate have enabled us to continue to function when in-person worship and events have not been possible. Website, YouTube, Zoom, Facebook and WhatsApp and other media resources have allowed multi-level communication to keep us together. Rob, Betty and the AV team in conjunction with the church staff and volunteers have kept us at the forefront of creative worship each Sunday and continue to do so with relatively lean resources.

The construction work continues at 22A Kennedy Road and we must thank the BUFF team for their continued very high level of professional input and oversight and the work they are doing now on the fitout which is being funded by the Grace of Giving campaign.

Pastor Michele has continued to grow

in her role as Senior Pastor and it has been a joy to work with her. She has led us and the staff from the front and my interactions with her in committees and on an individual level in my capacity with COM only underscore my appreciation of all that she does and brings to our church and community. We are indeed blessed.

Change and adapt - this is our “Agile Church”. We deeply appreciate our past and our strengths and have a palpable excitement about our future as we prepare our Church, our teams and our community for the move back to 22A in the first half of 2023. We celebrate the year gone by, miss old friends who have left and welcome new friends and those who are yet to join, with, above all, a real sense of purpose in our Christ-led community.

Michael Birley
Chairman
Committee of Management



Trustees' Report

by Geoff Lovegrove, Chairman (2021) and John Nicholls, Chairman (2022)

The Trustees for 2021 were: Mr. Geoff Lovegrove (Chairman); Ms. Jane Arnett; Dr. Rosanna Chan; Mr. Alan Law; Mr. John Li; Dr. Henry Ngan; and Prof. John Nicholls. Mr. Lovegrove retired as a Trustee in December.

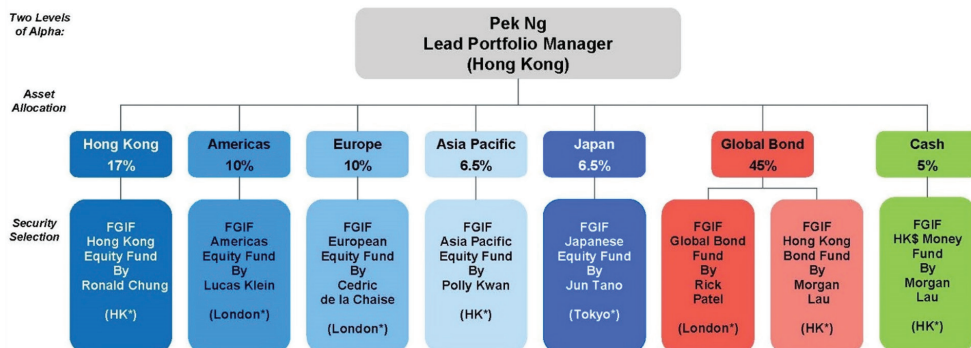
As described in our Ordinance, the Trustees are the body corporate of Union Church. The Corporation holds the church's property in trust for the purpose of a church for the public worship of God and for preaching the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the principles and usages of Protestant 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 and the Trustees would have to apply to the courts to alter this. 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 2021 the market value of the General Fund was approximately \$19.524M and of the Three-Quarter Century Fund approximately \$11.020M, each showing a loss for the year of about 0.49% (General) and 0.49% (Three-Quarter Century). The General and (Three-Quarter Century) Funds have gained about 42.9% (42.9%) in the past five years and gained about 62.4% (61.1%) in the past 10 years.

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

Structure of the FGIF Stable Growth Fund



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 2021, 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 in 2020, and with his considerable knowledge and assistance, the Trustees considered alternative fund options that give better returns and fall into the category of being SRI (socially responsible investing) or ESG (environmental, social and governance) funds. The Trustees decided to continue with the status quo because:

- 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
- there would be operational risk and regulatory issues in dealing with overseas operators without personal contact and subject to foreign regulations and compliance issues
- there is a need to have a smooth administration capability that will not be too daunting to Trustees either now or in the future
- the Trustees have pledged \$5M of the General Fund to the Grace of Giving campaign and this will become payable when non-invested Grace of Giving monies are nearing full utilisation
- there may be an additional need to draw down the Funds to support BUFF costs in the next few years, 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 \$76,460 at the end of 2021 showing a loss of about 19.2% for the year. No disbursement was made from the Fund's small income to the Committee of Management which, in accordance with the Fund's Deed, is

responsible for its use.

The Trustees have been represented in redevelopment discussions (through the BUFF steering committee as reported elsewhere) by Dr. R. Chan, Ms. J Arnett and Mr. J 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's.

The Trustees remain confident in the proposed redevelopment which means that today's congregation can leave a church for many future generations that is both financially secure and can remain independent.

Geoff Lovegrove
Chairman (2021)

John Nicholls
Chairman (2022)



Prayer

“If my people who are called by my name, humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. ~2 Chronicles 7:14

“There has never been a spiritual awakening in any country or locality that did not begin in united prayer.” A.T. Pierson

Praying together is critical. I am grateful for Tuesday morning prayer and Deacons’ prayer on Friday mornings. Additionally, there were two prayer walks where we walked to and prayed on site at 22A Kennedy Road. At three retreats, our leaders — COM, Deacons, Trustees and staff — took time this year to pray, reflect and envision. These retreats provided opportunities to build community, pray and envision together. We dedicated the month of September to prayer with *On the Move* prayer guide comprising individual reflections and prayer points written by our leaders. We also held a communion service on the 22A construction site with our leaders, giving thanks and praising God for His faithfulness.

by Rev. Dr. Michele Bland



Educate

by Rev. Dr. Michele Bland

CLASSES & SEMINARS

Throughout the year we provided classes and seminars - "Wednesdays at Union" offering both in-person and online classes featuring local and international speakers: Maintaining Mental Health with Rev. Dina Chamberland; Screenagers NEXT CHAPTER with Dr. Amanda Oswalt Visser; Marriage Renewed – Gary Thomas; The Passion in Mark – Professor Matthew Skinner; two Church History series – Catronia Woodrow; Art Jam with Crystal Lo; Worship teaching by King Chau; An Evening with J. John; Raising Global Teens – Dr. Anesha Abrahams; Spiritual Gifts – Monte Peterson and the Difference Course with Monte Peterson, and Jessica Hexter and Lakshmi Jacota. We also enjoyed 8 Film & Theology Movie Nights with Chris McKenzie.

Stephen Ministry continued to provide pastoral care to our community and Stephen Members received regular supervision – twice monthly. Six of our Stephen Ministers (Tess Lyons, Crystal Lo, Monte Peterson, Trudy Staalman, Ellen Ahn Demuynck, Catronia Woodrow) completed 25 hours of additional training to become Stephen Leaders.

Our 6th annual Ladies Retreat was held on Lantau Island in November with 47 ladies in attendance. Our theme was 7 Wonders of the World. Worship was led by Anna Rees and the speakers included Jane Arnett, Nevada McKenzie, Emilie Banfield and Pastor Michele. We are grateful to Juliana Rotmeyer and her team for organising an amazing weekend of reflection and encouragement.

Advent devotionals were also a highlight - featuring devotions written by members of our congregation and staff. Quiz nights provided opportunities for people to connect during Covid.

Men's Ministry by Dan Tupps

MEN'S MINISTRY

Men's Retreat

One of the biggest highlights of the past year for our Men's Ministry was our first-ever Union Church men's retreat at the YWCA Sydney Leong Holiday Lodge on Lantau Island. Praise God we had a total of 32 men join! It was a great time of fun, fellowship, and learning together. Charles Caldwell set the tone well for us on the opening night and we heard about the importance of authentic relationships in three areas: 1. with ourselves and 2. with others (led by Chris McKenzie) and 3. with God (led by Dan Tupps and Andrew Lo). We also had great times of worship, communion, games, reflection and sharing with one another.

Men who were not already in a group were encouraged to form 3-2-1 groups: 3 men commit to meet for at least 2 hours once a month. Praise the Lord, as of this writing, I know of at least four such groups forming, a couple of Walk to Emmaus reunion groups that will resume meeting again, and another group that has welcomed new people!

The consensus from our planning team

and participants is to make this an annual event. We look forward to our next retreat in Fall of 2022.

Wings & Fries with the Guys

We also launched a new monthly gathering for our men on the first Wednesday of the month at Fini's Italian Restaurant in Wan Chai. The event has been aptly dubbed "Wings & Fries with the Guys" as it occurs during Fini's deal of unlimited wings,

fries, drinks and fellowship. It's been a great chance for men to connect, deepen relationships, forge new ones and discuss life in a casual setting.

Men's Fellowship of Hong Kong

Our men have continued to participate in the HK Men's Fellowship Lunch on the second Friday of each month. Due to restrictions, the venue changed for most of the year from The Hong Kong Club to



Madame Fu in Tai Kwun, Central. There were several joint lunches for men and women this past year celebrating and learning more about city-wide movements and ministries, such as the ONE during Lent, Alpha and Walk to Emmaus.

Men's Bible Studies

"The Finishers!" men's group has faithfully met every Thursday over lunch for study and fellowship. Also, Andrew Lo led an

online Bible study with about 10 men on the Gospel of John chapters 4-6. It was originally supposed to be for six weeks. However, as the study was coming to an end, the group decided to go another six weeks to study John 7-12! Praise the Lord for how He gave these men a hunger for His Word to impact their lives.



Young Adults by Dan Tupps

YOUNG ADULTS

So many amazing things happened in 2021 it's easy to forget we were exclusively online the first three months of the year. Even during our online season God was at work bringing new people to our church and Young Adults group.

In total we saw over 10 new people get connected to our Young Adults fellowship this past year, including one who started with us online then attended our in-person Alpha, came to know Jesus as her Lord and Saviour and eventually got baptised. Speaking of baptism, we had two young adults get baptised this year, praise the Lord!

Gospel of Mark Study

We started the year with an online study of the Gospel of Mark during Lent. We had some excellent discussions, particularly on Jesus' teaching and example on servant leadership (Mark 10:32-45). This fruitful discussion set the tone for the year allowing our young adults to feel free to open up and share more.

Young Adults Alpha

We hosted an in-person Alpha course for young adults from 28 April – 23 June. We had 10 guests throughout the course. Two guests were brand new to exploring Christianity, another was coming back to the faith, one guest was inspired to get



baptised after the course and another guest prayed to receive Jesus a few weeks after attending Alpha! And still others who were already believers found Alpha helpful in solidifying their faith.

Another highlight was our Alpha Day Away. We had an amazing prayer ministry time that lasted the full hour! In fact, our leader for the day, who has been running Alphas for many years, said he couldn't recall a time when such in depth conversations and prayer lasted for so long.

Discipleship Explored

In the Fall, we launched Discipleship Explored, a video-based series that goes through the book of Philippians and teaches what it means to be a devoted follower of Jesus. During each session we also learned a useful discipline for spiritual

growth, such as helpful prayers, how to read the Bible, etc. It was a great follow-up to Alpha.

Not only did we study and grow together, but we developed closer relationships with one another through various events such as:

- Hikes
- Serving our community through Kindness Walks
- Bowling Night + Dan's Birthday Celebration
- Other Fellowship Lunches and Dinners
- Game Night
- Christmas Lunch + Party

2021 was a great year for our young adults deepening their faith, welcoming new people and growing God's kingdom.





Youth by Hunter Purvis

YOUTH MINISTRY

Overview

At Union Youth, 2021 was a year of new faces, trying new things and finding new ways to grow in our relationship with Christ. We started the year online and took the opportunity to renovate the Youth room, which quickly became one of the best places at Union to just hangout. Just in time, in fact, because we then moved back in person and jumpstarted an amazing Spring, Summer and Fall of fun and discipleship.

In the spring we were so lucky to have Elise Bland join our Youth Ministry Staff – Elise, a graduated Youth, served as our Youth Intern from February through September before leaving for university in Edinburgh. 2021 would have been completely different without her energy, dedication and passion for discipling young people. While Hunter Purvis continued as Youth Director, there were some other major changes. Justin Cheong continued working as Youth Assistant through the summer before taking the next step in his journey as a teacher, while Britta Tellvik helped make it a worshipful year as she developed the Youth Band and especially worked alongside our junior high youth! A huge thank you to everyone who came together to make it a great year for Youth Ministry, including our amazing team of adult volunteers and student leaders who continue to volunteer their time and energy to mentoring and walking alongside our Youth.

2021 was an important year for our Confirmation Programme, with 3 new

youth finishing the Confirmation process, affirming their personal relationship with Christ with the support of the congregation. A huge congratulations to Britta Tellvik, Caleb Chung and Wilfred Ding for taking this next step in their walk with Christ!

Friday Youth Group - While the challenges posed by COVID-19 changed how we do Youth Group for significant periods, our fellowship and connection with Christ have continued to be proven unshakeable. When in the Spring we were allowed in-person gatherings we grabbed the opportunity by the reins to hold Youth Alpha, Holy Spirit Weekend Retreats, dinners at Fini's, jewelry making, HELP First Hand workshops, Kindness Walks, airsoft, Youth Junk Trips, Bible studies on the Just10 series and more. Thanks be to God for His love and protection this last year.

Sunday Youth Group – We were especially blessed this year in Sunday Youth as a great and energetic contingent of Children's Ministry graduates transitioned to Junior Youth, and also when several newcomers joined our weekly gatherings. Whether we were studying Ephesians, Revelation, the Trinity and more, it was as great time and a huge thanks to Pastor Michele for opening her home in 2021 for Youth gatherings. On Wednesdays we've had Youth attend various classes and discussion series like our study of the Gospel of Mark alongside ONE Hearing the Word, Women in the Bible, Spiritual Gifts and more.

In terms of Missions, our Youth continued to shift our focus to helping as much as we can in our local community, as international travel became difficult during the pandemic. Youth and adult volunteers led regular Kindness Walks around Wan Chai throughout the year to reach out to our neighbours in need – a huge thank you to Kathy Foley for organising and leading these great opportunities for Youth to give back to our community. Thank you for your continued support and encouragement!

Again, 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 of them for their dedication and commitment. Many thanks to Wanda Yuen, Cecilia Lee, Charles Caldwell, Dale Weathington, Karinda Chuntavorn, Kathy Foley, John Jamison, Jennifer Shiu, Teresa Fox, Tess Lyons, Koon Wee, Jennifer Parks and Melody Meyers.

Goals for 2022

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 2021, 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 in different ways – but especially with a focus on getting students to read, understand and digest scripture in new and engaging ways, whether that be listening to it spoken during the ONE series, group bible studies, watching and discussing sermons and more.

3. **Continue to Build up Student Leaders**

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

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

"But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint." ~Proverbs 16:9

We continue to trust in the Lord as we enter the new year and find strength in Him to help us through the uncertainties.

We started off the 2021 year with in-person Sunday School until the situation required us to switch our operation online.

Online Sunday School may not be the most ideal way for our children to meet and learn about God and His Word, but we made every effort to continue to meet and worship God together. We made the best of the technology that is available to us and held our Sunday School via Zoom. As a result, we had the most wonderful time with our children, worshipping and praising God, learning about Him through His Word, sharing and praying for each other, and playing educational and Biblical theme online quizzes. Winners of the online quizzes were awarded with ice cream vouchers.

Here are outlines of our ONLINE and IN-PERSON Sunday School Programme throughout 2021:

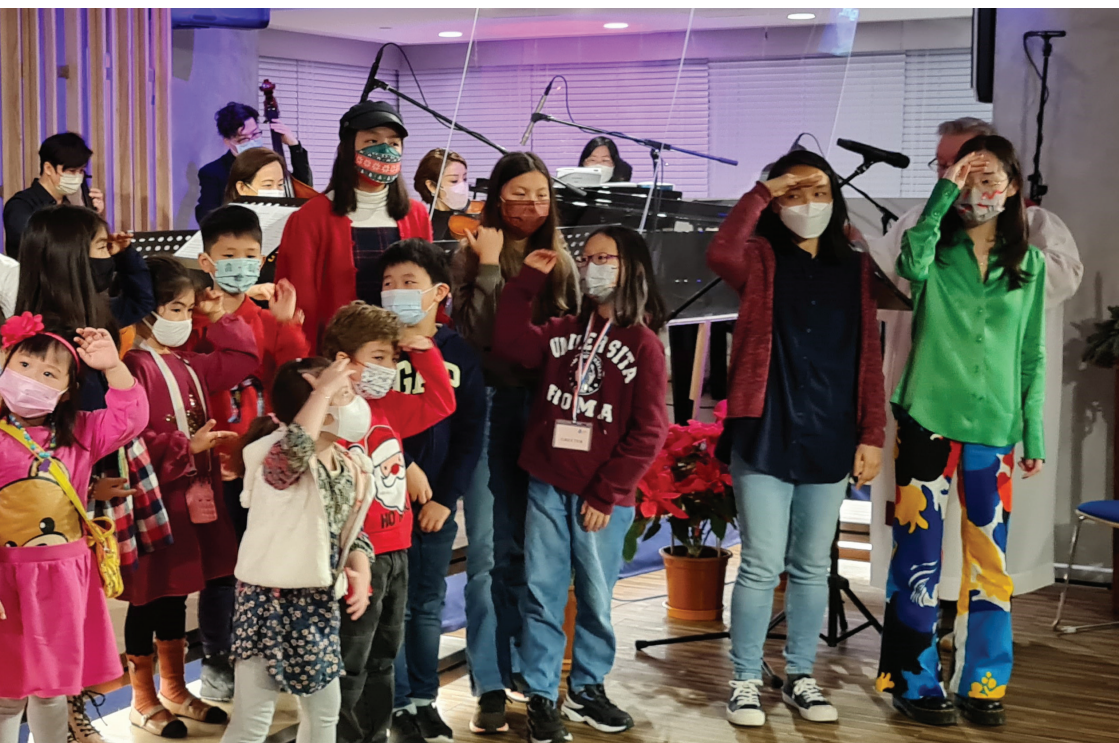
1. Online Sunday School - Age-group wide Online Sunday School, every Sunday, at 10:30 am to 12:00 noon, from February to May.
2. Sunday School and Programmes packages - CNY, Palm Sunday and

Easter Sunday, Mother's Day and Father's Day packages were mailed home for the children.

3. Kingdom Kids Sunday Edition - Pre-recorded children's messages aired every Sunday after Sunday Worship services.
4. In-person Sunday School - For the month of January, and June to December, we were able to hold in-person Sunday School and we took advantage of this opportunity and had fun learning together about Jesus and His teachings.



5. Senior Sunday School Outings - Our oldest Sunday School students were able to go out for outings and enjoyed meals and activities together such as bowling and ESCAPE Room.
6. Sunday School Graduation - We held an in-person graduation ceremony for our 12 amazing children who graduated from Sunday School at the end of June.
7. Family Educational Programme (March and April) - We organised an online screening of a documentary titled Screenagers - NEXT CHAPTER: Uncovering Skills for Stress Resilience, and invited Dr. Amanda Oswalt-Visher for a Q&A session with our families. We also organised Parenting Through COVID-19: Supporting our Children and Teens with Dr. Anisha Abrahams. Both programmes were well attended and received by parents.
8. Summer Programme - We organised and ran an in-person summer programme for our children for the month of July and encouraged our children to use the knowledge learned to praise God and glorify His name. Workshops included:
 - Drum to the Beat with Union Church Deacon, Malama Piliae
 - Musical Theatre with Union Church Choir Director, Forrest Morr
 - Watercolour Painting and Stamping with bymamalaterre
 - Drama Workshop with Dove Tales Theatre





9. Vacation Bible Sunday School (VBS) - We held in-person Vacation Bible Sunday School for 5 Sundays in August, with the theme of “TREASURED”. We were reminded that we are all loved and treasured by God.
10. Hallelujah Party - “The Adventure of Noah”-themed Hallelujah Party was held in-person on the last Saturday of October and was attended by 100 people. Friendship were built and more people were connected to Union Church through this family-friendly activity.
11. Children’s Christmas Musical – During the month of November, our children practiced the songs and lines for the Christmas musical titled “A Christmas Treasure”. They then delivered a beautiful play about Jesus being the greatest gift and treasure of all.
12. Christmas Community Outreach - A total of 46 people served at the St. Barnabas’ Society and Home (SBSH) on Sunday, 19 December. We spent a wonderful afternoon together with the children of SBSH’s Kids programme. We played games and made crafts together, we worshipped God, and listened to the good news of Jesus’ birth through a mini Nativity play by the children. We also distributed stationery packs and meal boxes to the children of SBSH.



13. Generous Community - We are thankful for our generous Kingdom Kids families who supported many great causes this year. In 2021, we donated 120 boxes of masks containing 6000 pieces of child-sized masks to Inner City Ministries (ICM). We joined and helped raise funds for the Union Church Grace Race. We also raised funds and purchased about 50 stationery packs and meal boxes for St. Barnabas' Society and Home. Other campaigns included donations of baby diapers and milk powder to Sons & Daughters and helping prepare and run activities for Thankful Day at Mother's Choice.

In 2021, we bade farewell to the David

and Betty Tong family and also the Joseph and Iris Ma family, who relocated to UK. We also said farewell to the Aquin and Tariq Dennison family who relocated to Switzerland, and to the Jessica and Andrew Hexter family who moved back to the US. We give thanks to God for these families who faithfully served Christ in various ministries at Union Church, especially as Sunday School teachers for the Children's Ministry.

We give thanks to God for our amazing Sunday School teachers whose love for Jesus and His children is evident in the gentle and loving way they interact with our children, the creative ways they shared the Bible story, and the flexibility and perseverance they have shown as

Educate

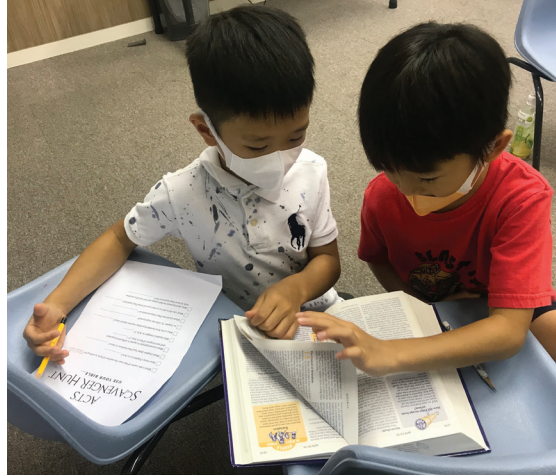
we transitioned back and forth between in-person and online Sunday School. Our heartfelt thanks also to our team of Sunday School crafts and events preparation for the countless hours spent in cutting hundreds of pieces of crafts and props. Your patience and love for the children inspire us to continue our work with enthusiasm and help us focus our eyes on Jesus. Thank you Sunday School teachers and volunteers!

A special thank you to our amazing Children's Ministry Assistant, Tingting Liu, who served God so faithfully and gave so much to our ministry. We prayed for a great new chapter in Korea for Tingting and her husband.

As we continue to follow our vision to raise all of our children for God's Kingdom, our prayers for the New Year of 2022 is for all of us to trust in Jesus and cling to His promises.

“For I know the plans I have for you’, declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’”
~Jeremiah 29:11

Let us continue to faithfully raise our children for God's Kingdom.





Evangelise

Alpha by Patrick Wilson, Alpha Course Administrator

We started 2021 by completing the last few sessions of our Autumn 2021 online Alpha course. As the group didn't want to disband – often the case once new friendships had been formed – we continued with an 8 week-long follow up course: 'The Jesus Lifestyle' which is based on the Sermon on the Mount. This course ended in April.

In the summer, we started a new initiative with our plan to run 3 Alpha courses concurrently; one for adults, one for young adults run by Dan Tupps and one for youth run by Hunter Purvis. We ran the adult course online at lunchtime and had 8 guests and 5 helpers. It was exciting that the Young Adults started their first course in the evening at Union Church. The group had around 10 guests and 6 helpers. With the relaxation in Covid social distancing rules at the time, both groups were able to meet up, as planned, to share an 'Away Day' which we ran in person at Union.

In May, the Youth started Alpha course during their regular Friday evening sessions with 25 students and 10 helpers. They were very fortunate to be able to travel to the New Territories for their weekend away when 15 students rededicated their lives to Christ.

My extended time out of Hong Kong over the summer followed by 3 weeks' hotel quarantine didn't leave enough time to run an Autumn course. As a result, our next course is planned for early 2022.

I would like to thank Dan, Hunter and all the group hosts and helpers who helped with running the various Alpha courses last year. Finally, we thank God for his faithfulness and give Him the glory for all He has done and continues to do through the Alpha ministry!



Prison Ministry by Nick Appel

In the early part of 2021, our prison ministry visitation classes continued to be suspended due to the Covid. However, Union Church members remained in touch with inmates through a coordinated letter-writing campaign from our sponsoring prison ministry partner, The Hong Kong Christian Kun Sun Association (KSA).

In May, the Union Church team (current and former KSA volunteers) in partnership with Youth with a Mission helped to produce a DVD on the topic of 'Wisdom' that was shown in various correctional institutions in Hong Kong. The DVD helped to bring the Gospel to the inmates during the pandemic. KSA was very grateful for the technical support provided by the Union Church production team to produce a very interesting and professional DVD which brought much encouragement to the inmates.

In September 2021 the prison visits resumed, but with only a limited team of 4

volunteers. Our Stanley Prison volunteers were able to return and visit the brothers inside and run Bible classes with them. It was a joyful reunion after not seeing each other for more than a year.

In October, we participated in the KSA flag day fundraiser as part of Union Church's Bless the City event. We sent a team to assist with selling flags on the street as well as helping to sell gold flags in order to encourage people to support the work of KSA. The overall event raised \$1.3 million for the work of KSA.

We were able to make visits to Stanley Prison to share the love and message of Jesus until December 2021. Unfortunately, the prison visits stopped again in January 2022 due to the pandemic. The team will collaborate with KSA about potential future projects during this time of lockdown to encourage and give hope to those in prison.



Missions by the Missions Committee

Amid the pandemic, natural disasters, and political upheaval on a global scale, our God continues to remain faithful through it all! This year we faced many challenges as a community of believers, but to nobody's surprise God showed up, and in a big way! Our UC Missions committee is grateful for the opportunity to put the resources our gracious Lord has given to us from the congregation to achieve what we hope is maximum value and Kingdom impact.

Meet our Ministry Partner Sundays

While Covid prevented us from traveling to visit our ministry partners in the field and especially our overseas ministry partners, it didn't prevent us from bringing those partners to our congregation for meet and greets. This year UC Missions introduced "Meet our Ministry Partner Sundays". Starting in September with International China Concern (ICC), we have invited ministries that we support, both foreign and local representatives in Hong Kong, to visit our congregation in person when the church was open, and virtually when we were restricted to online only service. The response from the congregation, and individual and corporate engagement by our congregation with our ministry partners, has been wonderful and we hope to continue this a monthly event going forward. Besides ICC, we've been blessed with visits from representatives of Sons & Daughters, ADM/SALT, Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor (HKCNP), Alpha Hong Kong, and International Care Ministries (ICM). We have scheduled visits for Faith Comes by Hearing Asia, Saint Barnabas' Society and Home (SBSH) and more.

Special Offerings

In addition to the budget that is allocated each year to Missions by the Committee of Management (COM) and the Honorary Treasurer, the Missions Committee is also permitted by COM to call for 4-6 "Special Offerings" on an annual basis. The generous gifts donated by our Union Church congregation go to support needs arising from Missions organisations with whom we network. This year we were able to support the efforts of several worthy organisations including:

- 1) Hope International: Covid aid and relief effort for poor indigent communities in India facing food and healthcare supply shortages during the deadliest wave of the virus in India.
- 2) Crossroads International: Refortification of crumbling walls in the staff dormitories and emergency power supply repairs, providing a safe home environment for workers supporting the mission of Crossroads, including some of our own Union Church congregants.
- 3) Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor: Through the annual 10/10/10 campaign in October, we were able to provide some needed resources for struggling families living on the margins throughout Hong Kong.
- 4) Home of Loving Faithfulness (HOLF): The building of an extension to house more residents of this amazing ministry that cares for the severely disabled, the hiring of new staff, and the creation of a garden for the residents to enjoy.





Bless the City

In keeping with a tradition that had been spearheaded by Monte Peterson, many Union Church members ventured out into the community on October 16th in support of several of our ministry partners. 72 pairs of hands & feet were sent out around the city to support ministry partners Sons & Daughters, Kun Sun prison ministry, Chung King Ministry, St Barnabas' Society and Home, Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor in Tin Shui Wai, a Youth outreach at Tamar Park, and to assemble love gifts for elderly residents of China Coast Community. There was an outpouring of grace dispensing across Hong Kong that equally blessed all the participants.

Missions Christmas Fair

We were delighted to welcome nine Ministry Partners and friends of Union Church at our annual Missions Christmas Fair on Sunday, 28 November. It is a wonderful opportunity to meet our partners and new neighbours too, understand their mission, and support them while buying Christmas gifts.

Participants included New Sight, ICC, Young Life, Sons & Daughters, Kun Sun prison ministry, YWAM, ICM Philippines, Crossroads and Lost and Found.

Discretionary Gifts

The Missions Committee is profoundly grateful for generous givers at Union Church. Gifts were received for discretionary use throughout 2021, with sizable gifts near the end of the year. We were able to apply these in a timely manner to the Typhoon Odette relief efforts in the Philippines by two of our Ministry Partners – ICM and CAMACOP Church Planting Network.

Comings & Goings

In the past year, the Missions Committee said farewell to John Jamison, Cornelius Staalman, KK Ip, Yan Yu, and Jessica Hexter as God called them to new opportunities here in Hong Kong and abroad. We salute the amazing contributions that they have each made to UC Missions during their tenure. We want to thank John Jamison for the foundational work he provided as Chair

of UC Missions in drafting our Missions Policy Document which remains our plumb line for operating and strong governance.

We also welcomed new committee members Ester Li Chung and Simone Loke and are very grateful for the impact that they've made as Prayer Partners with Alpha, HOLF, HKCNP, and Inner City Ministries.

What's New in '22 for UC Missions

- We look forward to building even closer contacts and building roots within our Wan Chai community as we prepare for the move back to 22A.
- Mission Trips: While we will still be unable to travel to visit our overseas missions' partners, there will be plenty of exciting opportunities to engage and participate in events that support our UC partner ministries in Hong Kong. Consider joining or even leading one of our Union Church Kindness Walks in Wan Chai.
- Provide professional skills. Many of our ministry partners need volunteers. Consider offering your professional talents in administration, accounting, counselling, art, crafts, leading worship/music ministry, film, and video production, etc. UC Missions will be happy to assist you in finding the right fit for your God given talents.
- We're always looking for people who feel a calling to serve in UC Missions. Please feel free to contact any one of our team (Nick Appel, Kathy Foley, Ester Chung, Emilie Banfield, Dennis Hopton, Simone Loke, Dale Weathington, or Jeff Cheung) if you feel led and wish to learn more.

*He has told you, O man, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?*

~Micah 6:8



Worship by Dr. Joyce Wu

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own
understanding; in all your ways
submit to him, and he will make your
paths straight. ~Proverbs 3:5-6*

2021 has been a year of worship, change and new initiatives for the worship ministry at Union. Thank you all for the faithful serving and commitment throughout the year!

Worship Ministries

8:45am Family Communion Service

The worship ensemble continues to expand and we have more volunteers singing and leading the congregants to worship with a richer and fuller music ensemble. Thank you for a group of committed singers and players who faithfully serve our weekly morning worship!

9:45am Traditional Service

Thanks to Forrest, Selene, and our gifted Union Church Choir for their faithful serving during the pandemic. The choir remained



strong and committed with the addition of some new singers. We celebrated St. Andrew's Sunday with bagpipes music played by Julian Ragless. Union's annual Children's Christmas Musical, "Christmas Treasure Hunt" was also well received. Thanks to our Children's Ministry team, Dove Tales Theatre Company and our many volunteers! More highlights include the Advent Cantata with the presentation of "Let There Be Christmas", Carols and brass on the Green at 22A, Blue Christmas Service, and Christmas Eve Candlelight jazzy and classic services with orchestra.

11:15am Contemporary Service

The Worship team continues to develop and grow in its style and quality, and we

have involved more worship leaders, singers, and players to lead and play. We were blessed to have our worship intern, Britta Tellvik who has assisted in various aspects of worship. We also saw the continuation of the Youth band and the development of the Junior Youth band. They have been cultivating a heart of worship and expanding their worship leading skills. It was also encouraging having Youth sing and play in our Sunday worship services.

We encouraged the church to worship and experience God through arts, music and prayer with the Experiencing Worship series. The series comprised worship-based art jam with Crystal Lo, a creative



worship service led by Juliana Rotmeyer which focused on prayer and worship in a meditative style, and worship teaching by King Chau on God's story. King also led a Worship Workshop - God Nourishes Us at the Table, and he invited us to reflect on the teaching of Jesus on Communion and how He is made known to us at the Table with a focus on the teaching of the Apostle Paul on the Lord's Supper, and the practice of Communion by the early church. Joshua Ng led the worship team on a workshop on historical prayer, and Anna Rees conducted a worship training on how to lead worship. We also welcomed the congregation to join us for the worship jam workshop and worship God together through music. You are welcome to join us in 2022 if you sing or play an instrument!





We are grateful for a strong team and committed worship leaders and singers and players for sharing their gifts and talents at Union Church. We are also grateful to Rob and Betty Porter and their talented team that keeps our AV and weekly online services running smoothly. May our worship continue to thrive and strengthen under our Lord's guidance. Thank you all and to God be the glory!

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

~Colossians 3:16



Filipino Ministry by Ruth Tablada

FILIPINO MINISTRY

“Fix your eyes on Jesus...so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”
~Hebrews 12: 2-3

For more than two years, the pandemic has caused anxiety and worry among the Filipino members not able to go home to see their families - not able to be with their grieving loved ones and see for the last time their loved ones that have passed away. Their strength, comfort and encouragement is Jesus in their heart! They have been holding on to Jesus! An excerpt from the song, “One Day At A Time, Sweet Jesus”, says

That’s all I’m asking of You
Just give me the strength to do every day
What I have to do.
Yesterday’s gone, sweet Jesus
And tomorrow may never be mine
God help me today
Show me the way
One day at a time!

Yes, one day at a time for them! God’s Word and Church have been their strength and encouragement. God is good all the time!

During Chinese New Year (CNY) 2021, we headed on the second day to Po Toi Island for fellowship and teaching. 60 of the Filipino ladies came and found a slope with big stones. They were divided into groups. I stood in a higher place with a portable microphone to allow us to see and hear one another. After the preaching, we had group interactions and sharing.

The 3rd day of CNY, we gathered at Victoria Garden at the Peak for a second day of teaching and learning.

We thank God for the opportunity and privilege to participate with the “Grace of Giving” and “Grace Race.” It was fun and a challenging. The Filipino ladies walked and hiked with joy and energy! Glory to God!



We thank God for the Canoe Hut that allowed us to gather for fellowship and barbecue and canoe around Tai Tam Bay. It was stress relieving for the ladies. They said it was the most unforgettable experience they had in Hong Kong. We thank you for David Ashton-Howorth for opening the place for the Filipino Fellowship to use for a minimal fee.

We rejoiced for the 5 people who came to know Jesus personally and who were baptised at Deep Water Bay.

We celebrated Christmas on 26 December and after worship we headed to a nearby park. Packed food was distributed and since it was raining each one went to find a place to shelter themselves from rain and enjoy the food. We can give thanks in all circumstances knowing that God is good and faithful!

Thank you for your continued prayers for us.

God bless you!



Administration

Building Union for the Future by the BUFF Steering Committee

2021 has been an eventful and blessed year! We see our new church taking shape with our Sanctuary's steel framework completed and the tower block topped out.

We started out the year continuing to work on the detailed design of the church interior while ensuring good communication with users and church staff. The final design was presented and approved by Joint Leaders in June and communicated to the wider congregation over the summer via meetings and on the website. In February, we also recruited a project management company, CBRE, to assist us in the tendering and eventual fit out work. We are currently in the tendering and value engineering process to select the most suitable main contractor for the interior fit out works which, we hope, will be awarded by March 2022.

We have been informed of a slight delay for the expected Occupation Permit date of the new 22A to July/August 2022. Hence, site handover to us to start fit out work is currently expected to be August 2022, and therefore putting our anticipated return to 22A sometime in the Spring of 2023.

We are thankful that, despite Covid, the Lord brought us back to 22A for three prayer meetings, a small thanksgiving service in our future sanctuary in November and Carols on the Green in December. We were able to continue with our outreach to the construction workers on site who have worked hard to build our church. We sent small gifts (sponsored by our leadership teams, COM, Deacons, [44 | Union Church | Annual Report 2021](#)

Trustees and the Choir) to thank them and to celebrate the festivities of the year with the workers.

We are grateful for all your prayers, your support and your generous contribution towards the Grace of Giving campaign. Most of all we want to give thanks to our Lord for this fruitful year. We pray that our Lord continues to lead and walk with us, bless us with faith, wisdom and joy as we work through this critical year, and to bring us back to 22A.



Stewardship by Michael Birley



UNION CHURCH
STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

An attitude of gratitude!

In what turned out to be another very testing year for us all due to the Covid situation and resulting restrictions on meetings, movement and travel, we went into November 2021 and the Stewardship month with a sermon series on gratitude. And on reflection, what a lot we have to be grateful for both as individuals and as a community.

Please excuse me for quoting Pastor Michele from Acts@22A last November –

“Grateful. Not only is being grateful Biblical, being grateful has many benefits. Author Melody Beattie stated, ‘Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.’

“Being grateful takes us outside ourselves, our circumstances, and our challenges and enables us to gather perspective. God is the provider of all things – ‘The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, for he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.’ Psalm 24:1–2 According to the Apostle Paul, it is God’s will for us to be grateful – ‘Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this

is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.’ 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18 We have so much to be grateful for.”

One thing I am personally grateful for is being a part of such a generous congregation. Funds raised for individual charities by way of special offerings, the amazing result we had from the Grace of Giving campaign and the monthly pledges, weekly collections and online giving are a testimony to your generosity. Commitments and pledges this year during the Stewardship season have come to a total of HK\$7.22 million from a total of 101 donors. This is a reduction of 11.5% on last year’s figure of HK\$8.16 million from 103 donors. Given the times we live in and just how generous everyone had been during the Grace of Giving campaign, I for one am grateful that we have all but maintained the number of donors and come within a reasonable margin of the amount pledged last year.

I am aware that people will have had to dig deep and as I know from personal experience (some of which I shared with you in person on a Sunday in November), God has a special way of honouring that commitment. Whilst some may feel that we are falling short, I have no doubt that, come the end of this year, He will have found ways to make up for any shortfall that there may be.

Juliana Rotmeyer wrote last year about FAITH and as we proceed through 2022 and all that this year will hold for us, we are looking forward in FAITH with an attitude of gratitude for all that the Lord has bestowed on us. Let’s also not forget what He has in store going forward as we prepare to return to 22A.



2021 COMMITMENT CARD RESULT				
	NO. OF PEOPLE		AMOUNT (HKD)	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
PLEDGE				
NEW	4	2	108,000	132,000
EXISTING	67	63	4,445,520	4,554,120
	71	65	4,553,520	4,686,120
ONE-OFF				
NEW	2	5	6,000	23,200
EXISTING	19	21	2,157,000	1,251,388
	21	26	2,163,000	1,274,588
FOHKC				
NEW	0	1	-	1,163
EXISTING	12	10	1,451,650	1,261,200
	12	11	1,451,650	1,262,363
GRAND TOTAL	104	102	8,168,170	7,223,071

The Grace of Giving by Ken Morrison

To God Be The Glory! On behalf of the Grace of Giving team, we wish to thank everyone who participated in the Grace of Giving campaign, whether through prayer support, donations, the Union Reunion, the Grace Race, the Final Push or by sponsoring participants. You certainly were IN and we're so grateful. (Special thanks also to David Ashton-Howorth and Wanda Yuen for helping to organise the Grace Race and Final Push.) We are also grateful for the real sense of unity experienced within our team throughout the campaign and also among our different leadership bodies with whom we worked – COM, Deacons, BUFF and Trustees. The fundraising was an encouraging example of the united Body of Christ as we move towards our return to Kennedy Road in early 2023.

The initial timeline for completing the fundraising was the end of June 2022. However, due to the accelerated progress of the redevelopment this timeline was advanced to the end of September 2021. From nearly 18 months to just 9 months!

And yet, despite the shortened timeframe, **God moved hearts and encouraged so many to participate.** Our guiding scripture from 2 Corinthians 8:7 exhorted us to “... *excel in this grace of giving.*” And you did! “Graces of giving” were received from approximately 300 donors. Moreover, we continued to receive donations even after the 30 September deadline.

And so, we were delighted to report that by the end of October our target of \$32 million (which included the matching commitment of \$15 million from Union

Church) not only had been reached but had in fact been exceeded, with donations/commitments of \$32.6 million. Your participation made a real difference in helping to reach our target.

One of the main purposes for the Grace of Giving campaign was clearly to raise funds for the fit-out costs of “New 22A”. If the funds finally raised are in excess of the actual fit-out costs, the church leadership will prayerfully consider how best to utilise such surplus - in missions, outreach and the work of the church.

During the course of the Grace of Giving we also learned or were reminded of other important “lessons”:

Fundraising as ministry in fostering relationships and community

We learned that Fundraising is not simply a “financial transaction” but involves the fostering of relationships and community across our entire congregation so that together we seek to carry out God’s work. Fostering community was at the heart of the Grace of Giving campaign. Our Union ReUnion in April involved many hosted gatherings as well as “alumni” joining by Zoom from overseas. The Grace Race in late May and “Final Push” in September were also opportunities for joining with family, friends and colleagues to participate in a sponsored run/walk.

The importance of Prayer

We were clearly reminded of the importance of prayer. Early on in the campaign, we realised we could not raise the funds “in our own strength”. The

Administration

great missionary to China, Hudson Taylor, repeatedly affirmed that when we are engaged in God's work, in His way and in His timing "He will provide". Therefore, prayer and seeking to discern God's will for the campaign was key throughout the "journey". In particular, in September 2021, the final month of the campaign, we focused specifically on prayer for the whole month and invited the entire church family to pray daily for all aspects of the move back to Kennedy Road – the smooth completion of the building; the detailed fit-out; and all the various ministries, both current and future. We were assisted by a daily devotional for the month which had been contributed and compiled by the church leaders.

Prayer was key and God showed up in ways we had never imagined at the start of the Grace of Giving.

To God be the glory!

The Grace of Giving Team

(Pastor Michele, Ken Morrison, Bronwyn Alexander, Tess Lyons-Caldwell, Michael Birley, Anson Wang, George Ding)



Treasurer's Report

by George Ding

Financial Highlights

2021 was a year filled with challenges as Union Church adjusted to serving our city and ministering congregants amidst the uncertainty and limitations brought on by the global pandemic. It was also a year of unique transition that set the course for how the church would function in the future. The General Fund, our main operating fund, recorded a deficit of HK\$2.7 million¹. This reflected a \$2.6 million deficit from operating activities and a \$0.1 million loss from the investment portfolio. The Grace of Giving campaign successfully concluded in September 2021, exceeding the fundraising target within half the time initially planned. The net assets of the church increased 24% from last year and stand at \$52.5 million at the end of 2021.

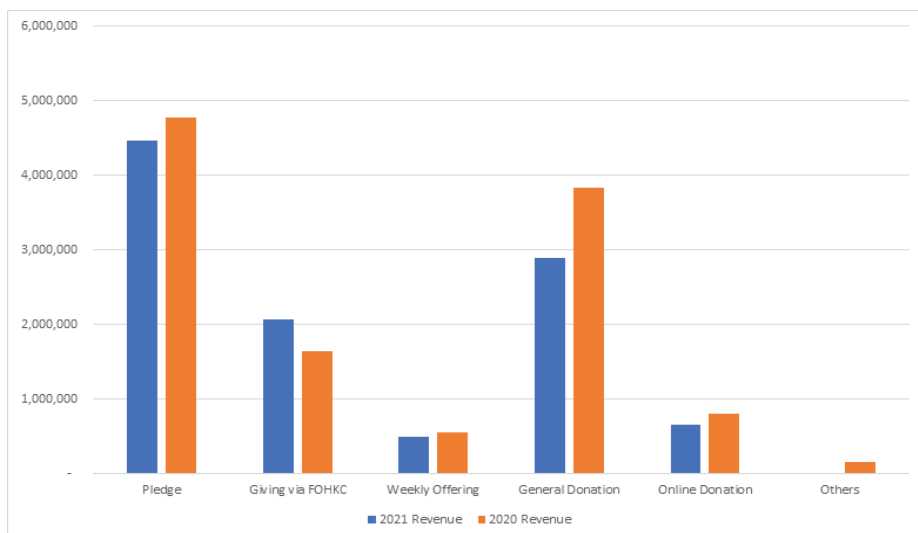
Revenue

Thanks to our Lord's abundant blessings and your generosity, we received \$10.6 million in offerings in 2021. In a year filled with uncertainty, our overall revenue (excluding Grace of Giving) decreased by 10% from 2020.

The breakdown of General Fund revenue in 2021 and 2020 is as follows.

Total Revenue: \$10,569,370

¹ All figures provided herewith are in Hong Kong Dollars and based on the unaudited financial reports by the finance staff as of 31 December 2021.

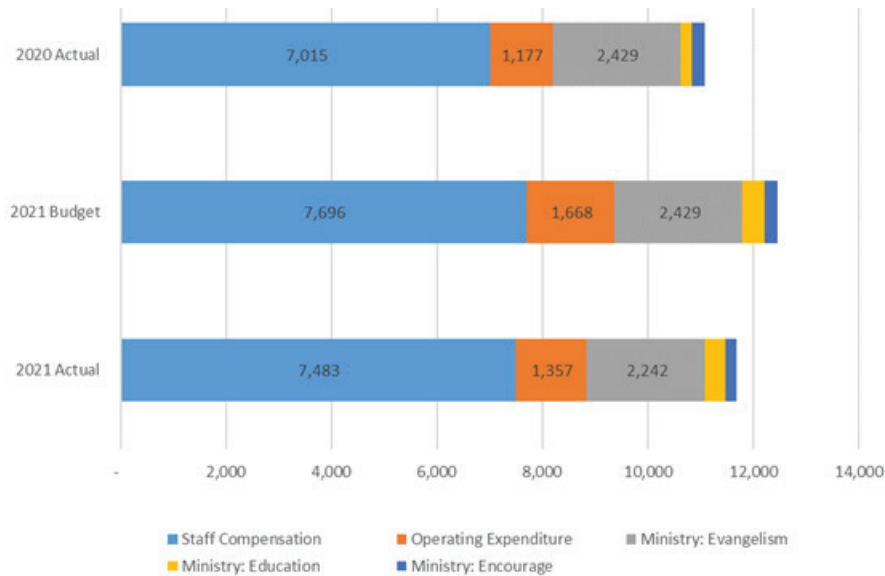


Expenses

This year’s expenses recorded a 5% increase from the actual in 2020 and was 6% lower than the budgeted amount. The Educational Ministry received a 93% boost in spending while Staff Compensation and Operating Expenditure recorded 7% and 15% increases respectively this year.

The breakdown of the General Fund operating expenses (excluding depreciation) and comparisons to budget and prior year’s actual are shown below (HK\$ in thousands).

Total Operating Expenses: HK\$ 11,690,340



BUFF and the Grace of Giving

The Building Union for the Future (BUFF) project progressed steadily in 2021. The New 22A superstructure topped out in August and the fit-out tenders were received in November 2021.

The church leadership approved the fit-out budget of \$62 million for the new 22A premises and set the capital campaign target at \$32 million in 2020. The Grace of Giving launched the public phase of the capital campaign in January 2021. By 30 September, nine months ahead of the schedule, the Grace of Giving received \$32.6 million in donations and commitments, which included \$17.6 million raised from congregation and \$15 million as a matching commitment from church reserves.

The BUFF records net expenses at \$2,366,344 and the Grace of Giving received donation of \$13,368,064 in 2021. The balance of the Redevelopment Fund stands at \$14,000,446 as of 31 December 2021.

The Year at a Glance

Sermon Series

The sermon series of 2021 included: Faith in the Marketplace, The Gospel of Mark for Lent, the Resurrected Life, Acts 2 Church, Navigating Transitions, Moving the Needle through Prayer, Living Faith—Book of James, Grateful, and Hope is Here—Advent.

Speakers

Dr. David Wong — Faith in the Marketplace

Rev. Dr. John Snelgrove — Faith in the Marketplace

James Tang - Compassion on the Crowd

Hunter Purvis — 2 sermons

Monte Peterson — 6 sermons

Dan Tupps — 11 sermons

Pastor Michele — 35 sermons

There were 10 radio broadcast Sundays on RTHK this year and our choir was also featured on the Christmas Day service.



Baptism and Membership

Adult Baptisms

Sophie Milner
Khulan Tumurbat
Lily Wilson
Deirdre Chan

Child Baptisms

Emily Primrose
Luca Keates
Caitlin McLellan

Baby Dedications

Frida Nel
Luke Ng
Mark Ng

Youth Confirmations

Ashley Lam
Caleb Chung
Wilfred Ding
Brigitta Tellvik

New Members

Sophie Milner
Deirdre Chan

Missed But Not Forgotten

Charles Schmitt



Human Resources

Juliana Rotmeyer joined as our Director of Creativity + Women's Ministry in December. This is new position at Union Church. Jessey Xiong will join as Director of Operations - 1st January 2022.

Thank you to the HR team which consists of Michael Birley, Terri Appel, George Ding, the Director of Operations and Pastor Michele. We meet regularly to discuss matters pertaining to HR.

FIN - Family in Need

Our Family in Need team, Isabel Morrison,

Brian Woo, Charles Schmitt and Pastor Michele continued to give support to members of our congregation who were going through difficult times. Although this ministry is not a budgeted ministry, we are grateful to those who give support as we have monthly commitments. Through your generosity we were able to sponsor individuals who needed help with food, housing and education - including tuition and tutors. We believe that we are investing in the future by providing individuals with support and skills necessary to prepare each one for the future. If this is a ministry you would like to participate in please let Pastor Michele know.





Thank You - Charles Caldwell



The Union Church Team



NAME	POSITION	JOB INTRODUCTION
The Rev. Dr. Michele Bland	Senior Pastor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with Ministry Teams • Head of staff • Preaching, teaching, equipping - Stephen Ministry • Pastoral Care
The Rev. Ruth Tablada	Filipino Ministry Pastor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastor for the Filipino Ministry • Provides counselling, shelter-pastoral care, and discipleship
Mr. Chris Yorks	Director of Worship (through July 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designs and coordinates worship services • Serves as Worship Leader and support to volunteers • Directs children's music and instrumental activities
Ms. Jacklien Lee	Director of Children's Ministry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's Ministry Programming for children between 0-10 years old
Mr. Dan Tupps	Director of Young Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Adults Ministry Programming • Men's Ministry

The Union Church Team



NAME	POSITION	JOB DESCRIPTION
Mr. Hunter Purvis	Director of Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Programming
Ms. Monte Peterson	Director of Small Group & Adult Education (through June 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small Group & Adult Education Programming
Ms. Bronwyn Alexander	Director of Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic communications Missions communications The Grace of Giving
Dr. Joyce Wu	Assistant Director of Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist the Worship Director Coordinate worship services Serves as worship leader
Mr. Justin Cheong	Youth Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assists programs for the Youth Ministry
David Ashton-Howorth	Director of Operations (through November 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages the overall daily church operations
Ting Ting Liu	Children's Ministry Assistant (through April 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assists the Children's Ministry Director
Ms. Irene Lau	Accountant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handles all church accounting matters
Ms. Josephine Lee	Office Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General administration & church operations support
Ms. Liza Sumagaysay	Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General administration & church operations support
Ms. Fanny Cheng Mr. Wilson Wong	Full-time Janitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains and cleans church Performs & maintains the overall church housekeeping duties

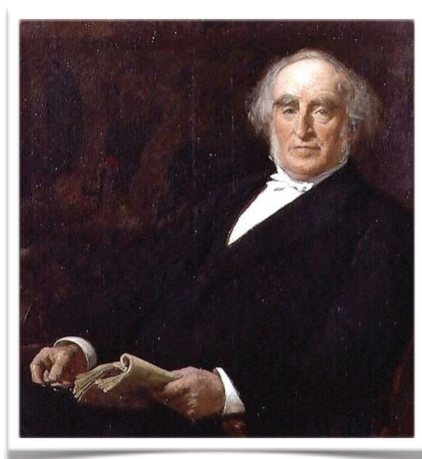
A Brief History

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

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

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

In 1866, Union Church relocated to a new site on 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 3rd associate pastor; and Ruth Tablada is the 1st pastor to the Filipino fellowship.

Union Church has matured from a ministry of the London Missionary Society to an independent congregation. Three bodies govern the Church: The Deacons' Court,



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

Editor's Note: Rev. Dr. Michele Bland became Senior Pastor at the AGM on 27 June 2020.

Acknowledgement

We thank God for providing us with these wonderful people:

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

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

Content Editor: Bronwyn Alexander

Cover Designer: Liza Sumagaysay

Photos: Marissa Reyes Bezanilla, Brian Woo, Patrick Wong, 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