

MCHK

The Methodist Church, Hong Kong

香港基督教循道衛理聯合教會



NEWSLETTER

Issue 03 Oct 2011



Celebrates the Arrival of
the Revs George Piercy and
Howard Mellor

Highlights of the Induction Service

Life of the Rev George Piercy

Bonding in the love of God



Be Biblical, be Punctual, Making Offerings as God's Disciples

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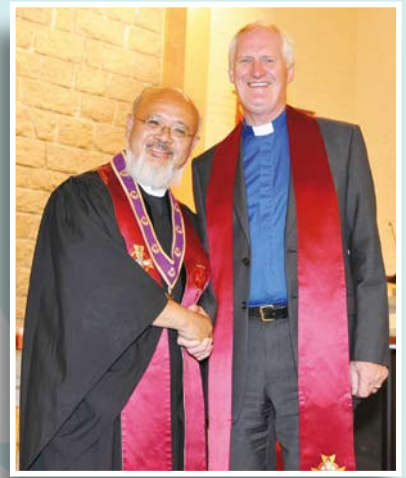
Publisher: The Rev Prof LO Lung-Kwong
Chief Editor: NG Sze-yuen
Editor: Marvis TSUI
Design: WU Chi-kwong, Ultragraphics Limited
Printing: Ultragraphics Limited
Translated by: WONG Oi-Wah, Christina

Literature Executive Committee:
 The Rev Dr LI Ping-kwong
 SO Wing-Kuen TANG Ching-lung LUN Tze-shan
 WONG Kin-fun KWONG Hiu-yan WONG YIP On-kay
 CHEUNG Yan-wing LEUNG wai-yan FUNG Wing-yin
 HU Ka-wo

The Conference Office:
 9/F, Methodist House, 36 Hennessy Road,
 Wanchai, Hong Kong
 Tel : 2528 0186 Fax : 2866 1879, 2861 1722
 Email: lit@methodist.org.hk
 Website: www.methodist.org.hk

Editorial

Celebrates the Arrival of the **Revs George Piercy** and **Howard Mellor**



The Rev Prof Lung-Kwong LO
President of The Methodist Church, Hong Kong

Let me begin this issue of the Newsletter by welcoming our newly appointed Pastor-in-Charge of the Methodist International Church, Hong Kong (MICHK) and the Superintendent of the Methodist International Church Circuit, the Rev Howard Mellor and his wife Mrs Rosie Mellor, who arrived in Hong Kong at the end of August. The Induction Service for the Rev Mellor had already been held on 10th September. Let us pray for the Rev Mellor as he was here to launch the ministries of discipleship and missionary works, and at the same time to lead the congregation to commit to the vision and mission of rebuilding the MICHK.

2011 had been a busy year for our Church. Among the several large meetings held this year, the annual Representative Session of the Conference was an important one. On that day, the Kick-off Ceremony of the fund raising campaign for rebuilding MICHK was also held.

Another big event was the Third Convention of the Asian Methodist Council in June. Over 140 representatives from ten different countries and areas were present, greatly demonstrating the Methodist spirit of love and bonding!

Moreover, this year marked the 160th anniversary of the arrival of the Rev Piercy to China. Rev Piercy was the first missionary sent by the Methodist Church in Britain to China. Having been to China for 31 years, and being hailed "Father of the Chinese Methodist Church", Rev Piercy was inseparable with the history of our Church. After his departure from China and return to England, he had started his preaching to the Chinese sailors in the dockyard area in London for another 31 years. Therefore

he could be seen as the Father of Chinese ministry of the Methodist Church in Britain. To celebrate the 160th anniversary of his arrival, we have prepared a number of activities. These include the three talks in August, the Heritage tour on 29th October, the Rev Piercy Sunday on the 30th and the Overseas Mission Conference in the afternoon and evening on that day. There will be over 30 Parish Superintendents, Circuit Superintendents and church leaders who are involved in Chinese ministry of the Methodist Church in Britain joining the occasion. In addition, more than ten missionary workers from the US and Britain will come to discuss the missionary work of our Church, especially the works for the Chinese. I am sure we are able to know each other, exchange and share our experiences and support one another. On the 31st of October, we have also arranged a special gathering where five of Rev Piercy's descendants and former missionary colleagues of our church will share their experiences with us.

The purpose of these series of activities is to give us the opportunity to be inspired and encouraged by Rev Piercy's enthusiasm and determination in missionary works, and to better cooperate with the Methodist Church in Britain to further develop the Chinese ministry of the Church.

I do hope that the celebration of the arrival of Rev Piercy and the new appointment of Rev Howard Mellor provide an opportune time for us to love our Church more, to continue following the footsteps of Rev Piercy as the ambassador of the Gospel and to bear good witness in Hong Kong and overseas. 🇬🇧

What would the Prophet Amos

Forgive my outrageous presumption in offering advice after being in Hong Kong for only one month. I do so because the same illness affects Hong Kong and its policies as it does the UK and many other countries. The Christian gospel judges government policies not by the position and support of the wealthy, but the way they deal with the poorest and most vulnerable in society. Certainly that is the call of Amos who is concerned with religious, political and economic hypocrisy and the argument leads to his cry found in Amos 5:24:

*But let justice roll down like waters
And righteousness like an ever flowing stream.*

To understand the impact of these words on his hearers we need to go to Amos 5:7 where the people have, says Amos, overthrown Justice and righteousness is crushed:

*You who turn justice upside down
And cast righteousness to the ground.*

He recalls the covenant relationship between God and his people.

- **Justice** here represents proper legal behaviour, fairness in court, practical social and community justice.
- **Righteousness** includes the qualities of decency, generosity, and piety (mercy and devotion).

This Justice and righteousness says Amos has been snatched from the poor and yet the image here in Amos 5:24 is of a river – a lavish capacity to provide both.

In the UK we have heard much of the notion of the 'Big Society' over recent months; described as social action, public service reform and community empowerment. It is intended encourages personal responsibility, community initiatives and finally state support. However the consequence is a withdrawal of funding for youth provision, support systems for the poorest and most vulnerable in society. The voluntary organisations are intended to fill the gap but their funding has also been cut.

Here in Hong Kong we have the headline of \$6,000 for all residents irrespective of wealth or need. If it is intended to help the poor it is misguided for they need much more than an occasional hand-out. They need adequate housing, free education, access to medical care, suitable pensions and the dignity of being treated as equals in a community dedicated to care for them.

Similarly Amos would call on us to care for the 'sojourner' (as the King James Version of the Bible puts it), which would support the judicial review recently about the right for domestic workers to apply for citizenship. Amos would be scandalised by the press and officials who react with apocalyptic language about the hundreds of thousands of people who would then apply. I and my colleagues work with many of the domestic workers through the Methodist International Church and their main desire is in the main to care for their families and return home.

Amos identifies that in the 8th century BC a large impoverished lower class had emerged, in violation of the Mosaic Law. In contrast a moneyed upper class had taken control - its members included profiteers, business persons who felt free to take advantage of tacit government policy that favoured the rich and paid no heed to the interests of the poor.

Such people trampled on the poor. The rich landowners, who became so by foreclosing on loans to poor farmers (Amos 2:6-8, 5:12), ignoring the Covenant gleaning laws, Jubilee laws.

They were in a position to control the markets, hold back produce until the price rose to their satisfaction. What could a poor city dweller or a non-landed country peasant do? Amos pointedly says they had to buy the food, overpriced, falsely weighed, contaminated.

Of course the merchants, money lenders and wealthy were devout in their religious practice. For Amos all this was a crime against Yahweh himself. The day of the Lord is not

say to the Hong Kong government?

The Rev Dr G Howard Mellor

one to which they should look forward for the Lion has roared
- Divine punishment would come.

At the beginning of this article I posed the question – What would Amos say to Governments today. The church has responded and like many other churches in Britain and Hong Kong will step up to the plate because community engagement is in the Methodist DNA. I suggest Amos would remind us that the God who brought all things into being cares for all his children and the whole created order. Moreover Jesus rejoices that in receiving good news the poor will find liberation, receive release from oppression and experience divine favour. John Wesley called the people of Methodist to go not to those who need you, but to those who need you most.

Amos would call us to a critique of Society – a prophetic voice. He would want to ensure that in the handover of any statutory service provision the poor are not disproportionately affected. He would speak out about the excesses of market forces – and challenge commerce without morality. It was Bishop Helda Camara who asked – Why is that when I help the poor you call me a saint, but when I ask why are there poor people you call me a communist? The prophet will not be so easily dismissed.

Amos would call Church and State to care – a pastoral voice. Simon Jenkins of the Guardian had lengthy article published on Good Friday this year entitled: 'There's no such thing as a 'big society' - just many small ones, under steeples.' He identifies the crucial role of the Churches in a caring role in communities across the land. In this city where have been 9 separate caring organisations started by Church initiatives, many of them now independent charities. The church will step up to the plate and take on as much of a healing caring role that it can, we all must. The prophet calls us to alert to the needs of others.

Amos would want us to celebrate – that there is good news for all. Amos proclaims the good news of Yahweh, for the God who brought all things into being values everyone.

As Jesus makes clear many times the well-being of people is not in proportion to their bank balance, but in the wholeness of their living.

The Christian gospel offers mercy and healing and forgiveness. But there is also a challenge, the need to repent and repair selfish policies that damage the environment or undermine the humanity and dignity of others. Whether the challenge is personal or proclaimed to systems, institutions or governments it is offered with the same hopeful conviction that there can be transformation and change for the future.

All of us who have any kind of leadership role come under the scrutiny of Amos words – therefore let us hear his call: to live within the orbit of God's love and mercy, to make our decisions as leaders in Church and City recognising we have an obligation to the poor, the weakest the neediest members of community.

Let us hear the challenge for us who have responsibility thrust upon us is to make decisions in both church and government which are wise and for the benefit of the whole community. Amos would want us to celebrate that there are things we can do, there are inequalities to put right, many decisions which are for the long term good of others, of all.

We have the awesome responsibility and a duty of care under God and for the people to make it so. In those circumstances:

Justice and mercy would roll
down like waters
Righteousness and generosity
like an ever flowing stream.

May it be so in this community
and in our day. Amen. 🙏



The Rev Dr G Howard Mellor

Highlights of the Induction Service



▲ Shaking hands and greeting each other

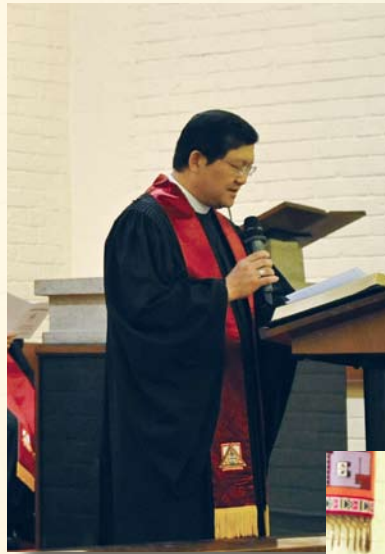


Singing and praising God together





▲ Prayer by Rev Maria Lau



◀ Bible reading by the Rev Paul
▼ Kan, the Superintendent of the
Hong Kong Circuit and Mr Stuart
Chen, the Vice President of MCHK



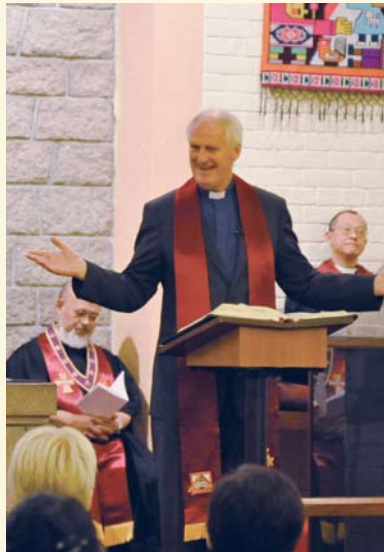
◀ The Rev Dr Martyn Atkins, the General
Secretary of the Methodist Church in Britain,
delivering the sermon



► The Rev Mellor putting on the
stole of MCHK presented to him by
the Rev Prof Lung-kwong LO, the
President of MCHK



► Mr Andy Neilson, the Circuit Steward of MICHK, expressing warm welcome and support to Rev Mellor and Mrs Rosie Mellor on behalf of brothers and sisters of MICHK



► Sharing by the Rev Mellor on his new appointment



► The Rev Greg Anderson giving welcoming remarks on behalf of the Hong Kong Churches



◀ The Rev Jesus N De Los Santos and the Rev Marybeth Asher-Lawson leading prayers of intercession

▼ The Rev Dr Ping-kwong Li, the past President of MCHK giving benediction at the end of the Service





▲ Participants taking a group photo with the Rev and Mrs Mellor



Refreshments after the Service





From Methodist Church, English Speaking to Methodist International Church –

the Past and the Future

Mr. NG Sze Yuen(NG): This year's Representative Session of the Conference had been held from May 27th to 28th at our Methodist International Church, Hong Kong (MICHK). In fact, quite a number of Methodist Church members had never been to this church before and they wondered why the church changed its name from "Methodist Church, English speaking" to "Methodist International Church, Hong Kong".

Origin of Methodist Church, English Speaking

Rev. Prof. LO Lung-kwong (LO): In fact, the church had changed its name for five years. This name change reflected not only the unique characteristic of the church, but also the transformation of the Hong Kong society. In the colonial times, English was the major foreign language in Hong Kong. The British were the most high profile group in the community and members of this church were mostly British. Naturally, they used the name "Methodist Church, English Speaking".

Under the Treaty of Nanking signed by China and Britain after the Opium War in 1842, Hong Kong was ceded to Britain. Among the British soldiers landed in Hong Kong, there were members of the Methodist Church of England. At that time, one of the members, Rowland Rees, a soldier from the Engineering Department of the Royal Army stationed in Stanley of Hong Kong, started the "class", a group which helped brothers and sisters

of the Methodist Church to spread the Gospel and live out the lives of disciples. He had written many times requesting the Methodist Church of England to send people to take pastoral care of these church members in Hong Kong, but to no avail, as the Church in England at that time had fully committed to the missionary work in the Caribbeans and did not have sufficient resources to take care of this Asian need.

In 1850, local preacher Rev George Piercy responded to God's calling and decided to go to China as a missionary. Without the support of the Church, he sold his property and arrived in Hong Kong in January 1851 and got in touch with these British Christians in Hong Kong. Eleven months later he left for Canton. However, this small Methodist community continued to flourish. Finally, they obtained support from the Methodist Church of England in 1893. The Government rented them the land at the junction between Queen's Road East and Kennedy Road to build a church with a lease period of 999 years. In 1897, the first Methodist Church in Hong Kong was built.

Before 1997, the majority of members of this church were British. Many were senior government officials or people in the upper class of society. Examples were the former Secretary for Civil Service and

General Administration, Mr. E.B. Wiggham, the former Secretary for Public Health and Social Welfare, Mr. Chambers and the former President of the Law Society of Hong Kong, Mr. Ian MacCallum, etc.

In 1987, the Methodist Church in Britain held its Annual Conference in Portsmouth. In view of the imminent return of Hong Kong to Mainland China, a resolution was passed to hand over this English speaking church originally under The Methodist Church in Britain to The Methodist Church, Hong Kong. Because of difference in language, history, background of church members, and also the need to employ pastors from English speaking countries, this church was under the “one church, two systems” umbrella, MICHK has been exempted from many of the policies, principles and policy of MCHK. That was why MICHK only belonged to our Church legally, organizationally and in name. The day-to-day operation, ministry, finance and culture did not amalgamate with that of local churches. All along we had not taken the initiative to develop a close relationship with MICHK and it was understandable that our brothers and sisters were quite distant from the church. In this respect, we felt indebted to our international church.

Gradual internationalization after 1997

NG: Was it because of the departure of many British members after 1997 and the gradual increase of people from other races in the congregation that the church changed its name to “Methodist International Church”(MICHK)?

LO: Yes, many senior government officials and their families left Hong Kong before and after 1997. At the same time, people of different nationalities came to Hong Kong. This change was not only unique to the English Speaking Methodist Church but also reflected in the Hong Kong society as a whole. In recent years, the number of white church members did not reach 20% while the number of Filipino brothers and sisters had been steadily increasing. There were about 500 of them sharing more than half of the congregation. In the Philippines, most people are Catholics. The United Methodist Church was the largest among Christian churches. We cooperated with the Methodist Church there and

they would send pastors to Hong Kong to take pastoral care of this Filipino community. The rest were Chinese from different countries or Hong Kong people coming back from different places. According to the report by the Senior Minister, in one Sunday service, they had people from more than 25 nationalities! Against this background, we agreed to change the name of the church to “Methodist International Church”.

NG: It was the unique characteristic of Hong Kong to have people of different nationalities coming together. In this year’s Representative Session of the Conference, the resolution to rebuild MICHK was passed. It also mentioned the future 24-storey building of the church. Brothers and sisters did express their concerns about the financial resources for such an enormous project and the amount that the Conference would bear.

LO: Brothers and sisters growing up in our Church should have a clear understanding of the principle and belief behind this financial responsibility. The typical feature of our Church was that there was only one Methodist Church in Hong Kong. No matter whether they were Kowloon Methodist Church, Wan Chai Methodist Church, Kwun Tong Methodist Church or North Point Methodist Church, they were local churches set up by The Methodist Church in different districts. No matter which church you attend, you in the first place belonged to The Methodist Church, then the local church. The premises and the properties of the respective local church also belonged to The Methodist Church, Hong Kong. Therefore, we were a part of the whole church, no matter whether it was Methodist International Church, Kowloon Methodist Church or Faith Methodist Church. We were connected to each other and we were one church, not many independent churches. Rebuilding MICHK was the work of the whole Methodist Church and therefore should be borne by the whole church.

Rebuilding MICHK – a belated project

LO: In fact, this rebuilding project was an overdue one. We should thank God for the three precious pieces of land in Wan Chai leaving behind by our forerunners. Historically, the first piece of land was MICHK, the second one was The Wesley

(the former Sailors' and Soldiers' Home), and the third was Wan Chai Methodist Church which was demolished and rebuilt in 1994. At that time, the English Speaking Methodist Church started the pastoral work for sailors and soldiers and built the Sailors' and Soldiers' Home to provide simple accommodation for the British army and the sailors passing Hong Kong. The Home was directly under the Methodist Church in Britain until 1980 when it was passed to the hands of MCHK. To achieve localization, the Chairman should be Chinese, and the Committee should comprise an equal number of Chinese and white people. Later, the whole piece of land was given to our Church generously. It was demolished and rebuilt in 1989 and developed to today's The Wesley and The Methodist Centre. The profit gained from The Wesley would not be used to support core expenses of our Church: such as salaries and general administrative expenses. Apart from giving one-tenth of the income to the Conference, the rest would only be committed to ministry work we should do or we wished to do but had no resources for the time being, like overseas missionary work, life education and China ministry, etc.

The second and the third piece of land in Wan Chai had already been rebuilt in 1989 and 1994 respectively, leaving the first piece long overdue. With the rapid development of Wan Chai, the location of the MCHK had moved from a remote outskirt to the city centre with high-rise buildings and heavy pedestrian traffic. However, the church had not followed the rapid change of the times. It was still an old 19th century building, though with the addition of a second building in 1967 and the extension in 1980. To date, it was still a small place holding only 300 people. With limited supply, land was always an invaluable resource in Hong Kong. Therefore, we should grasp this opportunity to make good use of this first piece of land God gave us in Hong Kong, and to fulfill the mission of God's kingdom.

Multiple increase in ministry work and number

LO: Rev Dr. John Illsley came to Hong Kong nine years ago to take up the role of Senior Minister of

MCHK. With his hard work and efforts of brothers and sisters, the church had grown to almost 1000 people, among whom about 500 were Filipinos. Due to insufficient space, the Filipino worship and gatherings had to move to Wan Chai Duke of Winsor Social Service Building, Shatin Methodist College and Fortress Hill Methodist Secondary School. Some gatherings even used The Methodist Centre. Rev Dr. Illsley brought up the issue of rebuilding the church five years ago and suggested to build a 4-storey building based on the model of that at the English countryside. The Standing Committee of the Conference welcomed his proposal but reminded him of the important value and development potential of that piece of land which was far greater than what he proposed. Rev Dr. Illsley was invited to further discuss with his church members taking into consideration the development of the future 50 years. In fact, the whole project had to take care of the future development of MCHK on the one hand and to provide room for other developments of The Methodist Church on the other. After discussion, they came back with the need of 10-storey space for MCHK so that the Filipino ministry can move back and further develop. After thorough and considerable discussion, we planned to allocate 11 storeys for use of the Conference and other social services. The offices of the Conference would be moved to this building leaving the old offices for the Wan Chai Methodist Church. The other 3 storeys would provide accommodation for pastors and workers of MCHK and the President of the Conference. This arrangement would reduce the rental and make the use of our Church property more flexible.

Breakthrough under irrational government policy

LO: We planned the rebuilding five years ago. In 2008, an architect was appointed to take care of the design and in August 2009 the initial plan to build a 24-storey building was approved. However, at the end of last year, the Town Planning Board suddenly published in the Gazette the height limit for buildings in all government/institution/community (GIC) land in North Point, Wan Chai and Yaumatei. Even the height for the new buildings should be limited to that

of the original ones. This policy seriously affected the future development of churches and social services institutions in these areas. Fortunately, our rebuilding plans of the 24-storey building had already been approved by the Government earlier, the approval period being two years expiring in August this year. In February, we immediately submitted a slightly revised plan, subsequently approved also, extending the valid period to March, 2013. Objection was raised to the Town Planning Board regarding this unreasonable height limit, but was futile. At the moment, our Church, together with other affected churches, were preparing for judicial review. Therefore, this irrational height limit policy expedited our determination to develop this precious land within two years. Hopefully, the project would be completed in seven years so that our church would have greater room for development and services to our community.

Full support from all members of the Methodist Church

NG: What was the budget of this enormous project? How could members of the church give their support?

LO: One and a half year ago, the architect estimated the whole rebuilding expenses to be 250 million. We increased to 300 million now. At the time of expansion of the Epworth Village Methodist Church and rebuilding of the Wan Chai Methodist Church, the budgets were also astronomical. With our faith in God and the enthusiastic support from brothers and sisters, these projects were completed as scheduled. This time the budget seemed huge, but after our thorough and painstaking consideration taken into account the number in the congregation and the financial capability of the Conference, we thought we could manage this amount. Certainly we could not pay all the bills at one time. We planned to raise funds in seven years. Apart from fund raising, property mortgage and other financing methods would be used. We do hope that brothers and sisters would understand the importance of the whole project, earnestly remembered it in prayers and fully supported it financially. Let us try our best in one heart to carry out the ministry of the Kingdom of God!

NG: The Kick-off Ceremony of the fund raising movement at this year's Representative Session of the Conference was a good start. It showed that all 25 local churches received the vision together.

LO: Yes, the vision of MICHK enabled us to experience that the body of Christ was beyond races and languages. We all belonged to the big family of the Methodist Church and we belonged to the body of Christ. I hoped that all members of our Church would work together and work with God!

NG: Thank you President Rev Prof. LO Lung-kwong. Wishing this project a smooth progress and a timely completion! 🙏

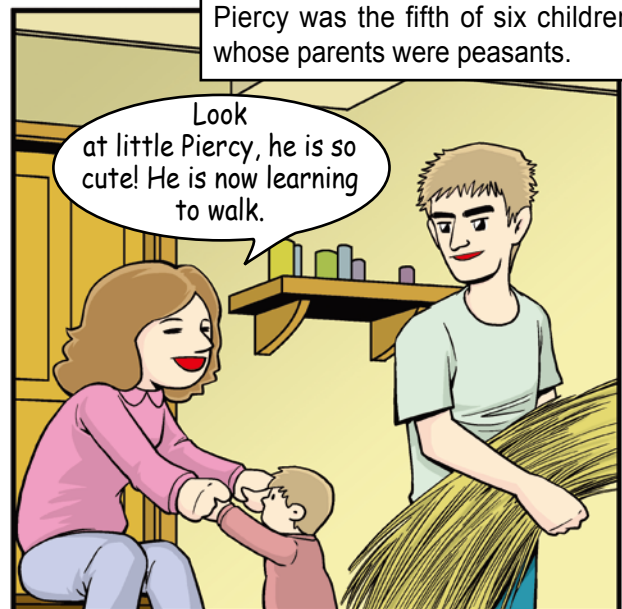
Life of The Rev George Piercy



Little George Piercy was born on 27th February 1829, a cold winter day, in York of England.



Piercy was the fifth of six children whose parents were peasants.



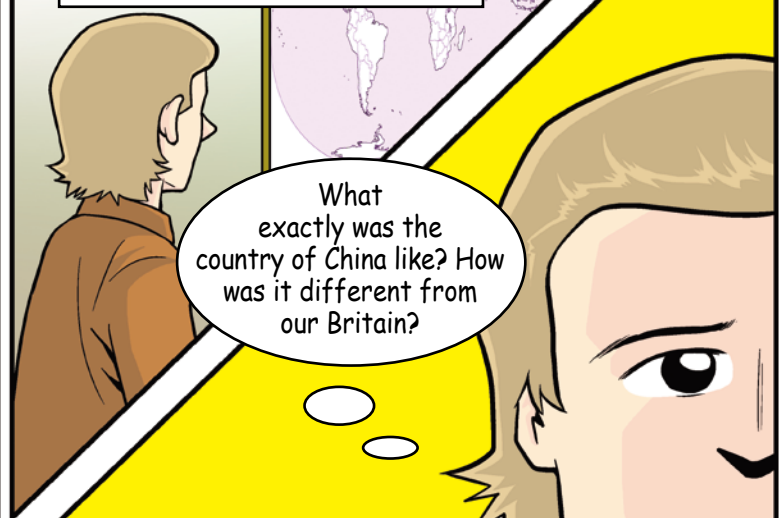
Piercy and his brothers and sisters needed to help out in the family farmland which occupied 300 acres.

Piercy always brought with him books to read while rearing horses or sheep.

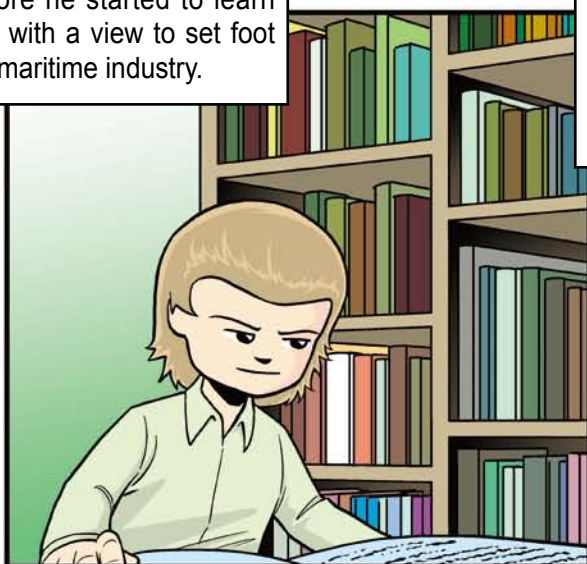


His most favored subjects at school were History and Geography.

He liked gazing at the map of the world and imagined what the faraway land was like.



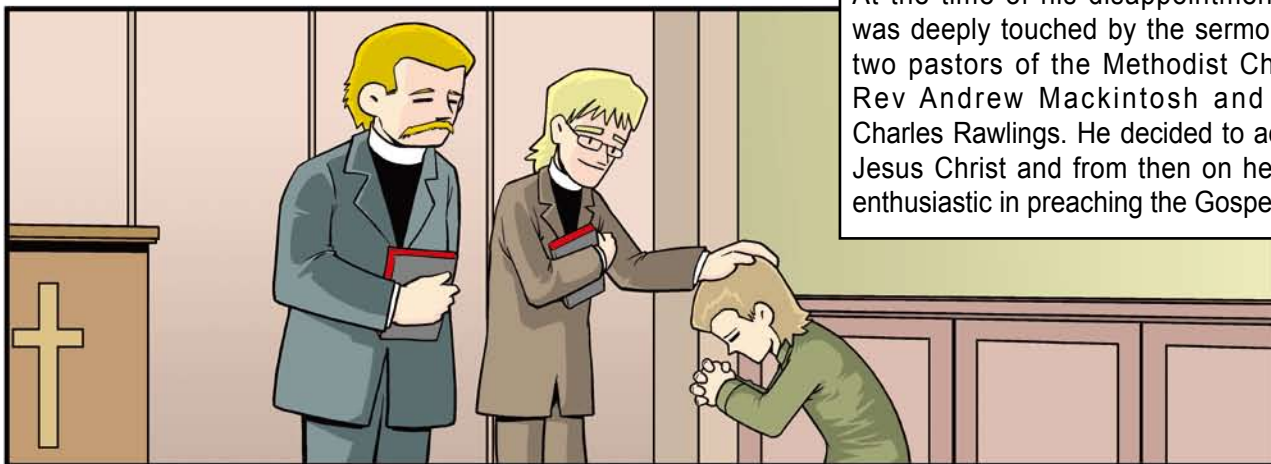
Therefore he started to learn sailing, with a view to set foot on the maritime industry.



He had been to the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. Unfortunately, he was not considered highly by the Captain who did not deploy him to any new post. Unwillingly, he was forced to quit the job of a sailor.



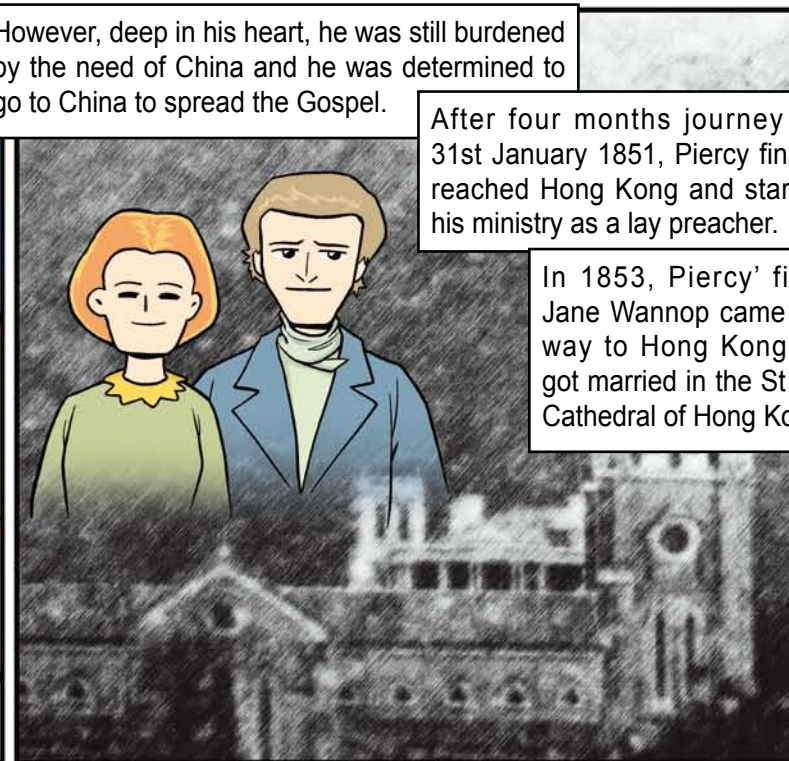
At the time of his disappointment, he was deeply touched by the sermons of two pastors of the Methodist Church Rev Andrew Mackintosh and Rev Charles Rawlings. He decided to accept Jesus Christ and from then on he was enthusiastic in preaching the Gospel.



He became a lay preacher of the Methodist Church and later was ordained as Minister.



However, deep in his heart, he was still burdened by the need of China and he was determined to go to China to spread the Gospel.



After four months journey on 31st January 1851, Piercy finally reached Hong Kong and started his ministry as a lay preacher.

In 1853, Piercy' fiancée Jane Wannop came all the way to Hong Kong. They got married in the St John's Cathedral of Hong Kong.

He finally managed to go to Guangzhou where he built a church with a school attached; and his wife set up a girl boarding school there.



He learnt Chinese from Mr Leung Fat in Guangzhou.

He tried very hard in practising Cantonese and later he could even use Cantonese to translate the book "The Pilgrim's Progress".

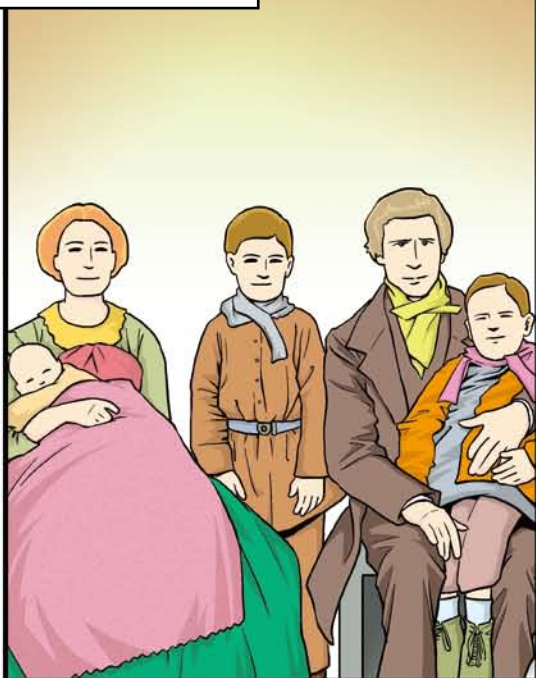


He talked to them in Cantonese, "Jesus loves you very much, you should commit your life to Him."

Jesus loves you very much, you should commit your life to Him



His two children were born in Guangzhou.



Not long after that, the Second Opium War broke out. When the British-French Alliance Army captured Guangzhou, Percy and other missionaries escaped to Macau. There, the first batch of Chinese believers of the Methodist Church was baptized.



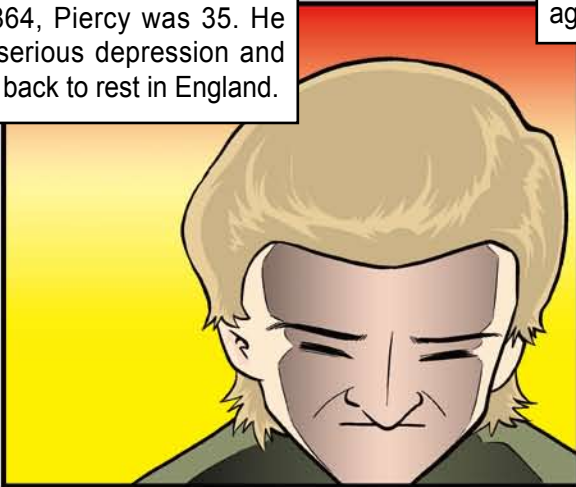
After years of hard work, Piercy was exhausted both mentally and physically. He went to Shanghai for convalescence.

And he claimed that he had recovered and immediately he took up his job again.



After two years, that was 1866, the couple came back to China again because their passion for China had never faded.

In 1864, Piercy was 35. He had serious depression and went back to rest in England.



Piercy had served for more than 30 years in China and laid the foundation of works of the Methodist Church in China and Hong Kong.



However, Rev Piercy was troubled by the conflict and discord among co-workers which finally led to his departure from China and return to his homeland.

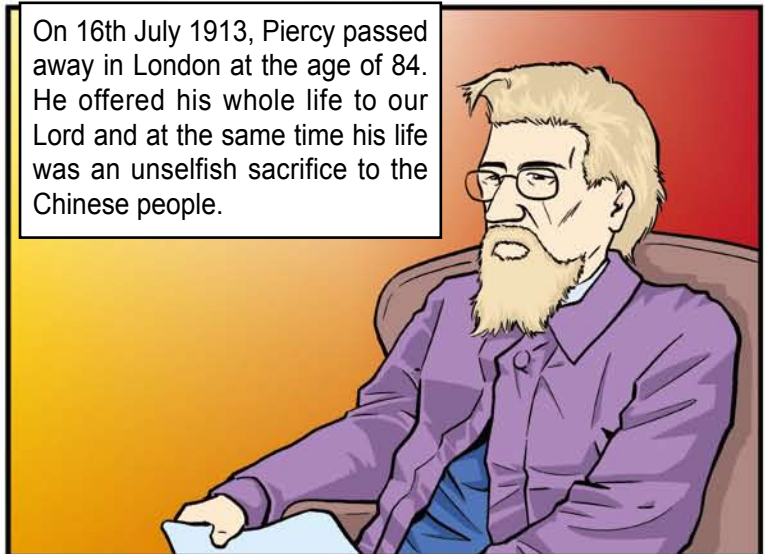
In May 1882, he bid farewell to China and all members of the Church missed him greatly.



After returning to England, his heart was still with the Chinese. He set up a Chinese Church in Limehouse, a dockyard area in Eastern London to spread the Gospel to the Chinese sailors.



On 16th July 1913, Piercy passed away in London at the age of 84. He offered his whole life to our Lord and at the same time his life was an unselfish sacrifice to the Chinese people.





Audacity in pioneering

Rev George Piercy had come to China as a missionary for 31 years (arriving Hong Kong in 1851, departing China in 1882). After going back to England, he started his ministry for the Chinese and devoted all his life to serve the Chinese until he passed away in 1913.

At the age of 20 when Piercy was a local preacher in Pickering, his home in York, England, he wrote to the Methodist Church in London, expressing his wish of going to China:

Pastor, Methodist Church in Britain:
We can't afford to send you.

Piercy: I don't want you to send me.
I intend to go. All I ask is that you give me a letter of recommendation.

Pastor: We have no money.

Piercy: I go at my own charges. When I arrive there, I'll take care myself.

Pastor: How?

Piercy: I don't know until I get there.

From this conversation, we came to know about Rev Piercy's pioneering spirit. In 1849, the Methodist Church of England was not yet prepared to send missionaries to China. However, Rev Piercy was willing to go on his own cost, fully revealing his dauntless and adventurous character.

Coming to China

Rev Piercy loved geography from very young age. He was curious about the world and hoped to know more about it by working as a sailor. He was disappointed because even as a sailor, he did not have a single chance to go ashore. However, he had not given up and waited for the chance to come.

In 1807 when Mr. Robert Morrison came to China as a missionary, Rev Piercy was able to learn from his reports and the writings of other missionaries about the missionary works in China. The signing of the Treaty of Nanking after the Opium War made Hong Kong a British colony. This, together with the opening of several other port cities in China for trade and commerce, provided the opportunity for missionaries from South East Asia to spread the gospel in China. In this encouraging environment, Rev Piercy, being committed in his faith and enthusiastic in preaching, could not wait to set foot on this piece of mysterious Chinese soil.

Although Rev Piercy's decision did not receive support from the Methodist Church in London and even his home church in Pickering, his aspiration and determination to go to China had already taken root. Against all odds, he started his journey by ship to China which took him four months. He reached Hong Kong on 31st January 1851, bringing with him the recommendation letter to a British Superintendent stationed in Hong Kong. Unfortunately, before Rev Piercy arrived, this Superintendent had passed away. Rev Piercy was then received by Rev James Legge in Hong Kong and they started the class meeting for the British soldiers in Hong Kong. Nevertheless, Rev Piercy's heart was with the vast Chinese land. He finally went to Guangzhou in December the same year and started his ministry there. Due to language barrier, Rev Piercy at first devoted most of his time distributing evangelical publications outside the city gate of Guangzhou. That was the reason for his emphasis in the publication ministry.

After coming to China for a year, Rev Piercy reported his work and his living conditions to the Methodist Church in Britain and formally applied to be a missionary from the Methodist Church in Britain. The Church then sent two missionaries Rev William Roberts Beach and Rev Josiah Cox to China to ordain Rev Piercy as a minister of the Methodist Church and started his ministry in China. For 31 years, from the first day he came to China till he returned to Britain, he was all along the Chairman of the Parish of South China. This made him a very important person in the foundation and development of the Methodist Church in the southern part of China. In August 1853, Rev Piercy built a church in Guangzhou. As he believed in the importance of education, he set up a boy school attached to the church. His wife also started a girl boarding school. In 1859, he built another church in

The Rev George Piercy's passion and his missionary works in China

Guangzhou which became the home base of the Methodist Church in Guangzhou. The next year he built the second church in Guangzhou and started his ministry in Fatshan where he also built a hospital.

Years of tribulation

Suffering in sickness

The first trial to western missionaries in China was the difficulty in acclimatizing to the different climate and living conditions. At one time, Rev Piercy's house and neighbourhood were completely destroyed by a typhoon attacking Guangzhou directly. He said in the letter that in Guangzhou there were 30,000 casualties after the typhoon. Moreover, Rev Piercy's health had been deteriorating after coming to China and he took doctor's advice to go to Shanghai for convalescence. After he came back to Guangzhou from Shanghai in 1858, he was still weak as mentioned in his letter to the Methodist Church in Britain. It was because during the time in Shanghai, though sick, he still grasped every opportunity to spread the gospel to the Cantonese speaking Taiping troops. In addition, the chronic disease of his two sons and the death of his daughter as an infant made him heart broken.

Death of co-worker

Rev Piercy's helpful assistant Missionary Mary Gunson fell serious ill and had to leave Canton after one year. She rested with God shortly after going back to England. This was a great blow to Rev Piercy, who then suffered from depression and needed to take a year off and rested back in England.

Escape from war and turmoil

During the outbreak of the Second Opium War in 1856, the British-French Alliance Army captured Guangzhou. Rev Piercy and other missionaries escaped to Macau. However, he had not given up any opportunity to spread the gospel and the first batch of Chinese believers of the Methodist Church were baptized in Macau.

Financial pressure

In 1880, Rev Piercy wrote a letter to the Methodist Church in Britain, reflecting the difficult financial situation at that time. He mentioned that an experienced missionary with 20-year

service in the Canton Parish, who had four children studying in Britain, was receiving the same allowance as the newly appointed one.

Disputes among co-workers

During the period when Rev Piercy went back to England for debriefing, two other missionaries wrote a long letter to the Methodist Church in Britain attacking his integrity, accusing him of his selfishness and dishonesty. Rev Piercy refuted their unfair allegations and prepared for self defence. However, there was no response from the Church. Confused and painful, he felt physically and mentally exhausted. In 1882, he was summoned back by the Methodist Church without any explanation, so were those who were the accusations. He was therefore forced to bid farewell to his 31-year ministry in China, return to England, feeling dejected.

Chinese ministry in London

The pioneering spirit of Rev Piercy was not limited to China. After returning to England, he used one week's time to look for the Chinese living in London and set up a Chinese church in Limehouse in Eastern London to spread the gospel to the Chinese sailors there. This ministry received positive comments from the Methodist Church which expressed support to Rev Piercy.

Conclusion

In late 19th century, a British reporter visited the Limehouse and reported on the ministry of Rev Piercy. He wrote, "Rev George Piercy lived 31 years in China and he has gained much respect among the Chinese from all classes. In Limehouse, the old and the young, the residents and the new comers, look upon him as the father, the friend and the advisor of all who are in difficulties and troubles." This was a great commendation to Rev Piercy! It could certainly be said that Rev Piercy's work in London was also a great success. 🇬🇧

Note: The above is a written record of Prof LAI Tsz Pang, John's "Father of the Chinese Methodist Church – lecture series to commemorate the 160th anniversary of Rev George Piercy's arrival to Hong Kong" (held at the Methodist Church, Wan Chai on 21st August 2011)



Bonding in the love of God – The Third Convention of the Asian Methodist Council



(from left) Delegates from Indonesia, Lower Myanmar, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Upper Myanmar at the Holy Communion Service



Council President Bishop Dr. Hwa Yung delivering the sermon "I'll remember Thy wonders of old"



The Third Convention of the Asian Methodist Council (AMC) was held from June 25th to 28th this year at our Ward Memorial Methodist Church. A total of 146 participants from ten different Asian countries and areas gathered together in the church, among which 26 were delegates from Hong Kong.

Before the official opening of the Convention, the Annual Meeting of the Fellowship of Asian Methodist Bishops and Presidents (FAMB) was held. Sixteen Bishops/Presidents from the ten different countries/areas were present. Rev Prof. LO Lung-kwong, in the capacity of President of The Methodist Church, Hong Kong, participated in this occasion. During the meeting, there were sharing and reports on the ministry and works of different countries/areas. Special attention was paid to the current conflicts and challenge faced by Asian countries and heated discussion was held regarding political, economic, livelihood and social issues in these countries. Even topics on family and homosexuality were covered. These concerns were in line with the emphasis of the Methodist Church to practise our faith and live out God's love and grace in our community. We will never act as bystanders to the pressing social issues of the world today.

The opening ceremony was simple but grand. It was marked by a Holy Communion Service held in the church. In the midst of solemn church music, delegates from different countries/areas, holding their respective flags, paraded in. The Council President, Bishop Dr. Hwa Yung from Malaysia delivered the sermon based on Psalm 77 verse 11: "I shall remember the deeds of the Lord; Surely I will remember Thy wonders of old." He encouraged the congregation to always remember the origin of their belief and be faithful to their promises. They should bear in mind God's wonderful deeds in the past, take root in the tradition and live for today so as to create a brighter and better future.

Bishop Dr. Hwa Yung and President Prof. LO Lung-kwong officiating the Eye Dotting Ceremony of the Lion Dance at the welcoming banquet

The welcoming banquet in the evening was held at the Crystal Ballroom of The City View, YMCA. Fourteen tables of guests filled the place with warmth and joy. The banquet started off with the traditional Chinese Lion Dance. Rarely seen such dance before, many guests were amazed by the performance. Nearly all cameras were on and lots of pictures were taken. There were also performances by other participants. The most fascinating one was the singing and dancing by the Korean participants who brought along brightly-coloured silk ribbons and paper fans in their dance. From the performance we could also experience the national unity of the Korean people. As to Hong Kong, we had singing by the Chung Brothers from our Chinese Methodist Church, Wan Chai. Their songs had beautiful music and lyrics and their interpretation was really touching.

The next day all participants went to different local churches to attend Sunday worship. Some were arranged to be the speaker also. After service, they had the chance of having lunch and fellowship with local pastors and church leaders. They all enjoyed the occasion very much. The Meeting finished in the morning of the 27th. In the afternoon, members were able to see different aspects of Hong Kong by joining one of the three arranged local tours. The closing worship on the last day marked the end of the Convention. Participants felt that this four-day trip was very fruitful. They all had experienced the love and bonding of brothers and sisters in Christ and also had a very good impression of Hong Kong. 🇭🇰



Procession of delegates in the opening ceremony showing the flag of The Methodist Church, Hong Kong



Group photo of all the participants



Highlights of the Representative Session



360 voting delegates and observers attending the Representative Session of the Conference this year held in the Methodist International Church, Hong Kong.

The Representative Session of the Conference this year was held on 27th and 28th May at our Methodist International Church, Hong Kong (MICHK). There were 360 delegates and observers. During the meeting, the Rev Tin-yau Yuen and Mr Sze-yuen Ng were elected as the President and the Vice-President respectively for 2012-2015.

On the first day, the opening worship was led by the Rev Dr John Illsley, Pastor-in-charge of MICHK. John came to Hong Kong in September 2002 and would return to the UK to serve in pastoral ministry in July 2011. After passing the motion to record his dedicated service of piloting the ministry development and the redevelopment project of MICHK in the Minutes, he was presented with a souvenir from the President and the Past Presidents as a token of our gratitude. Following that were the reports made by the President; the Circuit Superintendents of the Hong Circuit, Kowloon East Circuit, Kowloon West Circuit and International Church Circuit; the Associate Director of the Divinity School of Chung Chi College; and the President of the Hong Kong Methodist Women's Association. After the representative of the Methodist Church in Britain, the Rev Anne Brown, had delivered a speech, the reports of the Ministerial Session were received and its motion of ordaining Mr Chak-tong Wong as Deacon was passed.

The Kick-Off Ceremony of the Fund Raising Campaign for Redevelopment of MICHK was held after the meeting had

adopted the proposals of working hard and fast to materialize the \$300 million redevelopment plan of MICHK with the aim of finalizing the building plans within two years (ie, before April 2013) and raising the costs in 7 years' time by project-financing and by fund-raising. Representatives from each of the 25 local churches and the Macau Methodist Church went forward to receive the Newsletters of the Campaign as a token of their pledge of full support and active participation.

On the second day, the meeting began with a worship on the theme of "We Are One". Thereafter, the reports and the motions of the Standing Committee and all Conference Committees were received and accepted. Listed below are the important resolutions——

Accepted the applications of two Pastoral Clerks and a teacher to become Candidates for Local Church Parish Worker, namely, Mr Stanly Chi-kin Ho of Lai Yiu Methodist Church, Ms Pui-san Ngai of Shau Kei Wan Methodist Church and Mr Sai-kit Ho of Asbury Methodist Church. Accepted the resignation of Mr Chi-wah Lau as Candidate for Local Church Parish Worker owing to his family conditions.

Nominated Mr Fun-kuen Au and Mr Kin-yuen Ng as our Honorary Legal Advisors for 2011/2012, with Mr Fun-kuen Au being the Chief Honorary Legal Advisor. Nominated medical doctors of different specialties as our Honorary Medical

of the Conference 2011



Our President, the Rev Prof LO Lung-kwong, presenting a pair of Cloisonne vases to the representative of the Methodist Church in Britain, the Rev Anne Brown



The President-Designate, the Rev YUEN Tin-yau and the Vice-President-Designate, Mr NG Sze-yuen for 2012-2015.



Consultants for 2011/2012, namely, Dr Raymond Chung-I Chen, Dr Vincent Wai-chung Chan, Dr Joyce Kit-wah Lau Kwan, Dr Sylvia Chia-lu Chen, Dr Sze-tong Chan, Dr Danny Chi-wah Tsoi, Dr Pui-yau Lau, Dr Yiu-wing Ho, Dr Arthur Hon-wing Wu, Dr Owen Tak-yin Tsang, Dr Geoffrey Chi-fung Mok, Dr Alec Ho-chuen Fung, Dr Marianne Man-yan Lam, Dr Kuen Chan, Dr Lucilly Ka-wai Hung, Dr Daisy Mei-yee Kan, Dr Chi-kwan Kong, Dr Wing-hung Ng, Dr Dawson To-sang Fong, Dr Chi-wai Kwok, Dr Wai-chong Wong, Dr Denise Shu-ting Lam and the Yang Dental Clinic.

Nominated the Rev Dr Sung-che Lam to be the Executive Secretary of the Social Services Division (term of office until 30th June 2013) as the Rev Peter Wong will be taking sabbatical study leave from July 2011.

Accepted the proposals of the Ministerial Session of approving the applications of the Rev Tin-yau Yuen and the Rev James Fan for extension of 1 year of service up to 30th September 2012 and 21st April 2012 respectively. Accepted the recommendation by the Ministerial Session of approving the applications of the Rev Yu-kan Sham and the Rev Winnie Wai Yee-ho for sabbatical study leave (to be taken in sessions and for 1 year respectively) from July 2012.

Accepted the recommendation made by the Joint Meeting of

the Joint Working Committee of the Conference and the International Church Circuit and the Leadership Team of MICHK to appoint the Rev Canon Dr Howard Mellor as the Pastor-in-charge of MICHK and the Superintendent of our International Church Circuit from 1st September 2011 for a term of 3 years.

New stationing for 2011/2012 included: the Rev Tim Lam would cease to be the Consultant Pastor of Macau Mission; the Rev Shing-ye Yu would serve as the Pastor-in-charge of Tseung Kwan O Methodist Church; the Rev Chak-tong Wong and the Superintendent of Kowloon East Circuit would serve respectively as Pastor-in-charge and Consultant Pastor of Lam Tin Methodist Church. The Rev Paul Kan, The Rev Dr Sung-che Lam and the The Rev Wilson Chan would continue to serve as the Superintendent of the Hong Kong Circuit, the Kowloon East Circuit and the Kowloon West Circuit respectively. As for the International Church Circuit, the Rev Dr John Ilisley would serve as the Circuit Superintendent until his departure in July, the Rev Canon Dr Howard Mellor would assume his office from 1st September, and the Pastor-in-charge of the Chinese Methodist Church, Hong Kong would serve in the interim.

Local Church Parish Workers (LCPW) are frontline workers providing pastoral care and training to our lay members. To convey the message that the Church does recognize their contribution and to help them develop their potentials and serve with increasing responsibilities so as to retain them and enhance their capabilities,

the recommendations that have been put forward by the Development Strategy Sub-Committee of the Standing Committee and/or the Ministerial Session were accepted, namely, that in deciding on their starting point, further degree programme in theology and their full-time missions and pastoral working experience in Local Churches/Chapels or Christian organizations after completion of their basic theological training will be taken into account; to effectively implement the policy of Local Church Parish Workers being considered as Candidates for Conference Parish Workers and Local Church Deacons after 3 and 5 years of service; and to fine tune the arrangements for their further studies.

In view of the fact that after more than 20 years, the scope of work and responsibilities of Ms Katherine Ng have well exceeded those specified for an Executive Secretary, and that her workload is heavy with insufficient support, accepted the recommendations put forward by the Executives' Meeting that Ms Katherine Ng shall serve as the "General Secretary" with be effect from 1st June 2011 and one new post of "Executive Secretary" would be created to share the workload of the General Secretary so as to cater for the organizational structure of our Church and the development of our ministry. The following suggestions were also accepted, namely, the "Laity Training Centre" shall be renamed "Laity Training Division", the "Laity Training Centre Committee" shall be renamed the "Laity Training Committee", and the titles for the "Executive Secretaries" of the 3 Divisions and the "Director" of the Laity Training Centre shall all be changed to "Division Head".

Accepted the recommendations of the Development Strategy Sub-Committee of the Standing Committee that neither the President nor the Vice-President may serve in that office for more than 4 terms in aggregate, and that a person who has served for 9 consecutive years (excluding any year during which he has served as an ex-officio member) on the Standing Committee shall not be eligible for election until after a lapse

of one year so that more members can serve in those capacities.

To cater for the rapid development of our ministries in Macau which have been established for over 20 years, the suggestion of renaming "Macau Mission Executive Committee" under the Overseas Mission Committee as "Macau Ministry Committee" which would report to the Conference (to the Standing Committee when the Representative Session is not in session) directly was accepted. Under the "Macau Ministry Committee, a "Social Service Committee" and a "Social Service Executive Committee" would be formed to plan and supervise our social services in Macau.

Accepted the application of Kwong Yuen Methodist Chapel to become a Local Church with effect from 25th September 2011 and to be named as "Kwong Yuen Methodist Church". Extended for 3 years (until the end of June 2014) the exemption granted to Tin Shui Wai Methodist Church from having to give up applying for remuneration subsidies for Pastoral Clerk when they apply for that of an Associate School Chaplain or Local Church Parish Worker. This is to give "special support" to Tin Shui Wai Methodist Church for developing her youth ministry.

According to the principle that the Conference would provide "special support" to Local Churches/Chapels established in grass-roots communities which need financial support to develop their ministry, the application of Epworth Village Methodist Church for subsidizing the remuneration of a Local Church Parish Worker (100% for the 1st year, 65% for the 2nd year and 35% for the 3rd year; maximum being \$480,000 to be paid out of the Church Development Fund) for the development of her Grass-roots Mission Ministry was accepted. The newly recruited LCPW, together with members of the Epworth Village Methodist Church, would



President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer together with colleagues of the Conference Office

support and give pastoral care to grass-roots families in the community who have been served by the pastoral clerk and social workers of Methodist Epworth Village Community Centre, Social Service.

Approved amendments made to the "Constitution" and "By-Laws". Accepted the budget of the Church Development Fund for 2011/2012. \$24.89 million would be allocated for supporting the new areas of work of the 4 Ministry Divisions, administrative costs of the Methodist Centre, consultancy fees for The Wesley, school ministry of our local churches and schools, Macau Mission, Fund for World Mission and work for the Chinese by the Methodist Church in Britain, the churches in Myanmar, Bangladesh, Cambodia and the China mainland, the urban mission of Methodist City Space of Kwun Tong Methodist Church and the Divinity School of Chung Chi College. Accepted the audited report for 2010 (there was a surplus of \$1.47 million in our Income and Expenditure Account) and approved the budget for 2011 with an anticipated deficit of \$0.28 million.

Renamed "The Youth Affairs Executive Committee" as "The Working Youth Affairs Executive Committee"; "The Junior

Youth Affairs Executive Committee" as "The Student Youth Affairs Executive Committee"; and the "The Centre for Family Pastoral Care Executive Committee" and "The Family Affairs Executive Committee" be amalgamated to form "The Family Pastoral Care Affairs Executive Committee" with the mission of helping our members to building their family life with Christ as the centre and living out their faith.

Accepted the suggestion that in the coming 4 years, \$3 million would be allocated from the "Church Development Fund" to strengthen Religious Education in our secondary and primary schools as well as making available New Senior Secondary "Ethics and Religious Studies" as an elective subject. In view of the achievements we have made since launching the Quality Life Education Project in 2004, it was suggested that churches and schools which have the qualifications and the interest of setting up "Life Education Base" be invited to submit concrete proposal. It is hoped that the establishment of the Base would enhance the exchange of experiences with external parties and enable the refinement of our Quality Life Education Project for the purpose of fostering an abundant life for our students.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:26 pm after the Rev Dr John Illsley had led the closing prayer and given the benediction.



The Senior Pastor, the Rev Dr John Illsley, and a lay member, Mr Gene Buttrill, explaining the progress of the Redevelopment Project of MICHK. Representatives from 25 local churches participating in the Kick-off Ceremony of the fund raising campaign to show support of the whole Church after adopting the proposal of full swing implementation of the Project



Participants voting for the motion by a show of hands



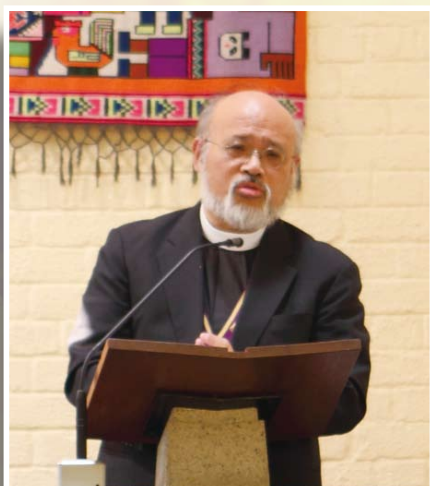
The Rev CHAN Tak-cheong, Wilson, the Rev. HO Wai-yee, Winnie and the Rev Jesus N De Los Santos singing hymns in Putunghua, Cantonese, Tagalog and English in the Worship on the second day. All delegates holding a hand-cross and declaring "We are One"



The Rev Dr John Illsley giving the benediction before the adjournment of the meeting



Group photo of all the participants



President's Report for the Conference 2011

The Rev Prof Lung-kwong Lo
26th May 2011

Dear Guests, Representatives, Heads and Staff of Subsidiaries, Brothers and Sisters:

Time flies! Without realizing it, I have been serving as the President of The Methodist Church, Hong Kong for 5 years, and this is the fifth time that I am delivering the President's Report in the Conference.

I am sure you have read the papers and attended the Pre-Conference Meetings organized by your respective Local Churches. You would know that besides organizing events and programmes to bring out the theme of the year "Be Biblical, Be Punctual, Making Offerings as God's Disciples", we have spent a lot of time to follow up on Government policies and to identify a new operator to run The Wesley; to seek methods of retaining human resources and to find ways so that our brothers and sisters could have more opportunities to serve the Church. Let me now give you a brief summary of the important matters and issues of directional concern. The details will be given in these two days by the Circuit Superintendents and the Executive Secretaries of the Ministry Divisions and the Chairpersons or Secretaries of the Conference Committees.

I. Development of Church and School Premises and Other Facilities

The Methodist Retreat Centre in Silvermine Bay, Lantau Island and the Wesley Lodge in Cheung Chau were re-opened in September and December 2010 respectively after extensive renovations. The responses from the users have been very good. We hope that our subsidiaries could fully utilize these camp sites and give suggestions for their further improvement. And please continue to make offerings for the renovation costs so that we could reach the targets of our Fund Raising Campaigns soon.

We are pleased to report that the Methodist School has been moved to her new premises at Wylie Road and the Fund Raising Campaign for the "School Development and Mission Work in the Kowloon Methodist Parish" has successfully raised HK\$8 million in early May. The School will be operated in whole -day mode in the new school year. We pray that our North Point Methodist Primary School will also be allocated appropriate premises for whole-day operation in the near future.

After 5 years of planning and discussion, the motion for the Kick-Off Ceremony for the Fund Raising Campaign for Redevelopment of Methodist International Church, Hong Kong will be put forward this evening. We aim at raising \$300 million in 7 years' time through project financing and donations so that the lot on which MICHK stands could be developed into a 24-storey building for the use of MICHK, the Conference Office and our social services. Please make your contribution and pray for the architectural drawings and the granting of approval from different Government departments.

Our 20 years of joint venture with Hang Lung Properties Limited for the development of the Sailors' and Soldiers' Home into The Wesley and the Methodist Centre will come to an end in January 2012. We are pleased to report that after more than 2 years of effort and under the guidance of our Lord, we have entered into a Hostel Management Agreement in mid-May with Shama Management Limited of the ONYX Hospitality Group, a Thai-based multi-national corporation. The Wesley will be renovated and re-launched in the latter part of 2012. We hope that better services will be provided and the income generated will continue to support the development of the Church's ministries.

Our North Point Methodist Church is facing some difficulties in its extension plan. We hope that with concerted effort, the problems could soon be solved.

Some of our Local Churches/Chapels and schools are also working very hard to explore ways of improving their premises and facilities. Please also express your concern and support.

In recent years, the Town Planning Board has been imposing building height restrictions (BHRs) on land designated for Government/Institutions/Community (G/IC) purpose in different parts of Hong Kong (including North Point, Wan Chai and Yau Ma Tei) by gazettal of Draft Outline Zoning Plans, thereby seriously limiting the development potentials of several pieces of G/IC land held by the Church. We will join hands with other Churches and Social Service Agencies to voice our opposition against Government's policy regarding the discrimination against owners of G/IC land to provide visual and spatial relief and breathing space of the public while property rights of private owners of commercial sites are not subject to such a restriction at all. It is simply unfair and unjust to impose hurdles on NGOs that are planning to redevelop their sites at their own expense with the aim of improving their services to the community. We may consider applying for judicial review.

II. Manpower Establishment

Upon passing the motions to be put forward by the Ministerial Session and the Standing Committee, Mr Chak-tong Wong will be ordained as Deacon on 19th June 2011 and we will have 3 more Candidates for Local Church Parish Workers in September to be trained at the Divinity School of Chung Chi College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong. It goes without saying that the most important asset of the Church is human resources. To train human resources and to put in place succession plans are of utmost importance. Our Church has therefore been providing a variety of training programmes to equip our members to deepen the faith and to become disciples with vision, compassion and accountability. It is hoped that our structure and policies could nurture and retain human resources. During the past year, the Development Strategy Sub-Committee of the Standing Committee spent considerable amount of time on exploring ways of enhancing the capabilities and increasing the responsibilities of our Local Church Parish Workers (LCPW). Besides reviewing their remuneration package, Pastors-In-Charge and Circuit Superintendents have been reminded to encourage appropriate LCPWs

to serve as Local Church Deacons as a gesture of recognition so as to encourage them to shoulder more responsibilities and serve in our Church happily. The Sub-Committee has also stipulated the maximum number of terms for the office of the President, the Vice-President, as well as the number of terms a member can serve on the Standing Committee consecutively. And in view of the development of our Church and the substantial increase in workload of the Conference Office since the union of Tsun To and Wei Li in 1975 and the establishment of the office of the Executive Secretary in 1979, the Executives' Meeting has also made several suggestions on the manpower deployment of the Conference Office, including the recommendation of appointing Ms Katherine Ng as the General Secretary, which will be discussed tomorrow.

III. Co-operation between the Conference and the Subsidiaries

It was glad to see that our special support for Tin Shui Wai Methodist Church (TSW) has made a huge difference. While they now have the manpower to develop their youth ministries, they would like the Conference to continue the extra financial support to be rendered to them for another three years. Actually the Conference is happy to provide "special support" to Local Churches/Chapels which have concrete and feasible proposals for improvement of physical facilities and developing services to cater for the niche of the local communities. Based on this principle, we would discuss how we could support the grassroots ministry jointly provided by Epworth Village Methodist Church and Methodist Epworth Village Community Centre, Social Service, as well as the redevelopment of North Point Methodist Church. We must remember that the Conference, together with all her local churches, chapels, schools and social services agencies, form "The Methodist Church, Hong Kong". We belong to one another and together we form one body. We Are One! With strategy, let us support one another with a united heart to accomplish the work that God has entrusted to us!

IV. Pastoral Care

Bringing more people to God and helping more brothers and sisters to experience the joy and support of Christian fellowship are the pastoral duties of a Church. As there is a limited number of Ministers and Deacons in our Church (only 25 serving full time in our local churches and chapels, and 2 of whom are overseas ministers serving at our MICHK), we hope that the 49 LCPWs and

34 Local Preachers in Hong Kong could take up more responsibilities of preaching and administering pastoral care, including delivering Extended Eucharist so that members who could not come to Church because of work or ill health could receive Holy Communion and experience the fellowship with other brothers and sisters.

The Ministerial Session will, starting this September, allow those who have received infant baptism to partake in Holy Communion even before they receive confirmation, so that they too can be reassured that they belong to the Body of Christ.

V. School Education

Apart from urging the Government to amend the Education (Amendment) Ordinance 2004 concerning school-based management, our Church will continue to invest resources in Quality Life Education. We are grateful that Mr Tin-luk Lau has agreed to serve as Part-time Officer of the programme. We are aiming at developing Quality Life Education at full strength in each of our 11 primary schools in the coming 2 years. Subsidy will also be granted to strengthen Religious Education in our secondary and primary schools as well as to make available New Senior Secondary “Ethics and Religious Studies” as an elective subject.

VI. Social Services

In recent years, our Social Service Agencies have shown increasing concern over the spiritual life of their staff and the youth they are serving. Besides recruiting Parish Workers and jointly organizing Alpha Courses with Local Churches/Chapels, our 5 Agencies have joined hands to initiate an evangelistic programme for the youth. They have also worked hard to provide poverty alleviation programmes. Please support by offering and by serving as volunteers.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the “Social Affairs Concern Group”. Apart from having celebrations to encourage our members to pay more attention to social affairs, the Group has also advocated that all Methodist subsidiaries be encouraged to support the appeal from the labour sector to set the minimum wage of our staff at HK\$33 per hour rather than the statutory minimum amount of HK\$28 per hour.

VII. Mission and Evangelism

In view of the prosperous development of our Macau Ministry, a motion will be put forward tomorrow to set up a “Macau Ministry Committee” which is directly responsible to the Conference. The social service programme established in Cambodia in May last year received very good response and our social workers have been working very hard to embark on various programmes in the near future.

Ms Lillian Wai-ling Leung, our Outbound Missionary who is serving in Davao of The Philippines has performed well in making cross-cultural adaptation, in discharging her duties and in getting along with other co-workers. She has already been accepted by Wycliffe Bible Translators (Hong Kong) as a Career Member. Ms Leung will soon undergo further training to prepare for literacy education in future. We pray that Lillian’s experience will encourage more members to serve as Outbound Missionaries.

Our Candidate for Outbound Missionary, Ms Kennis Lam, is now serving in Macau, and is still trying to identify a mission agency to facilitate her serving in Japan in the long run.

In terms of local mission, I am pleased to report that more of our members are getting familiar with our Prison Ministry. We have completed the first training course and we hope more members will help in the ministry.

VIII . International Exchange

2011 is a busy year for our Church. In the past months, we have been working on the preparation and coordination of the 3rd Asian Methodist Convention which will be held in Hong Kong from 25th to 28th June 2011. 120 delegates from 11 regions and 12 Church Members will come to Hong Kong to attend the Convention. We hope that our members will attend so that they could, on the one hand, better understand the Methodist Churches in Asia, and, on the other hand, help to receive overseas participants. From 1st to 3rd June, we will be welcoming 20 participants of the Fourth Theological Seminar organised by the Theological Committee of the World Federation of Chinese Methodist Churches. In October, we will be receiving about 60 guests from the United Kingdom, the States and from Asia who have accepted our invitation to come to Hong Kong for attending the activities to celebrate the 160th Anniversary of the arrival in Hong Kong of the first Methodist missionary, the Rev George Piercy. We hope that our members will join the

different events so as to be inspired by the life of the Rev George Piercy, and therefore become more committed disciples who are eager to share the faith. The book which three scholars in the China mainland and I have written, "A Church Grown from Suffering—History of Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society at Fatshan 1851-1949" has just been published. While our pastoral workers, local preachers and members of the Standing Committee will receive a free copy, please encourage other members to buy the book.

IX. Farewell

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Rev Dr John Illsley again for his wonderful service at MICHK for the past 9 years. We will keep him in our prayers as he continues his service in the United Kingdom. We

trust that the Rev Canon Dr Howard Mellor will build on the good foundation that Rev Illsley has laid and nurture the members of MICHK in Biblical truths and Wesleyan theology so as to prepare them to face new challenges and ministries. We hope that Mrs Rosie Mellor, an experienced teacher, could our schools too.

I sincerely thank for your support and prayer which enable me to take care of the roles of the President and the Director of the Divinity School of Chung Chi College at the same time. I pray that the Divinity School could become a blessing to His Church and our Church would further develop in a renewed and healthy culture. If it is the Lord's will, I expect to serve in our Local Churches/Chapels upon completion of my 6th term as Director of the Divinity School in July 2013. Amen. 🇬🇧



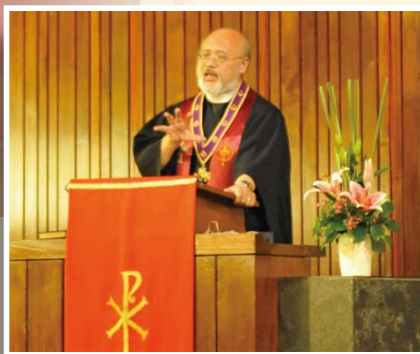
The Ordination Service 2011



Laying on the hand



The Rev WONG Chak-tong



President the Rev Prof LO Lung-kwong delivering the sermon

The Ordination Service for Parish Worker Mr. WONG Chak-tong to become Deacon was held at 8pm on 19th June at the Ward Memorial Methodist Church. The Conference Secretary, the Rev YUEN Tin-yau was the chairperson, the President, the Rev Prof LO Lung-kwong was officiated the ordination by laying hand on the deacon to be ordained and delivering the sermon. Almost 300 pastoral workers as well as brothers and sisters were present in the ceremony, which was simple but grand.

Mr. WONG Chak-tong was a member of the Ap Lei Chau Methodist Church. He graduated from the Social Work Department of the University of Hong Kong in 1990 and was awarded the Bachelor of Laws by the University of London in 2006. He had been working as a social worker and in the Equal Opportunities Commission until he was accepted as a Candidate for Ministry by the Representative Session in 2007. After completing the Master of Divinity degree at the Chung Chi College of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, he was deployed to assist with the work of Lam Tin Methodist Church, until 1st July 2011 he became Pastor-in-Charge of the church.

The sermon that night was "Prepare God's people to build the body of Christ". The Rev Prof LO Lung-kwong encouraged the congregation to try their best to keep united in the Holy Spirit. This unity did not imply uniformity or stereotypes. What God treasured was the uniqueness of individuals with different gifts, roles and functions, pastors or lay Christians alike, and our willingness to respond to His calling to contribute ourselves in His service. Therefore we should accommodate one another and work together in one heart, to fully utilize God's gifts to us. The purpose of the Church in the ordination of an individual to take up the

specific role of a pastor was not to emphasize the pastor's importance, and certainly not asking him to take up all lay Christians' responsibility in serving God. The most important role of a pastor was to identify, encourage and train lay Christians to serve God. At the same time the pastor should equip and commit himself in developing those areas of work that lay Christians were not able to participate. In this way, the body of Christ could then be built up and developed. 🇧🇪



Ministers taking a group photo with the Rev and Mrs WONG Chak-tong



In commemoration of the **160th**
Anniversary of the Arrival of the First
Missionary of the Methodist Church,
Rev George Piercy

Heritage Tour

- Date: **29th October 2011** (Saturday)
Time: 9:00am – 6:00pm
Meeting Place: Kowloon Methodist Church 40, Gascoigne Road, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon
Itinerary: Kowloon Methodist Church, Tai Hang (Wesley Village), Stanley Military Cemetery, Hong Kong Cemetery, Methodist International Church
Accompanying narrators :
The Rev LEUNG Lam-hoi, Lincoln, The Rev Dr LI Ping-kwong, The Rev SEN Ken-ju, Abraham and Prof YING Fuk-tsung
Fees: \$100 (inclusive of lunch, tea, and coach; shortfall covered by the Conference)
Quota: 110

Overseas Mission Conference

- Date: **30th October 2011** (Sunday)
Time: 3:00pm – 10:00 pm
Place: Chinese Methodist Church, Wan Chai, Hong Kong
Purpose: Help the congregation understand more and care about overseas missionary work in places like UK, and Cambodia

Sharing by Rev Piercy's Descendants and our Former Missionary Colleagues

- Date: **31st October 2011** (Monday)
Time: 7:30pm
Venue: Chinese Methodist Church, Wan Chai, Hong Kong
Purpose: Help the congregation understand more of Rev Piercy's deeds and our former missionary colleagues' experience and service in Hong Kong
Target: Members of our Church