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Follow in the Lord's steps and become His real disciples

## Hills Christian Alliance Church Newsletter

August 2018 No. 30

### Pastor's Sharing – Disciples and Unity

Rev. Almon Li

The church theme of these two years is to exhort believers to grow spiritually and be a real disciple of Christ Jesus.

Every disciple of Christ should know Lord Jesus's mind. Lord Jesus prays for the unity of the Church in the High Priestly Prayer in John Chapter 17. This prayer was made when Jesus was approaching to the Cross. It shows how important the unity of the Church is. Moreover, Paul the Apostle reminds us in Ephesians 4:3 that we should make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit.

However, in today's Chinese churches, church division is a serious problem that they are facing. A brother from New Zealand told me that the growth of the Chinese churches there was mostly because of church splits, from one church to two churches.

In the Chinese churches in Hong Kong, Canada, US and Australia, it is easy for me to hear of the cases about church split. The main reason for the split is differences in opinion between two groups of brothers and sisters who insist on their own opinions respectively. As a result, one of the groups leaves the church and sets up another one. Or they go to another church. This is like a divorce which is due to differences of opinion between husband and wife.

In fact, Lord Jesus had foreseen today's church problem 2000 years ago. Therefore, he earnestly prayed for the disciples and for the unity of the church before he died on the Cross for us. He prays, "Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one." (John 17:11b)

Today, how can we make every effort to keep the unity of the church?

#### 1. Set our eyes upon God's glory

Jesus says, "I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one." (John 17:22)

When every disciple concerns only God's glory, keeps his eyes on Christ, puts God's business as a priority and has the same mindset as Christ's, unity must be achieved. On the contrary, if we focus on ourselves and like to show off, oneness in Christ cannot be pursued.

#### 2. Through intimate interactions and fellowship

Through fellowship in cell groups, believers can learn how to communicate with each other and share life experiences in the Lord. Also, how to exhort each other and build each other up can be taught. Such doing is in accordance with Christ's will and shows that we are united in the Lord.

#### 3. Serve in unity

We all receive a common mission from God which is to build the Church and to expand the Kingdom of God. Therefore, today we have to do it with unity -- do not compete with each other, do not compete for fame, do not flaunt, do not want to be stronger than others, do not want to be praised, do not form cliques and factions, do not only choose those who you like to work with... All these are definitely not the purpose and the attitude of serving the church.

In this connection, we have to stay alert every moment and be aware of the purposes of serving in unity -- to build the house of God and to respond to God's love.

Brothers and sisters, Christian unity has incredible value in the eyes of Lord Jesus for this is a very important testimony which enables the world to know that we are the disciples of the Lord -- a community of love, and to know Jesus Christ who is the source of love. In the past, churches or Christian organisations have done a lot of contributions in different communities and different corners of the world, for examples, the establishment of many schools, hospitals and orphanages. They are considerate of the needs of the community and feed a lot of hungry people (both spiritually and physically). Also, they comfort the hearts of many injured people.

Even if a believer shows how he loves people and loves God, in the decision-making of the church and in the cooperation with brothers and sisters, he cannot achieve the oneness in Christ and express the unity due to different opinions and disputes with others. It may cause to a large gap among the believers and conflicts among churches.

As disciples of the Lord Christ, we should focus on God's glory in everything we do. God gives different gifts and talents to different believers. Everything is given by God. When everyone uses his gifts to serve each other, God will be glorified. We should take the humility of Christ as our example and learn to accept, tolerate, love and forgive. Hoping that our church will become a church of unity in diversity.

Dear brothers and sisters, if any church lacks the spirit of unity, the spread of the gospel will be blocked. If there is conflict in church, there will be no way to bring the world to the Lord. Therefore, we have to be considerate of the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ and make every effort to keep the unity of the church.

English Translation: Eve Kwan

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## The 17<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) cum the 5<sup>th</sup> Deacon Election

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3 June 2018 (Sunday) is a special day in HCAC's history because on this day the 17<sup>th</sup> AGM cum 5<sup>th</sup> Deacon Election made the following records:

1. The very first 3-congregation joint AGM cum Deacon Election, conducted in 3 languages, was held.
2. The HCAC had a two-round election for the first time, of which the first round is by individual congregations.
3. This was the first contested election in the HCAC (i.e. the number of seats less than the number of candidates).
4. The first Mandarin deacon was elected on this occasion.
5. There were pre-AGM Q&A sessions for the first time.

As this AGM was for the whole HCAC with 3 congregations and would take a longer time, the Q&A sessions of the AGM were advanced to 20 May 2018 (for Cantonese and English) and 27 May 2018 (for Mandarin) respectively. Hence, the distribution of the Annual Report for 2017/18 to church members was advanced to 13 May 2018 accordingly.

In each of the past four deacon elections, the number of candidates did not exceed the number of seats available. Therefore, accepting the nomination by a candidate meant that the candidate would definitely be elected. For this term, there were a total of 8 seats, 6 for Cantonese, 1 each for English and Mandarin Congregations. At the nomination stage, English and Mandarin Congregations each had one qualified candidate only (Leo Lai and Kenneth Chiu respectively) while the Cantonese Congregation had

12 qualified candidates, of which 8 accepted the nomination.

At the 5<sup>th</sup> AGM chaired by Rev. Almon Li and attended by a total of 116 church members, the Cantonese members present elected 6 Deacon candidates from the 8 nominees. The results of this first round election were (no. of votes received): Carter Li(68), Ling Chiu(60), Sherwood Kwok(51), Nicky Lee(50), Fione Kelly(49), James Wong(49), Roy Ho(45), Anita Chan(43). Then, at the second round, all the church members present voted that the following 8 candidates were elected into the 5<sup>th</sup> Deacon Board:

Cantonese: Carter Li, Ling Chiu, James Wong  
Fione Kelly, Sherwood Kwok, Nicky Lee  
Mandarin: Leo Lai  
English: Kenneth Chiu

At this AGM, the financial reports of the General Funds of Cantonese/English and Mandarin Congregations and Building Fund for 2017-18 as well as the Budgets of the General Funds of Cantonese/English and Mandarin Congregation for 2018-19 were accepted unanimously. As for the Building Fund Budget for 2018-19, there was a suggestion to defer the 0.1Mn renovation project to the following year. After voting, the Budget was passed with 16 opposing votes.

Arrangement had been made for the joint Deacon Board to be held on 24 June, at which the posts of the new Deacons would be decided. Welcome to the new Deacons, namely, Carter, Sherwood, Fione and Leo; and thanks to the leaving Deacons, namely, Anna, Roy and Anita for their faithful service in the last term of the Deacon Board.

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## Sharing – To be God's Faithful Steward

**Pastor Don Huang**  
**Voluntary Mandarin Pastor**

Back in 2006 when the Mandarin Church Plant was established, Pastor Chu encouraged me to equip myself so that I could serve as a pastor in the church in future. My response at that time was, "God, please prepare someone else. I just want to be an ordinary brother in Christ." At that time, pastoring was not on my mind; but a few years later, Pastor Chu brought up the issue again. This time, although I was not especially moved, I held this notion to heart, knowing if I were to serve, without proper training, my road in pastoral service would only be a short run. Rev. Li later organised the Christian Training Course. I signed up and spent two years on the course. It helped me a lot.



Australian College of Ministries later designed a Certificate IV program. Several brothers and sisters from our church enrolled themselves in this course, but I was not particularly motivated to sign up. After a year, I could feel my limitation in serving God, only leaning on our human

ways, and I felt very tired. At the beginning of that year, I wanted to better serve the Lord.

Encouraged by the pastors and my wife, I enrolled myself in the certificate program which consists of nine units. I spent 7 years studying theology while working. In God's leadership, I finally completed the course. Throughout these years, I was given the opportunity to learn from Rev. Li, Pastor Khor, Pastor Leung and other brothers and sisters on pastoring, and to serve alongside my brothers and sisters. In my five years of being a Voluntary Assistant Pastor, there had been times of hardship and moments of learning, especially in the past year when the Mandarin Congregation was without a full-time Pastor.

Looking back at my service in HCAC over the past few years, I firmly believe that it stems from God's leadership and God's grace, especially on preaching, I can see the guidance of God and the preparation of the Holy Spirit. Preaching is not easy, but as you prepare for a sermon, you will

experience the abundant grace and sustenance from God. So no matter how it went after each address, I give thanks to the Lord. During my service in the church, I had a profound realisation of the difficulty of being a pastor and the frequent encounter of challenges, complaints and misunderstandings. I believe it was God's grace and protection that enables me to serve until today without retreat. Thank God for allowing me to become His vessel and thank God for a wife, who also loves God, to be my helper and supporter in my pastoral walk.

In December 2017, my worker's license was upgraded after completion of my diploma program. I have been assigned to take on the administration of the Mandarin Congregation. The greater responsibility has made me feel that I have greater burden of shepherding the congregation.

I hope that in the coming year I will be able to shepherd my brothers and sisters and to proclaim the salvation of Christ in accordance with the truth of the Bible and the will of God. There has been an influx of Mandarin-speaking Chinese to the Hills area. Lord, please unite the church, Rev. Li, our pastors, brothers and sisters to reinvent HCAC, to attract more people to Christ, to create a church that is pleasing to the Lord. May all glory and praise be to our God!

Lastly, I would like to encourage you all with a verse in 1 Corinthians 4:2 (ESV), "it is required of stewards that they be found faithful."

**English Translation: Iris Chau**

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## **Prayer is not only Important but Essential (Mark 11:17)**

**Johnny & Connie Mok**

For the Christian, praying is supposed to be like breathing, easier to do than to not do. We pray for a number of reasons. For one thing, prayer is a form of serving God (Luke 2:36-38) and obeying Him. Besides, God commands us to pray (Philippians 4:6-7). Prayer is exemplified for us by Jesus Christ and the early church (Mark 1:35; Acts 1:14; 2:42; 3:1; 4:23-31; 6:4; 13:1-3). If Jesus Christ thought it was worthwhile to pray, we should also. If He needed to pray to remain in the Father's will, how much more do we need to pray?

Another reason to pray is that God intends prayer to be the means of obtaining His solutions in a number of situations. We pray in preparation for major decisions (Luke 6:12-13); to overcome demonic barriers (Matthew 17:14-21); to gather workers for the spiritual harvest (Luke 10:2); to gain strength to overcome temptation (Matthew 26:41); and to obtain the means of strengthening others spiritually (Ephesians 6:18-19).

We come to God with our specific requests, and we have God's promise that our prayers are not in vain, even if we do not receive specifically what we asked for (Matthew 6:6; Romans 8:26-27). He has promised that when we ask for things that are in accordance with His will, He will give us what we ask for (1 John 5:14-15). Sometimes He delays His answers according to His wisdom and for our benefit. In these situations, we are to be diligent and persistent in prayer (Matthew 7:7; Luke 18:1-8). Prayer should not be seen as our means of getting God to do our will on earth, but rather as a means of getting God's will done on earth. God's wisdom far exceeds our own.

### **Ways to Pray**

**A.C.T.S. is an easy way to remember key elements of prayer. It's simply prayer in four parts (Note):**

**Adoration** – "Praise be to God!" -Psalms 68:35

Tell God how much you appreciate Him. Express your love for Him. Praise His power and majesty. This is a great way

to begin your prayer time. "How awesome are your deeds!" -Psalms 66:3

**Confession** – "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just, and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." -1 John 1:9

Tell Him where you have fallen short. Be specific. Thank Him for the forgiveness we have in Jesus Christ, and ask for help and strength to turn away from future temptations.

**Thanksgiving** – Always "glorify him with thanksgiving" -Psalms 69:30

We have plenty of reasons to be thankful. Thank God for His love, His faithfulness, His patience and many other things. Express gratitude for what He's doing in our life.

**Supplication** – "Make your requests known to God." -Philippians 4:6

Tell God what we want, no matter how small it seems to us. There is nothing too small or too big for our God.

The A.C.T.S. is not the only formula to pray. The acronym itself isn't found in the Bible, but it can serve as a guide, especially when we are learning how to pray. Remember, prayer isn't a formula; and each prayer doesn't have to cover every element. God wants us to talk from our hearts and express ourselves to Him. As we grow in our love for Jesus Christ, we will naturally desire to talk to Him more.

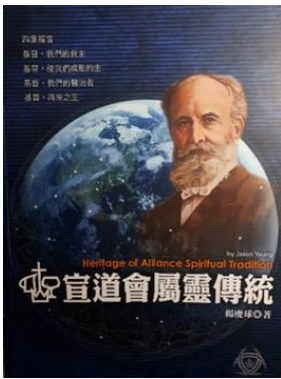
**May God glorify His name in our lives as we believe in Him enough to come to Him often in prayer.**

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Since the founding of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA), the two spiritual traditions of "spiritual depth" and "global missions" have been emphasized and mission and prayer are highly regarded. The spiritual tradition of the C&MA is not a pile of doctrines or rules, but the fruit of the faith of God's servants and their purified lives.

The book of "Heritage of Alliance Spiritual Tradition" articulates the spirit of the C&MA, and it portrays Dr. A B Simpson (the founder of the C&MA), his growth in life and his core beliefs. Dr. Simpson was completely faithful and absolutely loyal to God. His eagerness to save souls touched tens of thousands of believers. He stresses that mission ministry is based on spiritual growth, and spiritual growth and experience is based on the union with Christ's life. The "Fourfold Gospel" of Dr. Simpson sums up the spiritual theology of the M&CA, which was the spiritual essence that he had received and experienced personally from the Lord. The book incisively explains the core beliefs of the C&MA - the Christ-centered "Fourfold Gospel", that is Christ is our Savior, our Sanctifier, our Healer and Coming King. This is the message that the congregations of the C&MA should pass on and apply diligently.

Another characteristic of this book is the introduction of Dr. A W Tozer, who has greatly influenced the spiritual traditions of the C&MA and further developed the spiritual theology of Dr. Simpson. Every day he listened attentively to the voice of God and he was "the man who meditates the law of the Lord day and night". He also expected believers to return to faithfulness and walk with the Lord. Dr. Tozer repeatedly emphasizes that we have too much biblical knowledge and too many theological theories, but seldom experience God. In this book, the author outlines

his growth and spiritual pursuits, as well as his often-stressed "Trilogy of Sanctification" - Knowing Christ, Walking with the Lord, and Worshipping Wholeheartedly.

The secret of the depth of the lives of Dr. Simpson and Dr. Tozer is their personal discipline before God, which is reading, meditation, thinking and prayer in their abundant spiritual life. The two pastors both point out that "The Word of God is important, but Christians should not only fall into the study of words, but rather listen to and act on the Word of God."

The book also points out that Dr. Tozer has insights into the secularization of the church. As society is developing rapidly, believers are lacking of patience to experience spiritual growth because it takes time and needs patience and obedience to nurture spirituality and discipline for godliness. He exhorts believers to read the Bible devoutly in order to walk with the Lord, and the highest pursuit of believers is the union with God.

Both Dr. Tozer and Dr. Simpson valued the union between Christ and believers very much. This year our church focuses on helping brothers and sisters grow spiritually. Thank God for giving me this opportunity to find this book in the church's library. I not only learn more about the spiritual traditions of the M&CA, but also the two important persons of the M&CA – Dr. Simpson and Dr. Tozer. Their life stories are admirable. I sincerely recommend every member of the M&CA and believers who are pursuing growth in life to read it.

*[Editor's note: The book of "Heritage of Alliance Spiritual Tradition", published by Christian Canadian Chinese Missionary Association, is one of the new release books in the library of HCAC and its code is BHS 0040. ]*

**English Translation: Eve Kwan**

## Women Outreach Ministry--"Knitting for Christ"



After the Chinese Dancing Class, the Women's Group has set up a new outreach ministry called "Knitting for Christ". This knitting squad was instigated by 3 HCAC sisters, Sylvia So, Fione Kelly and Wylie Tam.

Commencing from July this year, gatherings will be held on every first Tuesday from 10am to 12:30pm on the first floor of the Church Building. All Cantonese and Mandarin congregation members, friends and relatives are welcome to join.

This ministry is free of charge, open for offerings, but participants will need to bring their own needles, yarn and

other knitting supplies. The knitting squad has invited Rosan as their mentor. She has years of experience in knitting and is now responsible for the supervision and material preparation for the monthly crochet meeting.

The "Knitting for Christ" ministry held a simple opening ceremony on 12 June 2018. 17 church members, friends and relatives were there to witness this inauguration. At the induction, Sylvia introduced the group's objectives as follows:

- Meeting brothers, sisters and friends through knitting, developing friendships and spreading the gospel.
- Sharing the fun of knitting and beautifying life.
- Serving the community e.g. visiting nursing homes.



After that, Fione led the theme song "Knitting for Christ" (adaption of the modern hymn "Live Out Love" with new lyrics) and Rev. Almon Li's sharing.

Sylvia So, Fione Kelly and Wylie Tam all belong to the cell group Malachi B. Since 2016, Malachi B has participated in events organised by the "Wrap with Love", which led to the establishment of this knitting outreach ministry by these 3 sisters. They shared this vision with Rev. Li and Mrs. Marianna Li. With the latter's enthusiastic support and

approval from the Deacon Board, the "Knitting for Christ" ministry was formally set up in July 2018. It has also registered as a member of the "Wrap with Love". May God continue to guide and use the "Knitting for Christ" ministry.



**Knitting for Christ**

Amazing Love from Heaven above,  
 Deep, vast, wide like the sea,  
 Hard to bear, hard to grasp, yet able to see.  
 All cause of love, together we walk,  
 Submit our hearts, never give up,  
 And we pledge, from our hearts, show your love.  
 Christ's deep grace motivates me  
 True light leads my way  
 Selflessly, to the world, blessed be.  
 Purling, knitting, add a stitch and we weave out of love  
 You and me, in one heart, knit for Christ.

**English Translation: Iris Chau**

## Knowing HCAC : HCAC's Governance Structure

**Sherwood Kwok**

According to the Constitution of HCAC, the Deacon Board is the leading executive body of the church in the absence of a Board of Elders. "Deacon Board is under the leadership of the Senior Pastor while the rest of pastors, who play the role as Elders, are responsible for teaching and pastoring. Deacons are to assist the Senior Pastor to lead the church." (Note) The term of each deacon is two years and all deacons should be elected at the Annual General Meeting.

As the Cantonese Congregation has so far been the largest one in the church, it has more seats of deacons (6) in the Deacon Board than the English and Mandarin Congregations (one each). However, among the seats of deacons under the Cantonese Congregation, certain posts (e.g. Treasurer, Building Management & Development) are for the whole church.

Under the church's governance structure and apart from the Deacon Board, the Mandarin and English Congregations have their own advisory committees to lead their respective ministries. Tables 1 to 3 show the current memberships of these three committees.

According to Table 1, all pastors are ex-officio members of the Deacon Board, in addition to the elected deacons. The membership of the English Advisory Committee comprises mainly all ministry heads and two parent representatives, plus the relevant pastoral staff. The Mandarin Advisory Committee has similar composition.

All the pastoral staff form the Pastoral Team Meeting (Table 4) which meets once bi-monthly with the following objectives: to share with and give support to one another; to pray for and keep guard of the church; and to consider the future directions of the church.

There is also a Remuneration Team, under the Deacon Board, to deal with the salaries and related matters of all paid staff of the church. There are also departmental committees in some departments/ministries under the Deacon Board.

Cell ministry is directly under the Senior Pastor, with the assistance of three zone leaders (Table 5).

Should church members have any questions or suggestions, they are welcome to contact the pastors or deacons.

*Note: Rev. Almon Li, "Pastor's Sharing – Deacon Election", (3/6/2018)*



**2018-2020 Deacon Board**

**Table 1: HCAC Deacon Board (2018-2020)**

Name	Position	Ministry/Service Areas	Overseeing/Caring
Rev. Almon Li	Chairman & Senior Pastor	Cell Ministry, Education Department	Sherwood Kwok, Carter Li, James Wong
Fredrick Song	English Pastor	English Congregation	Kenneth Chiu
Don Huang	Voluntary Pastor (Mandarin)	Cell Ministry, Sunday School, Ushers	Leo Lai
Freddie Li	Voluntary Pastor (Cantonese)	Men's Ministry, Young Families Fellowship	
Paul Chan	Voluntary Worship Pastor	Worship Ministry	Fione Kelly
Marianna Li	Voluntary Reverend Assistant	Women Ministry, Choir, Promotion Team	Ling Chiu, Nicky Lee
Ling Chiu	Deacon	Membership Department	
Fione Kelly	Deacon	Multi-media Department	
Sherwood Kwok	Deacon	Treasurer, Publication Team, Library	
Nicky Lee	Deacon	Caring Department	
Carter Li	Deacon	Evangelism Department	
James Wong	Deacon	Building Management & Development Department	
Leo Lee	Deacon	Mandarin Congregation	
Kenneth Chiu	Deacon	English Congregation	

**Table 2: English Advisory Committee**

Name	Position
Rev. Almon Li	(Chairman) Senior Pastor
Fredrick Song	English Pastor, Ministry Overseer
Kenneth Chiu	(Secretary) Deacon, Soccer Outreaching
Marianna Li	Reverend Assistant
Jane Chiu	Worship Ministry
Timothy Kwok	Cell Group Coordinator
Matthew Wong	Kids Church
Cassandra Tang	Flashlight (Youth Fellowship)
Edward Yu	Parent Representative (Cantonese)
Chen Liang	Parent Representative (Mandarin)
Sharon Kan	Added member (Bible Study Leader)



English Advisory Committee

**Table 3: Mandarin Advisory Committee**

Name	Position
Rev. Almon Li	(Chairman) Senior Pastor
Don Huang	Voluntary Pastor
Leo Lee	Deacon, Outreaching Ministry
Annie Lin	(Secretary) Caring Ministry
Vivian Hung	Worship Ministry



Mandarin Advisory Committee

**Table 4: Pastoral Team Meeting**

Name	Position
Rev. Almon Li	(Convener) Senior Pastor
Fredrick Song	English Pastor
Don Huang	Voluntary Pastor (Mandarin)
Freddie Li	Voluntary Pastor (Cantonese)
Paul Chan	Voluntary Worship Pastor
Marianna Li	Voluntary Reverend Assistant

**Table 5: Cell Ministry Zone Leaders' Meeting**

Name	Position
Rev. Almon Li	(Convener) Senior Pastor, Zone Leader
Paul Chan	Zone Leader
Ling Chiu	Zone Leader
Anna Kwok	Zone Leader

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