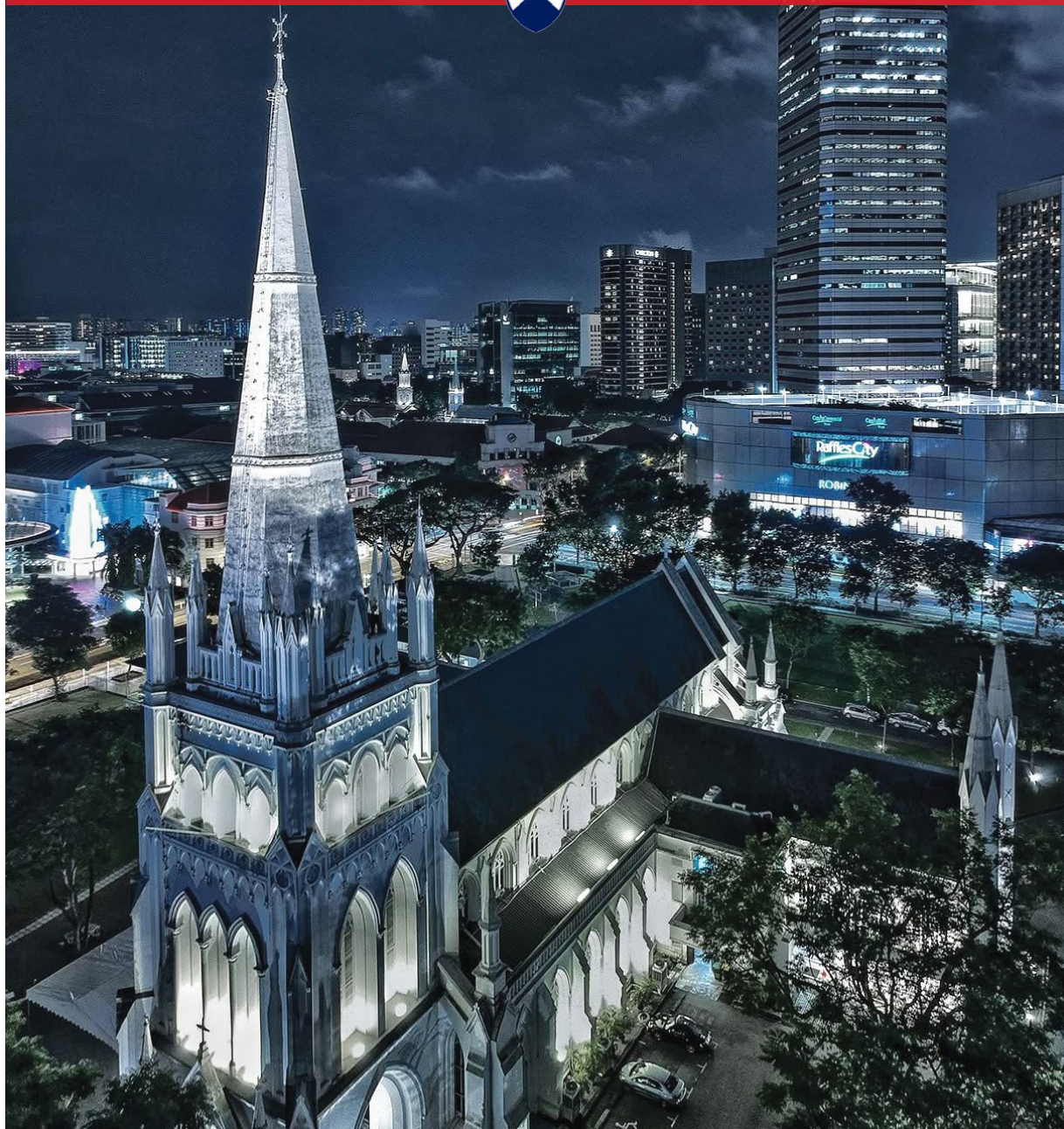


# THE COURIER

ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL



SG60 2025



CATHEDRAL and the NATION  
— CELEBRATING 60 YEARS —

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THE COURIER is published by  
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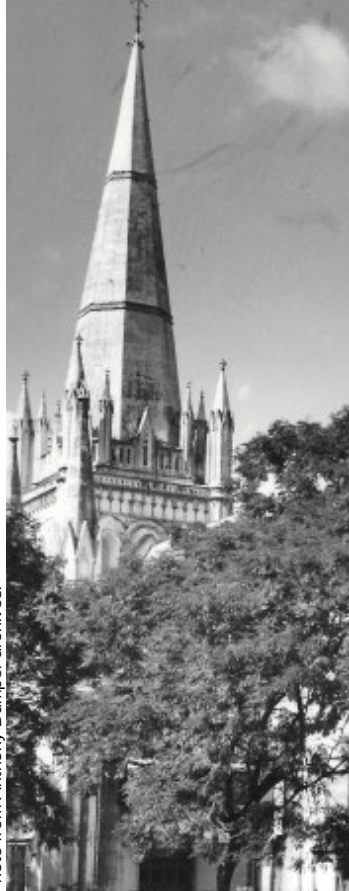
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| <p><b>3</b> Foreword by<br/>The Most Revd<br/>Dr Titus Chung</p> <p><b>4</b> Saint Andrew<br/>Apostle, Martyr, and<br/>Symbol of Faith</p> <p><b>6</b> St Andrew's<br/>Cathedral: A Witness<br/>to Singapore's History</p> <p><b>8</b> Witness in the City:<br/>St Andrew's Cathedral<br/>and the Singapore<br/>Story</p> | <p><b>22</b> An Overview of<br/>Cathedral in 1960s</p> <p><b>24</b> The Cathedral in 1965:<br/>Coming to Terms with<br/>Separation</p> <p><b>28</b> Kenneth Sansbury<br/>- The Last English<br/>Bishop of Singapore</p> |
|---|---|

# • Contents •



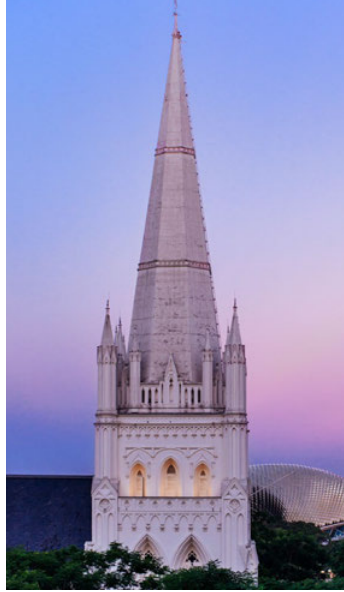


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|--|--|--|
| <p><b>32</b> Chiu Ban It<br/>- The First Asian<br/>Bishop of Singapore</p> <p><b>36</b> Devasahayam David<br/>Chelliah<br/>- The First Asian<br/>Archdeacon of<br/>Singapore</p> <p><b>39</b> The Mandarin<br/>Congregation at St<br/>Andrew's Cathedral</p> <p><b>44</b> Holy Church in the<br/>Secular State</p> | <p><b>49</b> Close to 60 Years,<br/>Still a Sermon For<br/>Our Times</p> <p><b>54</b> An Overview of<br/>Cathedral in 2020s</p> <p><b>56</b> Something Familiar,<br/>Something Fresh</p> <p><b>64</b> The Cathedral<br/>- A Glorious<br/>Testimony of God's<br/>Blessing</p> <p><b>69</b> Coping with Covid-19<br/>- How the Cathedral<br/>Survived the<br/>Pandemic</p> | <p><b>76</b> Restoring the<br/>Cathedral</p> <p><b>84</b> Our Wartime Legacy<br/>- Military Emblems<br/>at St Andrew's<br/>Cathedral</p> <p><b>92</b> Reaching out<br/>to Singapore:<br/>A Hub for the City</p> <p><b>96</b> Vicar's Reflection</p> <p><b>98</b> Church in Action</p> <p><b>108</b> Clergy Listing</p> |
|--|--|--|

# • Contents •

## FOREWORD BY

# The Most Revd Dr Titus Chung

Bishop of Singapore and Dean of St Andrew's Cathedral  
Archbishop of the Province of the Anglican Church in South East Asia

*“But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.” (Jeremiah 29:7)*

**My dear brothers and sisters,**

**Greetings in the name  
of our Lord Jesus Christ!**



In Jeremiah 29:7, we see a principle that has guided the Anglican Church in Singapore throughout its existence. We firmly believe that God has called us to labour for the welfare of our nation, for we shall have a share in it. Of course, Singapore is not a Christian nation. Nevertheless, the Church has a God-given responsibility to serve our nation well and seek its peace and prosperity. Fulfilling this responsibility is an important aspect of our witness to the people of Singapore, and a means by which we can reveal and glorify our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Indeed, this is what we have endeavoured to do throughout the years.

This special SG60 edition of the Courier magazine will give us a glimpse into the life and work of St Andrew's Cathedral since Singapore attained independence in 1965. Over the past 60 years, the Cathedral has grown together with the nation. We have adapted with the times, and rightfully so. However, our core values, and our commitment to the mission entrusted to us by God, have remained unchanged. I invite you to take a little journey through this publication and see how the Lord has been faithfully at work in and through the Cathedral during the past 60 years. As we look back with thanksgiving, we can also look forward with confident hope that He will continue to use St Andrew's Cathedral for His greater glory. Praise be to God! 🙏





# Saint Andrew

Apostle,  
Martyr, and  
Symbol of Faith

• Ronald Hee •

One of Jesus Christ's 12 apostles, Andrew was known for his unwavering dedication to spreading the teachings of Jesus. He played a significant role in the early Christian church, and his legacy continues to inspire millions today.

We first hear of Andrew in John 1:40-42. A disciple of John the Baptist, Andrew brought his brother Simon to Christ: "One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which means Christ). He brought him to Jesus."

Andrew was a fisherman from Bethsaida, a small fishing village. His faith and readiness to follow Christ was clear: "While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he [Christ] saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.' Immediately they left their nets and followed him." (Matthew 4:18-20)

Andrew's ministry took him to various parts of the ancient world, where he preached the Gospel and established churches. As an apostle, he was a witness to Jesus' life, death and resurrection, and he shared this experience with others through his preaching and writings. His teachings emphasised the importance of faith, humility and selflessness.

Andrew's missionary work has earned him the respect and title of patron saint in many places, including modern-day Greece, Turkey, Russia, and parts of Eastern Europe. While we often associate him as the patron saint of Scotland, St Andrew is also the patron saint of Barbados, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, Patras in Greece, the Spanish island of Tenerife, the Chamoson municipality of Switzerland, the

Italian cities of Pienza and Amalfi, Esqueira in Portugal, Luqa in Malta, and Parañaque in the Philippines.

The X-shaped cross, also known as the Saint Andrew's Cross or Saltire, is a symbol associated with Andrew's martyrdom. According to tradition, Andrew was crucified on an X-shaped cross in Patras, Greece, where he had preached to the people until his death.

As a result of his obedience in heeding Jesus' call to spread the Gospel, Andrew's impact on Christians is widespread. The Feast of Saint Andrew's is celebrated across the world on 30 November. A number of denominations, particularly the Eastern Orthodox Church, honours Saint Andrew as Protokletos, or the first to be called among the apostles. By tradition, Andrew is the founder and patron saint of the Church of Byzantium, which is today the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. Just as the Roman Catholic Pope is seen as the successor of Peter, the Archbishop of Constantinople is regarded as the successor of Andrew, and leader to the world's 300 million Orthodox Christians.

In Singapore, St Andrew's Cathedral is named in his honour and in recognition of the Scottish community in Singapore who contributed generously to the building fund. Various other institutions within the Anglican community have also adopted this name, such as the St. Andrew's group of schools, St. Andrew's Mission Hospital and St. Andrew's Nursing Home.

The life and teachings of Andrew demonstrates the power of faithfulness, evangelism and humility, and stands as a testament and inspiration to Christians around the world, of what one good and faithful servant of Christ can do. ☒

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The X-shaped cross,  
also known as the Saint  
Andrew's Cross or Saltire,  
is a symbol associated with  
Andrew's martyrdom.

•

The Saint Andrew's cross on the Warden's staff.





# St Andrew's Cathedral: A Witness to Singapore's History

• Sharon Lim & Ian Khoo •

**1819**

Sir Stamford Raffles establishes a British trading post, laying the foundation for modern Singapore.

**1822**

In the Jackson Plan of 1822, Singapore's first urban planning blueprint, Raffles allocates land for an Anglican church.

**1834**

Revd Fred J. Darrah, Chaplain for the Mission Chapel, organises a meeting to raise funds for the construction of a church. With substantial financial contributions from the Scottish community, the church erected on land allocated by Raffles is named St Andrew, in honour of the patron saint of Scotland.

**1835**

The church's first foundation stone is laid, and construction of the building begins. It is designed by Singapore's pioneer colonial architect George D. Coleman in the neo-classical style.

**1837**

The church's first Divine Service is conducted by its inaugural chaplain, Revd Edmund White. It is consecrated a year later by Bishop Daniel Wilson of Calcutta.

**1852**

Church services are discontinued after the spire is struck twice by lightning.

**1855**

After suffering structural damage from the lightning strikes, the church is deemed unsafe and plans for a new building are approved.

Letters patent issued by Queen Victoria renamed the area's pastoral jurisdiction as the Diocese of Labuan and Sarawak, which includes Singapore within its extensive territory.

**1856**

The foundation stone for the present building is laid. The new church is designed by Colonel Ronald MacPherson in neo-Gothic architectural style and built using Indian convict labour.

**1862**

The building is consecrated by the Bishop of Calcutta, George Edward Lynch Cotton.

**1867**

The Straits Settlements are transferred from the British East India Company to the British Crown, turning Singapore into a Crown Colony under direct British rule.

**1909**

The Diocese of Singapore is established, separating it from Labuan and Sarawak, with St Andrew's Cathedral as its seat. It covers the Straits Settlements, Federated Malay States, Java, and Siam (Thailand).

**1915**

During World War I, 850 Indian soldiers launch an armed uprising – the Sepoy Mutiny – against the British. Four memorial plaques at the Cathedral commemorate the event.

**1941**

World War II comes to Malaya. Singapore is attacked by Japanese bombers on 8 December 1941.

**1942**

During the Battle for Singapore, the Cathedral is repurposed as an emergency hospital where care is provided to wounded troops and civilians.

**1942-1945**

After the British surrender on 15 February 1942, Singapore comes under Japanese rule and is renamed Syonan-to ("Light of the South"). The Cathedral remains a place of solace and unity for the local Christian community.





1945

Japanese forces surrender in Singapore, marking the end of the Japanese Occupation and return of British rule.

1946

Singapore becomes a separate Crown Colony following the dissolution of the Straits Settlements.

1951

As part of the Malayanisation process, locals are trained to replace colonial government officials. A similar shift is seen in the Anglican church, with local priests being ordained to replace the colonial clergy.

1952

The Cathedral's North Transept Hall is completed. It is also known as the War Memorial Hall and houses the Graham White Library.

1954

The Mandarin Congregation is established, becoming the first Mandarin-language service in the Diocese of Singapore.

1959

Singapore achieves self-governance from Britain.

1963

Singapore officially joins the Federation of Malaysia on 16 September, merging with Malaya, Sarawak, and North Borneo (Sabah).

1965

Singapore separates from Malaysia to become an independent and sovereign state on 9 August.

1966

Bishop Chiu Ban It is consecrated on 1 November, becoming the first Asian Bishop of Singapore.

1970

Following the separation of Malaysia and Singapore, the Diocese is divided into the Diocese of West Malaysia and Singapore. The latter continues to have jurisdiction over Singapore, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and Indonesia.

1973

St Andrew's Cathedral is gazetted as a national monument.

1983

The Cathedral's South Transept Hall is completed.

1996

The Church of the Province of South East Asia is formed, uniting the dioceses of Singapore, West Malaysia, Kuching, and Sabah. Bishop Moses Tay becomes its first Archbishop.

2005

The Cathedral New Sanctuary is completed, providing a new sanctuary and additional facilities to accommodate the growing congregation.

2019

The Cathedral is awarded a grant from the National Monuments Fund for its first major refurbishment.

2023

After over two years of restoration, the Cathedral reopens and is dedicated on Christmas Eve.

2025

As Singapore marks 60 years of independence, the Cathedral celebrates the 163<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of its consecration.

*Through every era and event in history, God's presence has been  
the Cathedral's constant strength and guide.  
To God be the glory; may His blessings continue to shine upon Singapore.*





# Witness in the City:

## St Andrew's Cathedral and the Singapore Story

• Alvin Francis Tan and Sharon Lim •

In 1960, shortly after Singapore attained full internal self-government with a new constitution, the Dean of St Andrew's Cathedral, the Very Revd Edward Oscar Sheild, wrote in the church's annual report that there was an "overnight change" in the relationship between the Anglican Church and the government. However, he also stressed: "Even so, this has meant no drastic change... whether within the colonial system, (the church) has always aimed at identifying itself with the local community to become the church of the local people."<sup>1</sup>

As Singapore celebrates SG60 in August 2025, this statement succinctly captures the

efforts of St Andrew's Cathedral to renew, revitalise and transform itself from a privileged colonial institution into a church for Singapore over the past 60 years.

### Early Beginnings: A Colonial Church

It all began when Anglicanism arrived in Singapore in 1826, with the British East India Company appointing Revd Robert Burns as a chaplain to tend to the spiritual needs of the British community here.<sup>2</sup> This came two years after the London Missionary Society built a chapel at the corner of Bras Basah Road and North Bridge Road that served as a place of

View of the Padang from the waterfront, showing St Andrew's Cathedral and Fort Canning Hill, 1837.





worship for Anglicans and other Protestants.

Just over 10 years later, in 1837, the first Anglican church building was erected on a site designated by Sir Stamford Raffles. Called St Andrew's Church, it hosted its first service on 18 June 1837, and was consecrated a year later by the Right Revd Daniel Wilson, the Bishop of Calcutta. Lightning struck this building twice in 1845 and 1849, however, and it had to be closed in 1852 after being declared structurally unsafe.<sup>3</sup> A new building – the present Cathedral – was subsequently completed in 1861 at the cost of 47,000 rupees.<sup>4</sup>

Designed by Colonel Ronald MacPherson of the Public Works Department, the building

was seen through to completion by Major John McNair, who supervised an Indian convict workforce to build the Cathedral.<sup>5</sup> It was elevated to the status of a cathedral church in 1870. A peal of eight bells named after the apostles – Saint Peter, Saint James, Saint John, Saint Andrew, Saint Matthew, Saint Thomas, Saint Bartholomew and Saint Paul – was presented to the Cathedral in 1889 by the family of Captain J.S.H. Fraser from the Honourable East India Company Service.<sup>6</sup> In 1909, the Cathedral became the "mother church" for the Diocese of Singapore when it was established as an independent diocese<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"Church and the Govt: Dean on 'overnight change', *Straits Times*, 25 April 1960, 7.

<sup>2</sup>"Anglican Diocese of Singapore," Singapore Infopedia, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://www.nlb.gov.sg/main/article-detail?cmsuuiid=9f6447a7-64c0-495b-be7b-013ebc0e8f35>.

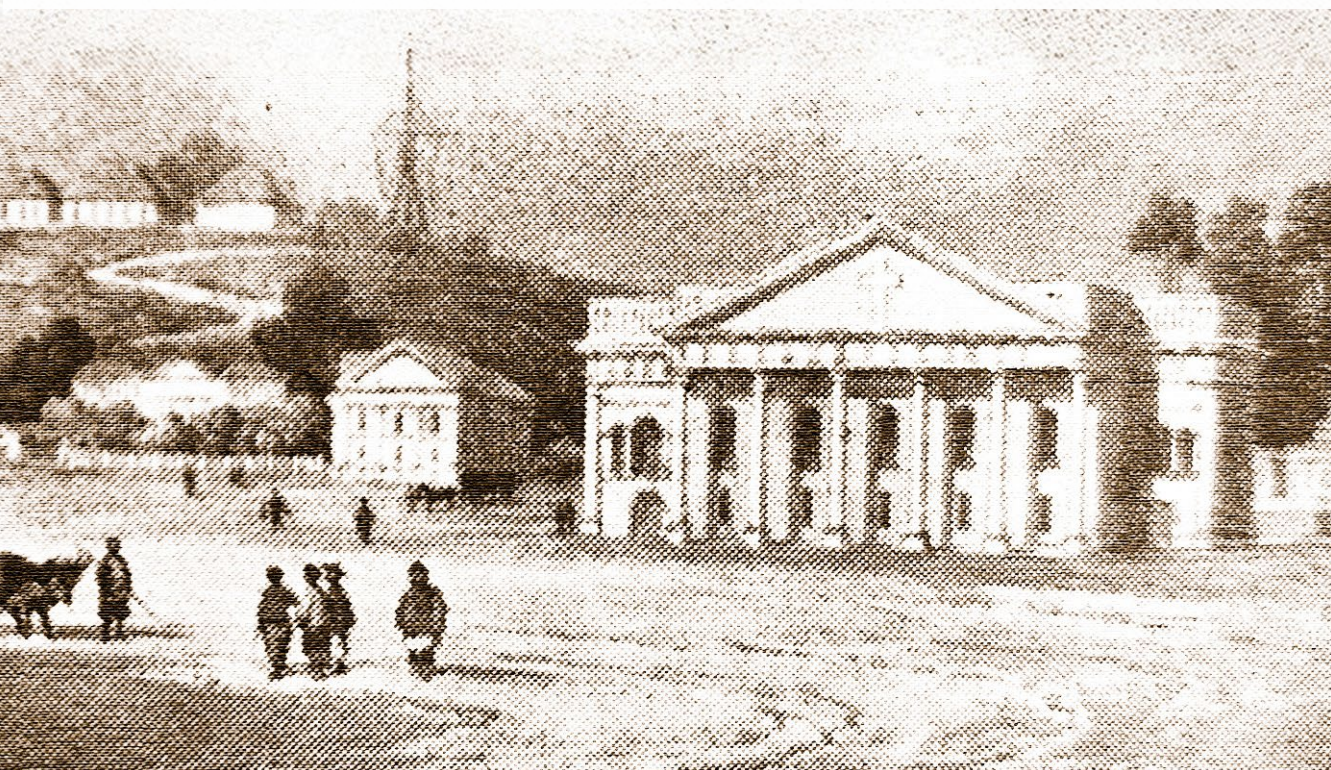
<sup>3</sup>"Saint Andrew's Cathedral," Roots, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://www.roots.gov.sg/places/places-landing/Places/national-monuments/saint-andrews-cathedral>.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid; Melody Zaccheus, *Monumental Treasures: Singapore's Heritage Icons* (Singapore: Straits Times Press, 2018), 101.

<sup>5</sup>"St. Andrew's Cathedral" Singapore Infopedia, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://www.nlb.gov.sg/main/article-detail?cmsuuiid=69d540ff-b1a1-4a62-8a5a-800404326ace>. Indian convict labour was widely used in constructing public buildings during that era.

<sup>6</sup>"Saint Andrews's Cathedral: Bells of Change," Roots, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://www.roots.gov.sg/stories-landing/stories/St-Andrews-Cathedral/Bells-of-Change>.

<sup>7</sup>"Anglican Diocese of Singapore," Singapore Infopedia, 30 July 2025, <https://www.nlb.gov.sg/main/article-detail?cmsuuiid=9f6447a7-64c0-495b-be7b-013ebc0e8f35>







Altar at St. Andrew's Cathedral, 1920s

Designed in English Gothic style and measuring 68.58 metres long and 35.5 metres wide, St Andrew's Cathedral was laid out in the shape of a Latin cross, with a nave running from north to south, crossed by a transept.<sup>8</sup> For many years, it was believed that Madras chunam, a building material comprising lime, egg white, and coconut husk-infused water, was used; recent research by architectural historian Dr Yeo Kang Shua, however, showed that if Madras chunam was used at all, it was done so in very limited quantities due to a limited budget.<sup>9</sup>

### The Cathedral in War

All it took was 70 days. After the first bombs fell on Singapore on 8 December 1941, British and Commonwealth forces began a long retreat down the length of the Malayan peninsular, finally surrendering Singapore on 15 February 1942.

In the days just before that, Bishop John Leonard Wilson gave permission for a casualty clearance station to be set up in the Cathedral. As the Japanese closed in on the city, Revd John Hayter vividly described the scene inside the Cathedral on 14 February 1942, of "wounded lying in the nave and aisles (now emptied of their furnishings), doctors and orderlies moving about their work, the stillness broken only by the tread of boots on the stone paving and the low murmur of voices".<sup>10</sup> Shortly after learning of the surrender, Bishop Wilson celebrated the last Evensong before the Japanese took over, administering Holy Communion.<sup>11</sup>

With the help of an Anglican Japanese military officer, Lieutenant Andrew Tokuji Ogawa, Bishop Wilson, Revd Sorby Adams and Revd Hayter were allowed out on parole in the early days of the Occupation. They were, however, eventually interned on 29 March 1943.<sup>12</sup> In their absence, the Asian clergy stepped up and took on the task of ministering to the flock: Revd D.D. Chelliah, who was designated by Bishop Wilson as the Acting Dean of the Cathedral, together with Revd Yeh Hua Fen, Revd Yip Cho Sang, Revd P.S. Baboo, Revd Dong Bing Seng and Revd John T.N. Handy, worked to keep the church going in those difficult years.<sup>13</sup>

Church services continued to be held regularly during this period, and even in such trying times, the Cathedral did not forget the

<sup>8</sup>"St. Andrew's Cathedral" Singapore Infopedia, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://www.nlb.gov.sg/main/article-detail?cmsuuiid=69d540ff-b1a1-4a62-8a5a-800404326ace>.

<sup>9</sup>"St Andrew's Cathedral and the Mystery of Madras Chunam," BiblioAsia, 1 January 2021, <https://biblioasia.nlb.gov.sg/vol-16/issue-4/jan-mar-2021/st-andrew-cathedral/>. Dr Yeo found no physical evidence of protein (egg white) or fibre (coconut husk) – a key component of Madras chunam – in numerous plaster samples taken from various locations in the Cathedral.

<sup>10</sup>Joseph Thambiah, *The History of Anglicanism in Singapore 1819 – 2019* (Singapore: Joseph Thambiah, 2019), 150.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, 151.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, 154; Constance Mary Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2009), 196

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, 172, 216 – 217.



Source: Australian War Memorial, APT26531, Griffin, Murray

St Andrew's Cathedral as Emergency Hospital, February 1942



needs of the wider Christian community. In May 1945, the *Syonan Shimbun* reported that the Cathedral – together with St Matthew's, the Foochow and Hokkien congregations of Holy Trinity Church and the Church of the True Light – contributed \$857.40 to the Bahau Fund to support a farming settlement in Bahau in the Malayan state of Negeri Sembilan. It was established by the Japanese as a resettlement area for Eurasian, Chinese Catholics and a small group of Protestant European families. Many residents had died there due to poor living conditions and disease outbreaks.<sup>14</sup>

In July 1944, as the tide began to turn against the Japanese, the Cathedral itself became an agricultural site of sorts, when its grounds were dug up to grow vegetables under a "Grow More Food" campaign. Though desperately positively couched by the *Syonan Shimbun* as a positive move, it was beyond the shadow of a doubt clear that the days of the Japanese were numbered.<sup>15</sup>

### From Colony to Nation

Following the Japanese surrender in September 1945, the British returned to a colony scarred by occupation and eager for change. Driven by a global impetus towards decolonisation and local momentum of ideological mass politics, Singapore went from being a Crown Colony to an independent, sovereign nation-state in the space of two decades. For the Cathedral, these rapid changes meant that it had to break new ground to keep up with the times.

As early as 1946, the British government



Bishop Henry Baines and his wife, Elizabeth.

Source: <http://roxborogh.com/Biographies/bishopbaines.htm>

outlined its position that if its colonies were to attain self-government, then their public services would have to be staffed by local people. Though little concrete action was taken in Singapore aside from the establishment of a Public Service Commission in 1951, the same cannot be said about the church.<sup>16</sup> Bishop Henry Wolfe Baines, who took office in 1949, recognised that the clergy had to be indigenised. This realisation was sparked by several factors – the salutary work of the Asian clergy during the Japanese Occupation, the growing sense that the church had to become more multiracial and more Malayan, and the political reality of decolonisation. In this light, two significant appointments were made – Revd Roland Koh as Assistant Diocesan Bishop in 1957, and Canon D.D. Chelliah as

<sup>14</sup>"Bahau Fund," *Shonan Times (Syonan Shimbun)*, 2 May 1945, Page 2; "Bahau settlement," Singapore Infopedia, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://www.nlb.gov.sg/main/article-detail?cmsuuiid=c38cb04c-578e-4264-b714-e2686270b84a>.

<sup>15</sup>"Food growing spreads to cathedral compound," *Shonan Shimbun*, 8 July 1944, 2.

<sup>16</sup>Kevin Y. L. Tan, *Marshall of Singapore/Singapore: A Biography* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2008)e, 315 – 316. See also:



Archdeacon of Singapore in 1958.<sup>17</sup> Both were the first Asians to hold high ecclesiastical office in Diocesan history.

To serve the spiritual needs of the Chinese community in Singapore, a Mandarin worship service was also introduced. With support from Bishop Baines, the first Mandarin worship service – the first of its kind – was held on 9 May 1954 in the Cathedral's North Transept Memorial Hall.<sup>18</sup> Over time, this modest gathering grew into the Mandarin congregation, which in turn planted the seeds for similar congregations in Anglican churches across the island. Within two years of its founding, the fledgling congregation partnered four Chinese parishes – St Matthew's, Holy Trinity, True Light and Good Shepherd – to establish the Anglican High School in 1956. At



The Anglican High School at Upper Changi Road was officially opened and dedicated by the Bishop of Singapore on 25 January 1960.

Source: The Straits Times © SPH Media Limited. Permission required for reproduction.

Puan Noor Aishah, wife of Yang Di-Pertuan Negara Yusof Ishak attending a Christmas Party at Cathedral, 1964



the time, Anglican High School was the first Anglican mission school to formally use English and Chinese as its medium of instruction.<sup>19</sup>

When the Cathedral celebrated its centenary in 1962, it hosted an open-air Chinese dinner for 1,650 guests on its grounds. The Dean, The Very Revd Edward Oscar Sheild remarked that, "I prefer to describe it as a further development of a local church doing things the local way."<sup>20</sup> Grace was said in the four official languages – Malay, Mandarin, Tamil and English, as was Bishop Kenneth Sansbury's blessing translated over the public address system. These simple gestures captured Singapore's multicultural and multiracial make-up – and the gradual shedding of the Cathedral's identity as a colonial church.

Most of the diners were Chinese, with

Source: Ministry of Information and Arts Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore.

<sup>17</sup>"Assistant Bishop Of Singapore," *Singapore Free Press*, 20 March 1958, 7; "Rev. Koh is appointed to senior church post," *Straits Times*, 20 March 1958, 7; "Canon Chelliah Named New Archdeacon," *Straits Times*, 15 December 1957, 4; "Asian Asst. Bishop?" *Straits Times*, 12 March 1956

<sup>18</sup>*The History of Anglicanism in Singapore 1819 – 2019*, 263.

<sup>19</sup>Write-up submitted by Mandarin Congregation. See also "First Anglican Chinese school," *Straits Times*, 26 January 1960, 14; "New school is opened," *Straits Times*, 10 January 1956, 5; "Big, Happy School, Says Archdeacon," *Singapore Free Press*, 10 January 1956, 3.

<sup>20</sup>"A 100th birthday dinner," *The Straits Times*, 27 January 1962, Page 11.

Tamils being the next largest group, followed by Europeans. At the dinner, Archdeacon Robin Woods, Vicar from 1951 to 1958, concluded, "The passing of European dominance was not just a negative happening, but an occasion for a new partnership of the Asian races for the next 100 years."<sup>21</sup>

## Independence and Indigenisation

Singapore's independence on 9 August 1965 meant that the Cathedral had to renew, revitalise and transform itself. Two years earlier in 1963, Bishop Sansbury had described Singapore as "one of the last outposts of the Anglican Church."<sup>22</sup> He had observed then: "I am sure we must look forward to independence from Canterbury in the same way that the Government (of Malaysia) has become independent."<sup>23</sup> Shortly after the Separation, he described Singapore's independence as "an unexpected shock to us all" in the September 1965 edition of *Courier*. The Cathedral was now, as he presciently observed earlier, an independent church in an independent nation.

Just as Singapore was being pressed to transform itself quickly in order to survive, the Cathedral, too, had to ensure that it remained relevant to Singapore and Singaporeans.

Singapore's Constitution enshrines religious freedom as a fundamental liberty. It states that "everyone has the right to profess and practise his religion and propagate it"<sup>24</sup> – which meant that no religious institution would enjoy any privilege – it meant that the Cathedral had to reset its focus. Beyond further augmenting its



Photo from Anthony Dumper archives.

Anthony Dumper (right) with John Leonard Wilson (center), Bishop of Singapore from 1941 to 1949.

mission as an evangelising church, it also had to place greater emphasis on the works of mercy and reach out to those on the margins of society. But how? Recovering its status as *primus inter pares* —first among equals — among the Christian denominations and religious organisations in Singapore was out of the question. The way ahead lay in self-examination and discernment.

A year later, on 7 August 1966, the Dean of the Cathedral, the Very Revd Anthony Charles Dumper, preached a sermon at the National Day Service that gave a clear-eyed and honest appraisal of the way ahead:

"If we appeal for the cooperation of the secular state then we must see that we are not fossilised institutions just keeping going the rituals of past centuries. The Church does not remain in the past, whether it is a colonial past or a past remembered from the homeland from which we have come. The past prestige, the past associations, the past

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>"Bishop: The last outposts," *Straits Times*, 14 December 1963, 9.

<sup>23</sup>"Bishop: The last outposts," *Straits Times*, 14 December 1963, 9.

<sup>24</sup>Kevin Y. L. Tan and Thio Li Ann, *Constitutional and Administrative Law in Singapore: Cases, Materials and Commentary*, (Singapore: SAL Academy Publishing, 2021), 1033.

traditions of the Church have little meaning for the modern secular state. The Church in Singapore will have to prove itself by its life and witness today."<sup>25</sup>

It was a remarkably sober and humble acknowledgement of the challenges facing the Cathedral. Yet, Dean Dumper clearly articulated the direction. Now, shorn of its privilege which it had in colonial times, what other recourse did the Church have but its moral authority, expressed through its evangelising mission and works of mercy?

In 1969, as Singapore celebrated the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding, the Cathedral held a "150 Years of Singapore Festival". In an article

entitled "The Cathedral in a Secular City" in the festival's souvenir publication, Dean Dumper expounded further on his earlier sermon. Once again, he pulled no punches as he exhorted the flock and reminded them of their mission as Christians:<sup>26</sup> Given its changed status and circumstances, he noted, there was "a risk that the Church would give up the struggle in bewilderment and dismay", turn inwards and withdraw from public life.<sup>27</sup> Challenging the insidiousness of this defeatist mentality, he wrote:

"But a secular city does not mean a godless city...And Christians are as responsible for making the Word of God known to the



Cover of the "150 Years of Singapore Festival" programme book.

<sup>25</sup>Homily by Revd A.C. Dumper at the National Day Service on 7 August 1966.

<sup>26</sup>Very Revd. A.C. Dumper, "The Cathedral in a Secular City," *Souvenir Programme*, 8; see also: "Making of a Nation' Talks," *Straits Times*, 7 July 1969, 4.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, 9.

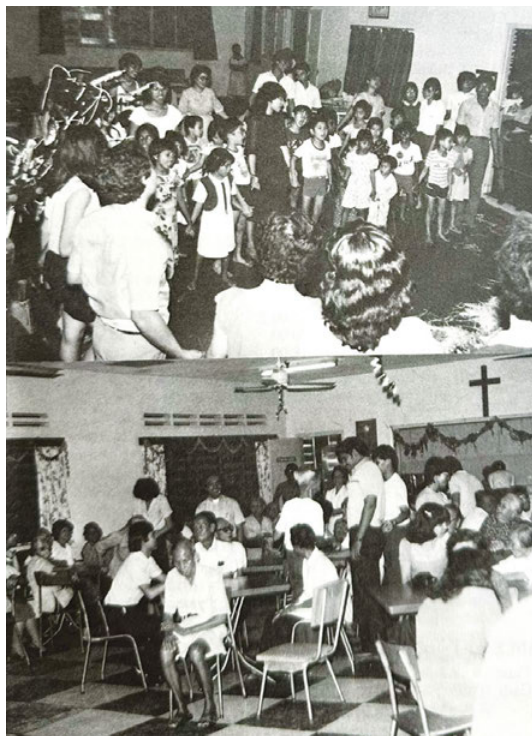


City now, when we are an unprivileged minority, as before, when we were part of the establishment. And it may well be that economic injustice in certain areas of our national life, some aspects of the Abortion Bill, the proposed abolition of juries are of more concern to the Christian Church than whether Good Friday is a public holiday or the Cathedral underground car park is built. The questions we have to ask ourselves must be directed not so much to our own rights and privileges but to the truth and justice and rightness of our social and political actions and policies. For the Christian Church's first and overriding concern is not with buildings, but with people and their relationship to the Truth and Love of God."<sup>28</sup>

Dean Dumper also cautioned against the embrace of what he termed a "social gospel". As a church in a secular city, he said, its activities – whether liturgical worship or community service – served a higher mission: "to present the Gospel of Christ in terms which can be understood in our own day".<sup>29</sup>

Several years later, an anonymous writer "A.A" would pick up this call in a homily published in the Cathedral bulletin. On 15 August 1976, he highlighted "three levers to get us out of our sleepy condition" – theological, eschatological and existential –<sup>30</sup> and reminded congregants:

"Evangelism means going out to where people are... 70% of Singaporeans live in housing estates. As people spread upwards, so should the church. Perhaps your home could become a caring group which will become known in the neighbourhood, and to which needy people will come for refuge and help."<sup>31</sup>



Christmas celebrations at the Golden Harvest Extension Centre at Beach Road

In the Gospel of Saint Mark, Christ sums up our calling as Christians – to love God and to love our neighbour. With Singapore modernising rapidly and the majority of its population now living in new towns and employed in new industries, it was clear that if the church was to renew and revitalise itself, it had to bring the gospel to where the people were. To foster an understanding of what it meant to live in a multi-racial housing estate, the Cathedral ran a series of talks under the theme "You and Your Non-Christian Neighbours" in 1967 that covered the beliefs of other faiths and even communism.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 9 – 10.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 9 – 10.

<sup>30</sup>Church Bulletin, 15 August 1976.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Courier, February 1967.

Later, what began as house churches in the housing estates eventually became “extension centres” and churches in their own right. These in turn planted their own congregations, resulting in a multiplier effect. Following a charismatic revival in the global church in the 1970s, the Cathedral also embarked on a phase of church planting. One of the seeds was Golden Harvest Extension Centre at Beach Road, which opened in 1976 and sprouted the Bedok Extension Centre in 1979.<sup>33</sup> In 1969, the Mandarin Congregation started its Sunday fellowship at Anglican High School and held its first Sunday Service a year later; these early efforts matured in May 1975 when All Saints’ Church was established.<sup>34</sup>

Meanwhile, transformative work was done in community service. The small seedling planted by Dr Charlotte Ferguson-Davie – a dispensary at 14 Bencoolen Street – in October 1913 has since bloomed to provide a comprehensive suite of healthcare and community services, catering to some of Singapore’s most vulnerable groups.<sup>35</sup> One example was St Andrew’s Mission Hospital: Established in 1913 with donations from the Cathedral and other groups, it broke new ground in post-independence Singapore as it moved into unserved and under-served areas. In 1983, it identified the elderly, people with autism and people with mental health issues as the groups it wanted to serve. At a time when public awareness of the needs of these vulnerable groups was low and social



Courtesy of St Andrew's Mission Hospital

Dr Charlotte Ferguson-Davie (seated second from right), the wife of Singapore's first Anglican Bishop.

stigma prevalent, this was a bold and ground-breaking decision.<sup>36</sup> Nine years later, in 1992, it opened St Andrew’s Community Hospital – the first step-down healthcare facility in Singapore – and<sup>37</sup> in 2005, St Andrew’s Autism Centre.<sup>38</sup> Today, the Diocese runs a comprehensive network of community services catering to a diverse range of clients across Singapore.

### The Cathedral as National Monument

The beauty and splendour of a historic Cathedral, and the resulting ability to bear witness, cannot be underestimated. As both a place of worship and the house of God, it is also a work of art that, as Pope Benedict XVI observed at his 2011 General Audience, “is able to manifest and make visible the human need to surpass the visible, it expresses the thirst and quest for the infinite”.<sup>39</sup> More so than

<sup>33</sup>*The History of Anglicanism in Singapore 1819 – 2019*, 250 – 251.

<sup>34</sup> “About”, ASE, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://www.asc.org.sg/about-asc>; “Daughter’ Church” *The Straits Times*, 7 May 1975, 11.

<sup>35</sup> “St. Andrew’s Mission Hospital,” Singapore Infopedia, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://www.nlb.gov.sg/main/article-detail?cmsuuiid=4eeabfc8-128e-492c-a010-30c9919894c9>; “Healthcare and community services,” The Diocese of Singapore, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://anglican.org.sg/community-services/>.

<sup>36</sup> “St. Andrew’s Mission Hospital,” Singapore Infopedia, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://www.nlb.gov.sg/main/article-detail?cmsuuiid=4eeabfc8-128e-492c-a010-30c9919894c9>.

<sup>37</sup> “About us,” Saint Andrew’s Community Hospital, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://www.sach.org.sg/about-us/>.

<sup>38</sup> “About SAAC,” Saint Andrew’s Autism Centre, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://www.saac.org.sg/about/>.

<sup>39</sup> “Art and Prayer, Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience on 31 August 2011,” The Vatican, accessed 30 July 2025, [https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences/2011/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_aud\\_20110831.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences/2011/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20110831.html)





Maintenance of organ pipes in the UK.



Reinstallation of wooden pipes at the gallery upon return from the UK.

ever, it fulfils the human longing for spaces where one can experience truth, beauty and goodness and in so doing, encounter God.

On 6 July 1973, the Cathedral was gazetted a national monument. It was one of the first eight religious buildings in Singapore<sup>40</sup> to be protected under the Preservation of Monuments Act. While this gave the Cathedral building legal protection, it also meant that as a national monument of historical and cultural value, it required regular and careful maintenance to keep it in good condition, both structurally and architecturally.

In January 2022, the Cathedral was closed for a two-year restoration project that uncovered some surprises. Among other things, the \$6 million project revealed hidden features. The fleur-de-lis motifs and fleury that were long thought to be made of plaster because they were painted over in white, for example, were discovered to be solid timber

constructions, clad in waterproof lead sheet. Two bricked-up lancet arch niches were uncovered at the West Porch of the Nave, and bricked-up windows were restored to their full 5.2 metre height. When a false ceiling at the main entrance was removed, a row of lancet tracery motifs was revealed. The background colours of medallions that studded the exterior walls of the North Transept were also restored to their original hue.<sup>41</sup>

With the completion of this meticulous and intricate work, the Cathedral opened its doors on Christmas Eve. Two hours before the service at 10 p.m., the queues started forming, as some 1,400 worshippers – far outnumbering the seating capacity of the Nave of 500, turned up. Many had to be seated in other parts of the Cathedral to watch the service via livestream.<sup>42</sup>

A major project was also undertaken to conserve the Cathedral's musical heritage by

<sup>40</sup> "Govt to keep eight landmarks," 8 July 1973, *Straits Times*, 5; "Preservation of Monuments Board is established," Singapore Infopedia, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://www.nlb.gov.sg/main/article-detail?cmsuuiid=a3be461e-c6a1-4fe0-8740-f7ec29baa8ef#:~:text=National%20monuments%20can%20be%20religious%2C%20civic%2C%20cultural,and%20the%20Cathedral%20of%20the%20Good%20Shepherd.>

<sup>41</sup> "Once hidden, now revealed: 8 architectural gems at St Andrew's Cathedral," *Straits Times*, 10 January 2024, <https://www.straitstimes.com/multimedia/graphics/2024/01/st-andrews-cathedral-singapore/index.html?shell>.

<sup>42</sup> "162-year-old St Andrew's Cathedral completes 2-year restoration works in time for new year," *Straits Times*, 1 January 2024, <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/community/162-year-old-st-andrew-s-cathedral-completes-2-year-restoration-works-in-time-for-new-year>.



Photo by Edwin Arokiam

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at Bicenennial Christmas Carol Service, St Andrew's Cathedral, December 2019.

Leaders from Singapore's major faith groups—including Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism—attended the Carol Service at St Andrew's Cathedral, 2019.



restoring its historic organ pipes, which dated back to 1860. In 2017, around 600 disused pipes from the 1959 Walker organ were sent to the United Kingdom for cleaning, repair and re-voicing. This was completed two years later, with the restored pipes placed in custom-designed oak cases above the South Vestry, visually and acoustically complementing the West gallery organ – and thus restoring the grandeur of pipe organ music to liturgical worship.<sup>43</sup>

Likewise, the peal of eight bells named after the Apostles was also sent to England for refurbishment in December 2018, at a cost of \$600,000. Five new bells were cast, and in June 2019, the entire peal was reinstated in the belfry. This allowed change-ringing – swinging the bells through arcs of

360 degrees or more – to be used, restoring the bells to their full acoustic range. Unlike melodic bell-ringing, change-ringing produces a continuous cascade of sound through ever-changing sequences rather than tunes. Each bell is numbered from treble to tenor, and the number of possible changes depends on how many bells are rung. In the original set of eight, Saint Matthew, the lightest at 227 kg, was the treble bell, while Saint Andrew, the heaviest at 1,420 kg the tenor bell, and to date, these

<sup>43</sup>June Gwee, "Making the Pipes Speak Again," St Andrew's Cathedral, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://cathedral.org.sg/courier-online/single/making-the-pipes-speak-again>; *Organs and Bells: A Thanksgiving and Commissioning Service*, St Andrew's Cathedral, accessed 30 July 2025, [https://sacm.sg/main/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/organ\\_bells-p.pdf](https://sacm.sg/main/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/organ_bells-p.pdf)





Children at the Easter Party, 2025



Residents from Bukit Merah enjoying a Christmas lunch at the Pavilion.

are the only bells in Southeast Asia that are capable of change-ringing.<sup>44</sup>

As a national monument, the Cathedral has hosted numerous civic occasions. When Singapore celebrated the 200th anniversary of its founding in 2019, a Christmas celebration was held on 13 December 2019. It drew 800 people, including leaders of Singapore's major faith groups, and then Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong.<sup>45</sup>

### The Cathedral Today

As Singapore celebrates SG60, St Andrew's Cathedral marks a historic relationship with Singapore. As Canon Terry Wong, its Vicar from 2015 to 2020, noted, the Cathedral had always had "a sense of vision and mission" as a result of its historical roots and strategic location. His vision was for the Cathedral to be "a home in the city, a monument in the

city, a voice in the city and a mother church for the diocese".<sup>46</sup> This inclusive vision recognised that the Cathedral is not only for its congregation, Anglicans or Christians, but for anyone, Singaporean or otherwise, who seeks a green space, a place of solace, or a place to meet people. It is a vision that echoes and reiterates what Dean Dumper wrote in 1969 – "to present the Gospel of Christ in terms which can be understood in our own day".<sup>47</sup>

Today, the Cathedral, true to its Singaporean roots, holds services in English, Mandarin, Hokkien and Cantonese. As the mother church of the Diocese, it oversees 27 parishes and exercises jurisdiction over six missionary deaneries in Southeast Asia.<sup>48</sup> And it continues to remain faithful to its mission in outreach: In 2018, it launched a new ministry to reach out to migrant workers, especially the Myanmar nationals gathering around it, offering them English lessons and inviting

<sup>44</sup>St Andrew's Cathedral: Bells of Change," Roots, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://www.roots.gov.sg/stories-landing/stories/St-Andrews-Cathedral/Bells-of-Change>; "Getting to Know Our Bells," Saint Andrew's Cathedral, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://cathedral.org.sg/courier-online/single/getting-to-know-st-andrews-bell-heritage>.

<sup>45</sup>"Bicentennial Christmas service at St Andrew's Cathedral joined by 800 of different faiths," *Straits Times*, 13 December 2019. <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/bicentennial-christmas-service-at-st-andrews-cathedral-joined-by-800-of-different-faiths>.

<sup>46</sup>"Vicar Writes 9 December 2018," Saint Andrew's Cathedral, accessed on 30 July 2025, <https://cathedral.org.sg/vicar-writes/the-vision-of-the-cathedral>.

<sup>47</sup>Very Revd. A.C. Dumper, "The Cathedral in a Secular City," *Souvenir Programme*, 9 – 10.

<sup>48</sup>"The Diocese of Singapore," The Diocese of Singapore, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://anglican.org.sg/the-diocese-of-singapore/>.

them to the Myanmar worship service.<sup>49</sup> It also launched the "Adopt a Block in Community Outreach" ministry to minister to people living in Bukit Merah.<sup>50</sup>

In 1968, in a guide for members and visitors, titled "The Cathedral is not a museum", Dean Dumper had fittingly observed that "the visitor does not come only to inspect the dead memorials of the past as in a museum, but to witness the work and worship of part of the living Church of Singapore today."<sup>51</sup> Revd Christopher Chan, the Cathedral's current Vicar, too observes that "the Cathedral is

a living organism: a Spirit-filled community of disciples with a mission to share with our nation and the world the life that is ours in Jesus Christ."

Today, the Cathedral is a place and space filled with life, a congregation imbued with an evangelising mission and a heart for Singapore. The sacred, the secular and the community all converge here. It is a witness for the Gospel. This reality, both tangible and intangible, is one that every visitor can experience and perhaps, with the grace of God, embrace it for himself one day. ☩

<sup>49</sup>"Serve With Us," Saint Andrew's Cathedral, accessed 30 July 2025, <https://cathedral.org.sg/serve>

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Very Revd. A. C Dumper, ` (Singapore: St Andrew's Cathedral, 1968), 4.

The congregation stands as the Gospel is read by Revd Canon Terry Wong, Vicar of St Andrew's Cathedral from 2015 to 2020.

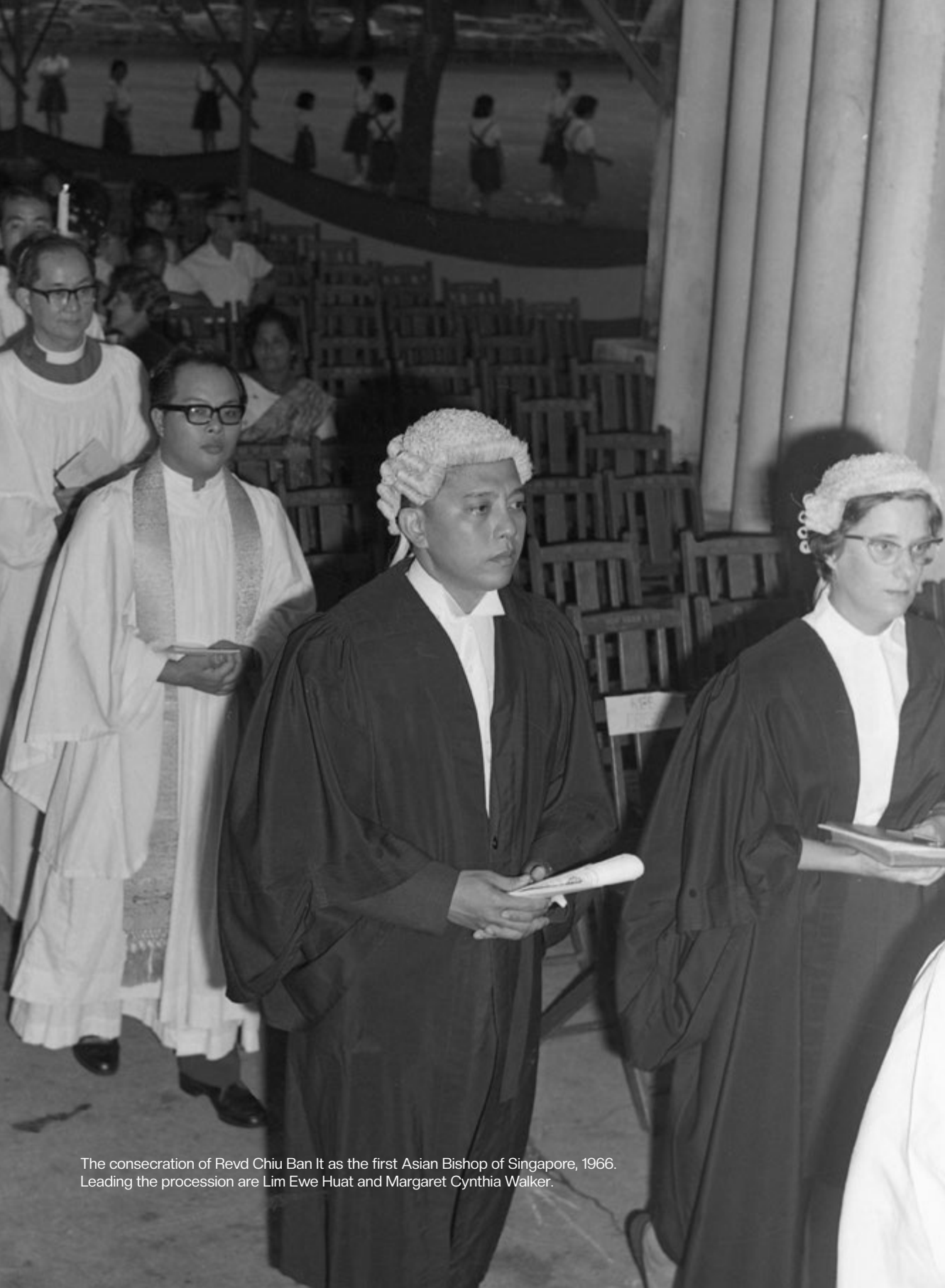




# An Overview of Cathedral in 1960s

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The consecration of Revd Chiu Ban It as the first Asian Bishop of Singapore, 1966.  
Leading the procession are Lim Ewe Huat and Margaret Cynthia Walker.



# The Cathedral in 1965: Coming to terms with Separation

The announcement of Singapore becoming a sovereign state in 1965 came not only as a shock to St Andrew's Cathedral, but also posed several challenges.

• June Gwee •

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### Now look to the future

THE first reaction to the decision of the Malaysian and Singapore Governments to go separate ways is one of great shock and profound regret.

There had been talk of "separate constitutional arrangements" earlier on in the "Malaysian Malaysia" controversy, but it had a distinctly speculative character.

In recent events, there had been nothing to prepare the public for yesterday's tragic news.

Rather, it had been hoped that Tengku Abdul Rahman and Mr. Lee Kuan Yew would succeed in putting an end to public animosity.

Separation was the last thing the public expected.

What has happened is sad beyond words. It was plain from the first that making Malaysia work would be a challenge.

It was still plainer—in 1961-63—that the problems of partnership were to be preferred over the dangers that the realigned separation of Singapore from Malaya would involve for both territories.

### Bitter battle

The right to form Malaysia was won in a bitter and prolonged battle in which the leaders of Singapore and the Federation joined forces against common enemies within and without.

What has happened to the spirit of those early days? The dangers of separation have not vanished. The positive economic advantages of integration have not grown less. It is a thousand pities that the clock has been thus set back.

The split has already been foretold. Singapore became a separate nation at 10 a.m. yesterday. It is too late for appeals to reconsider.

Let there be no mistake, however, that the destinies of Malaysia and Singapore remain intertwined.

The two countries must make up their minds to live as good neighbours, even though they have decided they

### Tengku pledges support for admission to Commonwealth and United Nations



**What it means—at a glance**

- ALL Singapore citizens cease to be Malaysian citizens.
- ALL civil servants, including police and armed forces personnel, courts and judiciary, who became employees of the Malaysian Government on Malaysia Day, come under the Singapore Government once again.
- ALL civil servants employed by Federal departments in Singapore after Malaysia Day become forthwith employees of the Singapore Government.
- ALL properties taken over by the Malaysian Government on Malaysia Day are now properties of the Singapore Government.
- NO tax-over tax.
- BANK of China reverts to status quo.
- NO more Common Market arrangements as provided by Annex J of Malaysian Constitution.
- FULL control by Singapore Government over broadcasting and television.

Unchanged are Singapore's water supply from Johore and maintenance by Central Government of military bases in Singapore.

# Singapore is out

By FELIX ABISHEGANADEN: Kuala Lumpur, Monday

**S**INGAPORE today separated from Malaysia, following an amendment to the Constitution approved unanimously by both Houses of Parliament under a certificate of urgency.

Simultaneously with the passing of the amending Bill—to allow Singapore to leave Malaysia and become an independent and sovereign State—a proclamation to this effect was gazetted.

At a Press conference this evening, Tengku Abdul Rahman announced that Malaysia would sponsor Singapore's admission into the United Nations and as a member of the Commonwealth.

At his own conference in Singapore, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew called on his people to remain firm and calm. His eyes brimming with tears, he declared: "What has happened has happened. Everybody will have a place in Singapore and will continue helping the Malays in competition with Umno."

## Tengku: It was my idea...

**KUALA LUMPUR, Mon.—**

Tengku Abdul Rahman confirmed tonight that it was his idea that Singapore should withdraw from Malaysia and become independent.

Otherwise, he said at a special Press conference, there was "no hope for peace."

He confirmed, too, that not only he and a "few" of his Cabinet colleagues were aware of the separation move.

**INSIDE**

PAGE 10: Tengku's speech to Parliament

PAGE 11: The debate in Parliament

PAGE 12: Mr. Lee Kuan Yew's press conference

PAGE 13: The debate in the Senate

PAGE 15: Stock market reaction

PAGE 20: Independence Bill details

**STOP PRESS**

THE TENGKU: No hope for peace unless Singapore withdraw from Malaysia.

The headline on page 1 of The Straits Times on 10 August 1965

No one would have thought the year 1965 would have been any different at St Andrew's Cathedral. Outside the church compound, the country's leaders were grappling with a strained political relationship between Singapore and Malaysia. Inside, however, life continued at a steady pace as clergy and members kept up with familiar routines and ordinary moments connected by purpose.

That year began with a focus on Cathedral family life, particularly in the areas of Communion, fellowship, Sunday School and building maintenance. The weekly Parish Breakfast, Women's Fellowship, Youth Fellowship, Bible Study and other gatherings continued, albeit with some initiatives and changes. At the first Sunday of the month at the 8am Service, for example, children were encouraged to join their parents for Holy Communion as part of efforts to get families to worship together.

As for the facilities, the search continued for more space to run Sunday School classes and for storage. One particular project was to erect railings to build an enclosure for the Cathedral grounds; this was needed to protect the neglected and dirty compound after care of the grounds was turned over

from the government to the Cathedral Church Council. An appeal for funds was launched the same year, in 1965, and the money was raised in six months.

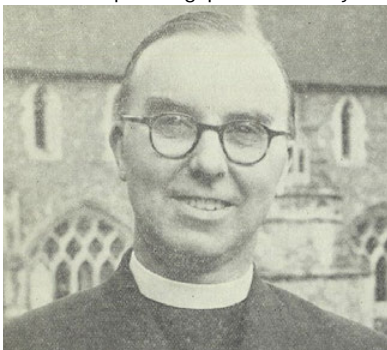
When the railings were completed, an improvement in the appearance of the compound was noticeable, leading to stepped-up efforts to keep the grounds clean, tidy and beautiful. In particular, focus was given to flower decorations. Members were invited to grow differently coloured ixora, hibiscus, crotons, bougainvilleas or suitable shrubs in their own gardens, and contributed these to the Cathedral when the railings were up.

Moves were also made to help church members better understand the Bible and Anglican practices. The Bishop of Singapore and Malaya, the Right Reverend Cyril Kenneth Sansbury, had written a year-long a series of articles in the Courier on "What is the Bible About", in which he explained the background of various gospels and the pastoral problems faced by young churches such as the church in Corinth. These dovetailed with insights given to Cathedral members on the office, function and work of various roles such as those of bishops and parish workers, to help church members gain a deeper appreciation of the work of the church.

At the same time, the Cathedral did not neglect the challenges of life outside its walls. Clergy and members alike had been praying and hoping that the young nation, which had joined the Malayan Federation in 1963 to form Malaysia, would be a place of stability amid the troubled region.

The Bishop of Singapore and Malaya, the Right Reverend Cyril Kenneth Sansbury (1961-1965), said: "Those who have the welfare of Malaysia with its different races at heart must be disquieted at the present times by

The Right Revd Cyril Kenneth Sansbury,  
Lord Bishop of Singapore and Malaya





the signs of tension between the leaders of different groups within the nation. It is not for me to express a judgement on the rights and wrongs of the matter, but as bishop I ask that you will continue your prayers that better understanding may prevail and I call on you to show in your daily contacts courtesy and concern for the equal well-being of all, without regard to race or creed or culture. Now as always, it is God's call to Christians to be his instruments of reconciliation between man and man."

### **Separation shock**

On 9 August 1965, however, Singapore separated from Malaysia, and became a sovereign state that would have its own government and laws, and govern itself independently. The announcement was not only a shock to everyone, but also a source of concern to the Diocese. It was difficult to foresee what the future was for a secular, multi-ethnic, multi-religious independent state. And, as the Diocese of Singapore and Malaya was spread over two separately governed areas, there was the uncertainty of what new challenges would emerge from Singapore's separation from Malaysia.

Amid the sense of unrest hanging over life and livelihoods in Singapore, St Andrew's Cathedral was also forced to confront its role and purpose in the shifting environment and adapt to the new situation. Among the questions it had to ask were: What changes should it brace itself for in the next 10 years? What changes should it initiate to meet the needs of the people of the city-state amid the changes across South-east Asia?

The Very Reverend Anthony Charles Dumper, the Dean of St Andrew's Cathedral

(1964-1970), said: "The answers will only be discovered by the People of God in Singapore as they seek to know God's will through service, prayer and love. This means this is something that involves the whole congregation, and, in fact, every Christian congregation in Singapore. But we have to start where we are. And that means we have to start by thinking about our Cathedral parish and to discover what is God's will for us there in the next few years. Such thought and prayer and study would in itself, be NO SMALL CHANGE."

Still, life at the Cathedral carried on. The Cathedral's Women's Fellowship, for example, continued with their monthly meetings, with members visiting the St Andrew's Orthopaedic Hospital in August and studying the Prayer Book Services in September. A garden party was held in October at Cathedral House to welcome the return of Dean and Mrs Dumper. Sunday School children, adult actors and helpers continued the annual tradition of the Christmas play in December, though with a much larger production than those of previous years.

Family portrait of Dean Dumper, Mrs Dumper and their three children, Nicholas, Hildegard and Michael.





Source: Ministry of Information and Arts Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore.

Band marching past St Andrew's Cathedral towards City Hall during the National Day Parade rehearsal in 1969.

The year 1965 ended with a hope "that the leaders of the nations will find the complete fulfilment of their striving for a just and harmonious order of life only as they bring the glory and honour for their peoples into the City of God."

By August of the next year, 1966, when Singapore celebrated its first National Day at the Padang, St Andrew's Cathedral had gained greater clarity on its role, the responsibilities of Christians, and the place of the church in a secular state.

At the National Day Service on 7 August 1966, Dean Dumper said: "Singapore is a secular state but the judgement of God confronts the secular state as much as the

religious state. That is why on this occasion of the first Independence Day we offer this service of worship — thus recognising the dependence of ourselves and all men on God, and in particular we recognise the social need of those in positions of authority in Singapore, to keep before them a vision of the God from whom all Truth and Love and Justice comes."

As Revd Lim Peng Soon, Priest-in-Charge of St Hilda's Church (1958-1967) had reminded all in an article published in the *Courier* one month after Singapore's separation from Malaysia – "Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain." (Psalm 127:1-2) ☒



# Kenneth Sansbury: the last English Bishop of Singapore

• John Bray •

**K**enneth Sansbury (1905-1993) served as Bishop of Singapore and Malaya from January 1961 until April 1966. He may have expected and even hoped to be the last English bishop. One of the main themes of his time in office was the need to build up a strong indigenous church that could stand on its own feet in a time of rapid political and social change.

Sansbury had not previously served in Southeast Asia but he had solid Anglican and international credentials. From 1932 to 1941 he and his wife Etheldreda had worked in Japan under the auspices of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG), a leading Anglican missionary society that had also been active in Singapore. This was a formative time in his ministry, and all three of his children were born during the period when they were in Japan.

However, it was also a particularly difficult period in the country's political history. His daughter Audrey Sansbury Talks later wrote a moving memoir, *A Tale of Two Japans*, in which she contrasted the warm, loving Japan of home and church life with the harsher, militaristic Japan that was emerging in the run-up to the Second World War. Political tensions made it increasingly difficult for foreign missionaries to work effectively and in 1941 the Sansbury family left for Canada, sailing on the last Japanese passenger ship to make this voyage before the outbreak of the Pacific War.

Photo courtesy of Mrs Audrey Talks  
(Bishop Sansbury's daughter).



Group photograph after ordination service in December 1964.

Front row from left: Revd Adam Ibrahim, Revd Michael Chin, Bishop Sansbury, Revd Pooh Tin Chee, Revd Abel Chung.

Back row from left: Very Revd Tony Dumper (Dean), Canon Sverre Holth (Warden of St Peter's Hall and Asst. Priest at Cathedral Mandarin congregation), Ven D.D. Chelliah (Archdeacon), Revd Peter Leung.

In Canada, Sansbury volunteered to serve as a chaplain with the Royal Canadian Air Force. After the end of the Second World War, he served first as Warden of Lincoln Theological College, then as Warden of St Augustine's College, Canterbury. Founded in the 19th century as a missionary training centre, St Augustine's functioned as an international seminary for the wider Anglican

communion, with many students from India and Africa. The Archbishop of Canterbury may have taken this combined teaching and international experience into account when selecting Sansbury for Singapore.

One of the hallmarks of Sansbury's ministry was the need to build unity both within and between churches. In his enthronement sermon, he urged the congregation to remember the "Communion of Saints to which we belong, both in the wider life of the Universal Church and in the more closely knit life of the diocese". He continued: "We are not to be Chinese Christians, Indian Christians or English Christians, clinging to our separateness, but brothers and sisters in Christ all bringing our distinctive gifts for the building up of the one church in the lands that comprise this diocese".

Sansbury's ministry in Southeast Asia

required incessant travel. His immediate task was to get to know his diocese, and this involved journeys throughout Malaya as well as to Anglican outposts in Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos. In his first year as bishop, for example, he visited Kuala Lumpur for the Diocesan Synod in April, embarked on a three-week tour of churches and congregations in Indonesia in September and early October, and visited Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF) stations in Perak later in the same month.

Within Malaya he was supported by Assistant Diocesan Bishop Roland Koh Peck Chiang (1909-1972) who came from British North Borneo (now Sabah): he had been appointed as a suffragan in the Diocese of Singapore in 1957. From 1961 Koh served as Bishop (Suffragan) in Kuala Lumpur with

Group photograph following a confirmation service at Holy Trinity Church, Hamilton Road. Mrs Sansbury is immediately on the Bishop's right, and then Canon John Lee. To his left is Revd Lai Wen Hwa and then Deaconess Eileen Collier.



Photo courtesy of Mrs Audrey Talks (Bishop Sansbury's daughter)



special responsibility for the archdeaconries of Central and Northern Malaya.

From the beginning of Sansbury's time as bishop, one of his main preoccupations was the possibility of forming an autonomous Province of South East Asia within the Anglican Communion. In the 1950s and early 1960s, several dioceses in African and the West Indies had combined to form their own Anglican provinces. As Sansbury put it, "We have to ask ourselves how long we can continue in what might be called a 'colonial' relationship with Lambeth". Lambeth Palace was the Archbishop of Canterbury's residence in London.

In February 1961, while on the way to Singapore, Sansbury stopped off in then-Burma (now Myanmar) for a meeting of the Council of the Church of Southeast Asia. The council had a broader geographical remit than its name suggested: it included bishops from Burma, Hong Kong, Korea, the Philippines, Rangoon, and Taiwan, as well as Borneo, Singapore and Malaya.

Then and at subsequent annual meetings of the council, one of the main topics discussed was the possibility of setting up an autonomous Anglican province in the region. (This would come true much later, in 1996, when the dioceses of Singapore, Sabah, Sarawak and West Malaysia combined to form the Church of the Province of South East Asia.)

A second preoccupation was the possibility of greater unity between Protestant denominations. Earlier, in 1947, Anglicans and other protestant churches had joined to form the Church of South India, and the question arose whether this could be a precedent for church unity in Singapore and Malaya. In November 1961, Sansbury travelled to South India to make contact with the churches there before moving on the Third Assembly of the



Bishop Sansbury and the St Andrew's Cathedral choir, Easter Day 1962. The choir master Vivian Kwek is sitting on his left together with Revd Leslie Drage (Precentor). The Dean, Very Revd E.O. Sheild is on the Bishop's right. Revd Joseph Mathew is standing behind him, holding the crozier. The choir's robes – including the ladies' hats – were imported from England but later discarded because they were too warm for Singapore's tropical climate.

World Council of Churches in New Delhi, the first such event to take place in Asia.

As it happened, similar changes did not take place in Singapore, where the most important interdenominational project has been the founding of the Trinity Theological College in 1948. Unlike in South and later North India, churches here have continued to retain separate institutional identities rather than moving towards full organic unity.

**One of the hallmarks of Sansbury's ministry was the need to build unity both within and between churches. In his enthronement sermon, he urged the congregation to remember the "Communion of Saints to which we belong, both in the wider life of the Universal Church and in the more closely knit life of the diocese".**

Within the diocese and as part of his regular pastoral commitments, Sansbury put particular emphasis on the training of both local clergy and laypeople. Affirming the church's vocation "to demonstrate that love and bring the redeeming power of Christ into the life of the community in which it is set", he noted: "If that is to be done, then in large measure it must be through a dedicated laity, whose daily work lies in the secular world. Laymen and women in the professions, in offices and factories, in hospitals and schools and shops, are the Church in these places".

In addition to his regular sermons, Sansbury's contributions towards greater lay education included a series of articles summarising Anglican teaching on the various books of the Bible. The articles were published monthly in *The Courier* throughout 1965.

In early 1966, the news came that Sansbury had been appointed General Secretary of the British Council of Churches, and he left Singapore on 30 April. Back in the UK, Sansbury continued to work on the issues that had preoccupied him in Singapore. His publications included the book *Unity, Peace and Concord*, which discussed the prospects

for greater ecumenical cooperation. A second book tackled the sensitive topic of *Combating Racism*. In 1973, he and his wife retired to Norwich, where he continued to support the staff of the city's cathedral.

In this *Courier* special edition to mark 60 years of Singapore's independence, it is perhaps appropriate to conclude with words that Sansbury wrote in a "Bishop's Letter" on the day following Singapore's separation from Malaysia in 1965. He affirmed that "those who are citizens of either territory have a responsible Christian duty of loyalty 'in all things lawful and honest' to the Government of their country. Where there are wrongs, they have a responsibility as citizens to use all democratic means to put them right".

He went on to make a wider point about Christians' responsibility to serve as peacemakers: "All of us as Christians who have been reconciled to God through Jesus Christ have a duty to be reconcilers when people are at variance, not ignoring the rights and wrongs of any situation, but helping those concerned to restore right relationships".

Throughout his ministry Bishop Sansbury lived by the values that he affirmed. ☒



# CHIU BAN IT

# The First Asian Bishop of Singapore

• Keith Leong •

**W**hen the first Asian Bishop of Singapore was consecrated in November 1966, it occurred at a time of great social, political, and religious change. The city-state had recently transitioned from colonial rule to self-governance, then independence, and the fledgling country was still coming to terms with significant changes in work, education and community relations.

According to a 2014 article in Anglican Perspectives in Asia quoting Chiu Ban It's recounting of his experience, under colonial rule the Bishop of Singapore was ranked next to the Governor of Singapore, and according to protocol would have been considered a VIP. Unfortunately, Singapore had become independent by the time he took over as Bishop. "My predecessors flew a little flag on their car," he recalled, "but I wasn't allowed that privilege at all."



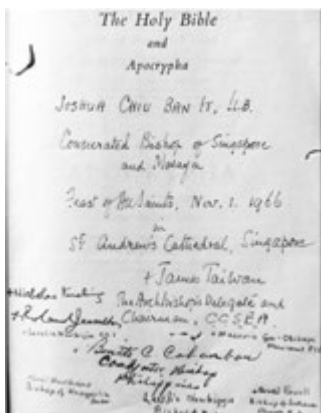
The Rt Revd Joshua Chiu Ban It, Bishop of Singapore at his consecration in 1966.

While this did not worry him too much, the loss of status was a challenge for the Church, especially as just several years later, in 1970, the dioceses of West Malaysia and Singapore would also separate, leaving the new Bishop with even less support in these uncertain times.

Yet, Bishop Chiu would persist and lead the Anglican Church in Singapore through transition and renewal.

## Promising Start

When Chiu left Penang for further studies on a Hutching's Scholarship, it was to study law at King's College, London. He was called to the Bar in 1941, following his graduation. Chiu subsequently took up the offer to serve as International Secretary of the Student Christian Movement of Great Britain and Ireland, a para-church organisation, from 1941 to 1943.



Bishop Chiu Ban It's Consecration Bible

This experience led him on the path to full-time ministry. He pursued theological studies at Westcott House, Cambridge, after which he was ordained in 1945 at Birmingham, becoming the first Malayan-born person to do so. He then served his curacy at St Francis in Bournville.

In 1947, Chiu returned to Penang to help his uncle re-establish his legal practice after the Japanese Occupation. Three years later, in 1950, he was appointed acting Vicar of Penang, and later that same year, moved to Singapore to serve as an assistant priest at St Andrew's Cathedral (SAC).

Over the next decade, he would take on many more appointments, including Priest-in-charge of St Hilda's in Katong; Vicar of Selangor; Diocesan Registrar; Honorary Canon of SAC; Home Secretary for the Anglican Church in Australia; and Secretariat for the Service of Laymen Abroad, World Council of Churches in Geneva. In 1965, he was also elected a Fellow of St. Augustine's

College, Canterbury, and lectured on the Ecumenical Movement.

He returned to Singapore for his consecration as Bishop of Singapore in November 1966, at the age of 48.

### **Challenging Times**

Bishop Chiu's appointment came at a time of uncertainty and transition. The Diocese of Singapore and Malaya was about to be separated, as was Church and State in the fledgling nation of Singapore as the latter moved on from its colonial past. Bishop Chiu had to lead the Anglican Church in a new multi-ethnic and political environment.

While his Chinese ethnicity and background attracted some to him, Bishop Chiu soon found his ecumenical and social justice-oriented beliefs at odds with those of the conservative community he was tasked with shepherding. Long-established privileges and resources that were accorded the Church were also

Bishop Chiu Ban It hosts Queen Elizabeth II at St Andrew's Cathedral during her 1972 State Visit to Singapore.







Staff meeting of clergy from Cathedral and daughter churches.

rapidly evaporating as the Church of England's relationship with international missionary organisations was overhauled following Singapore's independence.

Despite these challenges, Bishop Chiu remained sanguine: "It was extremely good for us that our standing, as far as the country was concerned, now depended, not on the status of the church in England, but on who we were and what we were doing."

One of Bishop Chiu's first moves was to cultivate biblical literacy. Having observed that many local believers, while faithful, were not biblically literate nor keen to evangelise, he initiated a five-year "Know Your Scriptures" campaign. After the church leadership committed this campaign to prayer for two years, Bishop Chiu brought in overseas experts to plan and run the Bible study programme over the following three years.

The result, however, was disappointing. A discouraged Bishop Chiu recalled: "After all that effort, we said, 'Now you have been educated in the Bible, taught how to read the Bible, and how to use it in evangelism, go out and evangelise'. Nobody moved. So, it was a failure."

As Bishop Chiu observed, there appeared to be no change to the spiritual condition

of his parishioners. There was also little the leadership could do, as the diocese had insufficient financial resources and clergy to serve the parishes around Singapore.

Bishop Chiu's attempts to pursue social justice, which he was passionate about because of his theological education in England, were equally disappointing.

Having served as vice and acting chairman for the social justice-oriented East Asia Christian Conference from 1968 to 1973, he had supported movements such as the Singapore Industrial Mission (SIM), which was aimed at

Bishop Chiu shares a game of Chinese checkers with a young patient at St Andrew's Mission Hospital for Children, November 1969.



Source: The Straits Times © SPH Media Limited. Permission required for reproduction.

providing social justice for workers. When national concerns about such movements resulted in SIM being closed in 1972, however, Bishop Chiu did not take the closure well. He saw it as yet another failed attempt to serve God.

## **Charismatic Renewal**

It was at this low point that Bishop Chiu encountered charismatic renewal while attending a conference in Thailand. As he reflected on his demoralising experiences in a hotel room, Bishop Chiu was filled with overwhelming joy and began praising God in English, Chinese, Malay and an unknown language.

Bishop Chiu asked the Lord, "Please, Lord, will you send me at least two or three people who might help me?" Soon after that, a young man approached him and told him, "Bishop, I have got two books, which I would like to lend to you. One is 'Revival in Indonesia'... The second book is 'Nine o'clock in the Morning' by Dennis J. Bennett".

"I read the book and finished it just before lunch on the Feast of the Epiphany. And I decided that I would go to bed, to have a siesta." Before he fell asleep, he prayed again, "Lord, if you can fill Dennis Bennett with your Holy Spirit, can you please do the same for me?"

"When I woke up from my siesta I knew something had happened. Instead of being depressed right down at the bottom, as I was, because of what was happening in the diocese and the churches around us, I suddenly felt a joy... Previous to that, God was so far away."

Bishop Chiu's experience came at a time when a charismatic renewal movement was sweeping through Asia. It saw the Holy Spirit making His presence and activity felt as

people spoke in tongues, prayed for healing, and worshipped enthusiastically.

The encounter empowered Bishop Chiu to return to lead the diocese in a charismatic direction, which saw services at the Cathedral – which had been empty for a long time – suddenly filled with people, especially at charismatic healing services.

As Bishop Chiu – a former chaplain at Selly Oak Hospital – laid hands on the sick coming forward to the altar rail in the Nave, he noted: "Whenever I try to offer myself [and] ask if I can pray with people, [it] doesn't [always] work. But when people come up, amazing things happen. I am no longer ever surprised, I am only amazed, at what God does and what He can do."

While the charismatic direction attracted some criticism and opposition from some parts of the church and Christian community, Bishop Chiu's support for the movement helped it grow. During this period, the number of Protestant Christians in Singapore increased rapidly, from 2 to 10 percent of the population, with church historian Edward Jarvis attributing much of the growth to conversions in charismatic circles.

The fragile and numerically insignificant community of Anglicans in Singapore and Asia also grew dramatically during this time. Under Bishop Chiu's leadership, the diocese became a hub for charismatic renewal in Asia. More than half of present-day Anglican churches owe their beginning to charismatic renewal. Bishop Chiu's encounter and support for charismatic renewal came at the right time, when the church was struggling with spiritual stagnation and diminished financial support.

In August 1982, after serving as the Bishop of Singapore for 16 years, Bishop Chiu stepped down and returned to retire in England with his wife, Wendy. ☒



# Devasahayam David Chelliah

## The First Asian Archdeacon of Singapore

• Lucilla Teoh •

The Japanese Occupation during World War II marked a watershed moment for the Anglican Church in Singapore, as Asian clergy emerged as resilient leaders capable of shepherding their congregations through the tumultuous war years.

The late 1950s heralded a transformative period for the Anglican Church in Singapore, marked by two groundbreaking appointments that reflected the growing strength of indigenous leadership. On 25 January 1958, D.D. Chelliah was installed as the Diocese of Singapore's first Asian Archdeacon, breaking new ground in church leadership. This was followed by another historic moment in June 1958, when Revd Roland Koh, who had served as Vicar of St Mary's Church in Kuala Lumpur, was consecrated as Assistant Diocesan Bishop.

Under Chelliah's guidance, the Diocese embarked on ambitious initiatives to cultivate local clergy leadership and establish new churches. These ecclesiastical developments mirrored the broader political landscape, as Singapore itself was taking decisive steps towards self-governance, gradually emerging from the shadow of British colonial administration.

Education was the first calling of the man who would become Singapore's first Asian Archdeacon. Born in 1894 in Thirunelveli, South India, Devasahayam David Chelliah – later



Yusuf Ishak Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

David Marshall, D.D. Chelliah and Francis Thomas (Principal of St Andrew's Secondary School) posing for a photograph at the Istana after receiving a letter of appointment as a member of the newly-established Presidential Council, 1970.



Leaena Tambyah Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

D.D. Chelliah (third from left) attending the Inter-Religious Organisation Conference as a delegate, c. 1960s.

known simply as "D.D." – grew up in a family dedicated to service. The fifth of nine children, he was raised by his father, S. Devasahayam, an Anglican Church catechist, and his mother Ponnammal, who worked as a teacher.

Following in his mother's footsteps, Chelliah embarked on a teaching career that would take him across the Malayan Peninsula. In 1911, at just seventeen, he accepted the position of headmaster at St George's Tamil Mission School in Penang, Malaya. His pursuit of academic excellence led him to the University of London, where he earned a Bachelor's degree in mathematics in 1923, followed by a postgraduate diploma in teaching the subsequent year.

Returning to Malaya, Chelliah continued his educational mission, eventually joining the prestigious Anglo-Chinese School in Penang where he rose to become headmaster in 1935. His journey then brought him to Singapore in 1940, where he assumed leadership of the Upper School at St Andrew's School, marking another significant chapter in his distinguished educational career.

The year 1940 marked a pivotal milestone in Chelliah's academic journey when, at age 46, he became the first educator from the Straits Settlements and Malaya to earn a doctorate from a British university. His doctoral thesis, "A History of the Educational Policy of the Straits Settlements from 1800-1925", was revolutionary in its advocacy for bilingual education in Malaya. This scholarly achievement would prove to be the foundation for his lasting influence on educational development across Singapore and Malaya, where he would later play a crucial role in shaping schools and educational programmes.

Yet this same transformative year brought an unexpected turn in Chelliah's life path. Despite his distinguished career in education, he felt drawn to follow his father's vocation in religious ministry. Though he lacked formal theological training, his spiritual calling became unmistakable during his return voyage from England, when he experienced a profound

vision that convinced him to pursue the Anglican priesthood. Acting on this divine prompting, he reached out to Bishop Basil C. Roberts, who recognised his potential and accepted him as a candidate for ministry. By September of that remarkable year, Chelliah had added another dimension to his life of service, being ordained as a deacon.

The following year, Chelliah was ordained as a priest in 1941 at St Andrew's Cathedral by Bishop John Leonard Wilson. This pivotal moment in his life coincided with the gathering storm clouds of World War II, a period during which Chelliah would leave an indelible mark on his community. During the Japanese Occupation of Singapore, Bishop John Wilson and other Europeans were interned. Chelliah was thus installed as the acting Dean of St Andrew's Cathedral from 1943 to 1945, the first such appointment in the Diocese. Under his leadership, the Cathedral continued to hold services throughout the Occupation.

Chelliah's care for the people stretched beyond the Cathedral. Despite his duties at the church, he did "hard and tireless work throughout the Japanese Occupation at St Luke's", as The Courier noted, referring



Rev'd D.D. Chelliah, Bishop Wilson and Rev'd Sorby Adams standing by the school bell at St Andrew's School, 1949.

Leaena Tambyah Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

to an Anglican outreach to lepers that was located in today's Buangkok Green. There, he celebrated Holy Communion every week throughout the three years of the Occupation. The Cathedral was a blessing to the wider Christian community in those dark days. Many worshippers of other denominations attended Cathedral as services in their respective churches stopped.

Chelliah, however, never forgot his interest in education. A year after the war ended in 1945, he started the St Andrew's Continuation School for overaged pupils whose education was affected by the war. His dream for bilingualism came true when he lay the foundation stone for the Anglican High School, which placed equal emphasis on Chinese and English in its curriculum, on 14 March 1959. He was also involved in the development of Anglican schools and churches in Singapore, as well as in Johor and Melaka, until 1964.

On 25 January 1958, Chelliah was appointed the first Asian Archdeacon of Singapore, a role he served until 1966. In 1961, he was appointed Vicar of St Paul's Church, where he faithfully served until his retirement in 1971. According to the church website, Chelliah did not take the vicar's salary. Under Chelliah's leadership, the church grew in its services to the community, especially through the work of its kindergarten, Sunday School, women's fellowship, youth fellowship and other ministries.

The Church of the Ascension, too, reported enjoying Chelliah's "energy and cheerful" optimism, as *The Courier* observed in a 1962 issue. There, he assisted in fund-raising efforts for the building of the church, which would later serve as a chapel for Chelliah's beloved St. Andrew's School.

In addition to his priestly ministry, Chelliah was also actively involved in various social services. He was one of the founders of the

St. John's Home for the Aged, later becoming its chairman, and also the founder and council member of the Inter-Religious Organisation of Singapore from 1949 to 1979.

In 1966, following the departure of Bishop Kenneth Sansbury, Chelliah was appointed the Vicar General. That same year, he would make another significant contribution to the Diocese – by installing Joshua Chiu Ban It as the first Asian Bishop of Singapore.

On 1 January 1967, Bishop Chiu elevated Chelliah as Archdeacon Emeritus, the first such honour in the history of the Diocese. He wrote: "Few men can equal the record of our beloved in Christ, Devasahayam David Chelliah, Doctor of Philosophy, Clerk in the Holy Orders for the long and outstanding service which he had rendered to the Diocese as teacher (1911-1961), priest (from 1949) and as administrator. There are few high posts in all the three capacities that Dr Chelliah did not occupy. Whether it was a teacher, Headmaster, Diocesan Secretary for Schools, Honorary Priest, Vicar, Archdeacon or Vicar-General, he brought to it a wealth of experience and wisdom and occupied each post with distinction and honour."

Archdeacon Emeritus Chelliah died in Singapore on 2 April 1979, at the age of 85, having served God and His people with the greatest faith, love and passion. ☩

D.D. Chelliah and his wife, Rosalind Chelliah, 1971.



Legena Tambyah Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore



# The Mandarin Congregation at St Andrew's Cathedral

• Goh Mia Jing and Angela Chen Hui Zhen •

If the Cathedral could be likened to a miracle, then its Mandarin Congregation could be said to be a seed of this miracle. God's blessings have been evident in this congregation, seen in the growth of its discipleship and in the numbers of new Christians joining the Congregation, from Singapore as well as from abroad.

In 2024, the Congregation celebrated its 70th anniversary. Each Sunday, some 2,100 communicants meet to worship in three languages: the Sung Eucharist is held in Mandarin and Cantonese, and contemporary services in Mandarin and Hokkien. Sunday

School classes are also held in Mandarin and Cantonese, along with an evangelistic Friday Seniors Service in Mandarin and cell groups.

Since its founding in 1954, the Mandarin Congregation has experienced steady growth through a diverse array of ecclesiastical and biblical activities. From choirs and Sunday Schools to adult fellowships and dedicated ministries for children, youth, seniors, families, communities, new immigrants, and Chinese visitors, the congregation has played a pivotal role in church life. It stands as a model of faith and service, serving as an exemplary congregation for others around Singapore.

The first Mandarin service was held on 9 May 1954 at 11am. It was held at level 2 of the North Transept Hall and attended by 6 people.



### **How it all started:**

#### **A pioneer in Mandarin-speaking services**

The Congregation was the first Mandarin congregation of the Diocese of Singapore, which currently shepherds more than 5,000 Chinese-speaking Anglicans. It began at St Andrew's Cathedral in 1954, with three families from the English Congregation.

Its birth was significant, because it came 25 years before the Speak Mandarin Campaign was launched in 1979 to encourage Chinese Singaporeans to embrace the use of Mandarin in their daily lives.

At the time, churches in Singapore saw little need to evangelise or minister in Mandarin, as Mandarin speakers formed just a small minority of the Chinese population. Then, vernacular languages such as Hokkien, Cantonese and Teochew were more common at home, in social settings, and in the marketplace. It was only later, after Independence, that bilingual education was introduced and Mandarin designated as the official mother tongue for Chinese Singaporeans.

Following the establishment of the Diocese of Singapore in 1970, St Peter's Church was established in Stamford Road in 1875. It became

the home of early Chinese congregations of vernacular speakers in the Diocese. Like other Christian institutions in Singapore, most Chinese-speaking Anglicans were worshipping and evangelising in vernacular languages during this period.

Until the establishment of the Chinese Diocesan Council in 1931, the work of planting Chinese congregations was carried out by St Andrew's Church Mission, which was formed in 1856 after Pentecost Sunday. Its outreach to the Chinese community resulted in several vernacular-speaking congregations and churches. These included the first Chinese-speaking parish, the Holy Trinity Church, which was started by Foochow- and Hokkien-speaking congregations; the first Chinese-speaking congregation in St Matthew's Church, which was founded by a Cantonese-speaking congregation; St John's Chapel, which held services in Hokkien, Teochew and Hakka; the Church of the True Light (also known as the Trishaw Riders' Church), which was planted for Hinghua-speakers. In 1960, the Church of Good Shepherd in Queenstown was also opened, with Cantonese and Mandarin services serving its large Chinese-speaking congregation.



First Board Meeting  
in 1956.



Mandarin Congregation, 1965 (11th Anniversary)

### **Back to vernacular**

In more recent years, efforts have been made to reach out to seniors who continued to be more comfortable in their vernacular languages, as well as to visitors.

While the growth of the use of Chinese vernacular languages was no longer significant statistically and demographically in Singapore, there were encouraging signs of growth in terms of discipleship, outreach and impact in the use of vernacular languages to reach out and minister to the substantial number of older Chinese who continued to speak Hokkien, Cantonese, Teochew and Hakka. There were also growing opportunities for ministry to tourists from Cantonese-speaking regions who continued to visit Singapore in notable numbers each year.

In 1997, the Cantonese Service was moved from St Matthew's Church to St Andrew's Cathedral. The first service at the Cathedral was held on 4 January 1998, and marked a significant move for the ministry and evangelism to the Cantonese-speaking community and guests in Singapore.

First started in 1902, this Cantonese service had been held at the former St Peter's Church in Stamford Road, and had grown to become the Diocese's first Chinese congregation; it later founded St Matthew's Church and also built the church with a kindergarten along Neil Road.

In 2024, the Hokkien Service ministry, which was started in 2013 by the English Parish of the Cathedral, was formally transferred to the Mandarin Congregation, in a transition that reflected the strong cultural and linguistic ties between the two groups.

### **70 years of evangelism and outreach**

The Mandarin Congregation's community outreach efforts began soon after it was founded, and has gone beyond its original missional aims and commitments.

For example, while still a relatively young congregation in 1956, it partnered four Chinese-speaking parishes – St Matthew's Church, Holy Trinity Church, Church of the True Light, and Church of the Good Shepherd – to establish the Anglican High School, the



first and only Chinese school established by the Diocese.

The school in turn became the birthplace of the All Saints' Church in 1969, as an extension of the Cathedral's Mandarin Congregation when members reach out to evangelise and minister to those living in the Changi area. A Sunday School was started the following year, and the first worship service in 1971. An educational fund was later started for needy students, along with plans for a church building in the school grounds. Today, the All Saints' Church, a full-fledged parish, serves as the chaplaincy for the Anglican High School.

In 1986, the Mandarin Congregation and

four other Christian institutions – Bethel Presbyterian Church, All Saints Memorial Chapel, Telok Ayer Chinese Methodist Church, and the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in Singapore – jointly founded the All Saints Home. Starting with 30 beds in Hougang, the nursing home has since expanded. Today, it hosts 734 beds in four nursing homes across Hougang, Tampines, Yishun and Jurong, along with two active ageing centres.

In 2010, the Congregation saw heartening fruit of a combined effort with three other parishes – Chapel of Christ the King, Orchard City Church and Hougang Christian Centre – when the St Andrew's City Church attained parish status. Located in Tanjong Pagar, it

## The Founding Priest

Reverend Canon Sverre Holth (Chinese name: 霍砭) was the founding Priest-in-Charge for the Mandarin Service, which was founded in 1954. This formed the foundation of today's Mandarin Congregation at St Andrew's Cathedral, which was consecrated in 1870.

Canon Sverre Holth was also the founding Warden of St Peter's Hall in Trinity Theological College. He served as its Warden twice – from 1954 to 1964, and from 1983 to 1987.

Born in 1902 in Norway, Sverre Holth was sent to China as a missionary at the age of 23, by the Lutheran Norwegian Missionary Society. In 1927, he married



Anne Elise Ødegaard, another Norwegian missionary. A man of courage, he tried to protect local Chinese villagers from invading Japanese soldiers in 1940. As a result, he was stripped by the soldiers, taken out into the snow and shot in the back in front of his three children. Although he was left to die, he miraculously survived to continue his ministry, and the bullet remained lodged in his back near his spine. Sverre

Holth was ordained an Anglican priest in 1941, completed his mission for China in 1952, and arrived in Singapore in 1953. Later, he returned to Oslo and spent the last season of his life pastoring a church and teaching at the University of Oslo.

is the youngest Anglican parish, and holds English and Mandarin services.

Another extension of the Congregation is the Jurong Anglican Church, which partners Westside Anglican Church to provide Chinese-speaking pastoral care for the St Andrew's Mission School in Bukit Batok and the St Andrew's Nursing Home in Taman Jurong.

The Mandarin Congregation also participates actively in local community outreach, such as at the St Andrew's Active Ageing Centre in Jurong West. It also partners the English Congregation in the Adopt-a-Block in the Community Outreach (ABC), which ministers to residents of Bukit Merah.

### **Growing into the future**

Over the last 60 years, the Mandarin Congregation has shifted from a demographic of Mandarin-speaking locals to a sophisticated demographic mix of bilingual locals, Mandarin-speaking new immigrants and Mandarin-speaking guests. This means that the importance of Mandarin in evangelism and in ministry will only grow, offering the

congregation more opportunities to serve and grow.

God has blessed the Mandarin Congregation with favourable timing, conditions and people, enabling it to grow, bless others, and continue serving a pivotal role in the Chinese ministry of the Diocese, to His praise and glory.

It was thus most appropriate and encouraging, that at the 70th anniversary of the Congregation in 2024, Bishop Titus Chung quoted Ephesians 1:15-19 in his address to the Congregation:

"For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which He has called you, what are the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe." 🏴

Mandarin Congregation, 2024 (70th Anniversary)





# HOLY CHURCH in the Secular State

National Day Service, 7<sup>th</sup> August 1966, 6pm

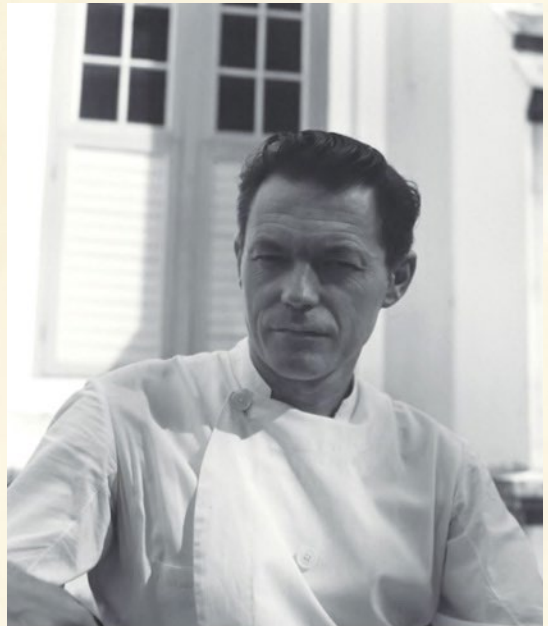
Delivered by the Dean of St Andrew's Cathedral, Revd Anthony Charles Dumper

Transcribed by: Lau Su Re



The first thing perhaps to remember about the service tonight and the ceremonies this week is that this service is not a service of thanksgiving, and these ceremonies are not ceremonies of thanksgiving. As the Prime Minister has told us, "We did not want this independence on our own". Singapore is not celebrating something it has fought and strived for and long desired. No sane man in the world today can rejoice when two countries so obviously linked economically fail to co-operate politically. In a world in which men are being forced to co-operate and merge more and more together with every new nationalistic split, every new barrier or restriction on the free movement of peoples whether imposed at the Causeway, or at London Airport, is a retrograde step for which we should mourn rather than rejoice. But Independence has come to Singapore and we have to face up to its meaning and its responsibility. Again to quote the Prime Minister – "This was not the best way to do it. But, if this is what we have, then we will make it work".

Tonight we must particularly ask ourselves what is the role of the church in the independent Republic of Singapore, what are the responsibilities of Christians in the new state. But first we must remind ourselves what is the duty and responsibilities of the State itself. This surely is to develop and foster the well-being of its citizens — to build up and strengthen a social order in which men and women can live useful, happy lives, developing their personalities to the full. But the well-being of a man does not consist only in having material security and prosperity — men do not live by bread alone. A dog and cat may be contented so long as they have enough to eat and a roof over their heads if it rains, but men will never be satisfied with that for ever. The emperors of ancient Rome gave their people bread and



Revd Anthony Charles Dumper

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circuses and hoped that this would keep them quiet, but all the time the whole Empire was in a spiritual ferment with men seeking for new religions, and amid this search emerged a new faith — the Christian Faith which eventually dominated the whole Empire. In the end, the Gospel spoke more directly to the needs of men than bread and circuses. Housing, food, employment, amusements — men need them all and no government can hold the confidence of its citizens if it does not seem to be making every effort to provide these for all its people. But they are not enough to satisfy men. Even in a prosperous, stable society men will still question, argue and criticise. This ability, this need, to stand outside his situation and ask Why? What is the purpose? Is there a better way? — this is what makes a man responsible, adult person; this is what distinguishes him from an animal. And these questions go beyond party politics — they reach out to the purpose of life; they involve the meaning of God.

**Singapore is a secular state but the judgement of God confronts  
the secular state as much as the religious state.  
That is why on this occasion of this first Independence Day  
we offer this service of worship.**

The Christian Church must proclaim that no government, no state is fulfilling its responsibilities to its citizens properly, that it is not securing their well-being in the deepest sense, unless the place of religion in the life of men is recognised. The Christian must say to this and every city — we must provide homes for our people, and we must see that God's home is also here. For God has His place in the life of the state and if we try to drive

Him out or ignore Him, then we are not only dishonouring God, we are neglecting the real interests of our citizens. This is not to say that we want to go back to the religious state, with its established religion, and its government committed to the support of one particular religious faith. If such a relationship between government and religion was ever justified (and I believe it was), it is no longer today — certainly not in the multi-religious society of Singapore. The secular state has come and we welcome it — long may it remain. A government today must govern in the interests of all its citizens, whatever their religious allegiance. It must not seek to buttress its power with support from religious movements. Similarly, religions today must accept the secular state and derive their support from the freely expressed beliefs of their members, not from official government pressure or social prejudice.

But the secular state does not mean that religious life is now outmoded, a museum piece which no intelligent modern politician can take seriously. We need homes for people and we need a home for God in every state. God is as essential to the well-being of society as technical development. A society in which none of its members know the power of prayer is as handicapped as a society which does not enjoy the benefits of electrical energy. A country which has no churches is as poverty stricken as a country that has no factories. A society in which there is no opportunity to make known the truth of God is as inhuman as a society in which there are schools only

Meditation Room, United Nations  
In 1952, Sweden donated the 6-ton iron ore stone altar as  
a sign of permanence in a world of change.



for the privileged few. The Christian Church has the duty of reminding this and every government that the well-being of society demands that the reality and importance of religious faith in the lives of men and women must be recognised and respected.

Let me give you two examples of what this can mean in practice. There have recently been on Sunday mornings two big rehearsals for the Independence Day Parade. These have taken place on the Padang and in the roads surrounding this Cathedral at the time of our morning services. Although the roads were all closed round the Cathedral, the Government recognised the right and need of the members of this Cathedral to worship on Sunday mornings. Special arrangements were therefore made, with a good deal of care and courtesy, for Cathedral members to have access to the Cathedral. There was some inconvenience, admittedly, but the State did accept its duty to make it possible for its citizens to worship God.

The second example is further afield. In the heart of the great United Nations building in New York, there is a sanctuary where the only furniture is a stone altar and some wooden benches — a permanent invitation to those planning for the future of the world to seek the help of God, and a permanent reminder that they cannot plan for the good of mankind unless they recognise that man does not live by bread alone, and that as great as his need for peace between nations, even more man needs the peace of God in his heart and mind. And we could think of many other examples — many of them more far-reaching in their implications.

But if the Church is to make these claims in the State then we must make sure that religious bodies are carrying out their proper functions. If we appeal for the co-operation of

the secular state then we must see that we are not fossilized institutions just keeping going the rituals of past centuries. The Church does not remain in the past— whether it is a colonial past or a past remembered from the homeland from which we have come. The past prestige, the past associations, the past traditions of the Church have little meaning for the modern secular state. The Church in Singapore will have to prove itself by its life and witness today. We shall have to remember the words of Jeremiah in our first lesson — Did not your father do justice and righteousness? Then it was well with him. He judged the cause of the poor and needy, then it was well with him. Is not this to know Me? says the Lord. To be concerned for justice and for the underprivileged in society — this is to do God's will — this is, in fact, to know God. And a government that is seeking to carry out such a policy is doing the will of God and the Church must recognise this

Dean Dumper speaking with Bishop John Wilson.



Photo from Anthony Dumper archives.



and offer its cooperation even if some of the government's measures disturb the customs and ways of life of many Church members. And again Saint Paul's words — "discharge your obligations, pay tax and toll, reverence and respect, to those to whom they are due" — they are a reminder to us that Christians have a religious duty to be law-abiding, honest trustworthy citizens.

If the churches (and this applies to other religions as well) are to claim, as we must claim, that we should have a rightful, recognised place in the technical world of the future, then we have to prove to the world around that we can and are playing our full part in fostering the wellbeing of society. Not just conventional Christians who go to church at Christmas and one or two other special occasions, not just those who go to church because they always have done so but never express their faith outside the walls of the Church building — not this but an alive and active personal faith in each member which is expressed in our work and in our homes, which makes the Church a fellowship of love, forgiveness and vision, leavening the lump of society, criticising and prodding, but also serving society and helping to reconcile groups and races within it who are divided from each other. This is the Church which can witness to Christians in the secular state, this is the Church which has the right to speak to governments and call for the recognition of God by modern society.

There are three main things that we shall say to government and society in calling for the recognition of God — and three things which all states need to listen to for their own well-being and that of their members. We say these things not because we are particularly good or clever or better than the rest — you and I are not — but we do have in the Christian

Gospel something that matters tremendously for mankind and we must make it known. And the three things we have to say are these:—

The first comes from our second lesson tonight when Jesus said "you would have no authority at all over me if it had not been granted you from above". All authority is from God and God is sovereign over all the authorities and powers of the world. No state and no government can be a law unto itself, all come under the judgement of God — and all are bound by Gods laws — and in this belief is the ultimate guarantee of the right of the individual human person to claim those kinds of freedom which we usually associate with a democratic constitution.

And the second thing we must say is that God loves all his children, whatever their race or social status, and so all of them — the poor, the defenceless, the minorities, the handicapped — have a claim on governments, and on us all, to be raised up and allowed to live a full and useful life in society. And the last thing Christians have to say to governments is to remind them, and to remind ourselves that all men and all social structures are pervaded by sin — no society is perfect and no rulers are above criticisms. And, therefore, no state has the right to arbitrary, unchecked power over others.

Singapore is a secular state but the judgement of God confronts the secular state as much as the religious state. That is why on this occasion of this first Independence Day we offer this service of worship — thus recognising the dependence of ourselves and all men on God, and in particular we recognise the special need of those in positions of authority in Singapore, to keep before them a vision of the God from whom all Truth and Love and Justice comes. ☒



# Close to 60 years, still a sermon for our times

A sermon preached in 1966 challenged the Church to make  
an impact on the society around it.

**Revd Canon Terry Wong** reflects on Dean Dumper's sermon.



View of the Cathedral from  
Swissotel The Stamford  
Singapore, 2025

**O**n 7 August 1966, almost a year after Singapore's unexpected independence, the Dean of St Andrew's Cathedral, the Very Revd Anthony Charles Dumper, delivered a sermon at a National Day Service at 6pm.

The nation he was addressing was not only young and uncertain, but still grieving its separation from Malaysia. Even its Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew, had admitted that this was not the outcome he had wished for. Dean Dumper underlined his point: in a world that needs unity and cooperation, when is separation ever good?

Before turning to the Church's responsibilities, he began by outlining those of the State. Yes, it must provide for the physical needs of its citizens—food, housing, security. But, he reminded the congregation, “man does not live by bread alone.” Human beings long for meaning: we are seekers of purpose, not just consumers of provision.

The Dean could not have foreseen how far Singapore would come. Today, the average Singaporean enjoys more than just bread—or rice—on the table. Our nation is among the wealthiest in the world. And yet, the spiritual hunger he identified in 1966 remains. Meaning, material wealth is not what ultimately nourishes the soul.

### **The Church's duty to the State**

Dean Dumper spoke plainly: it is the Church's duty to remind the State of this religious and spiritual need. While Singapore excelled in building homes, God's “HOME” (the Dean actually capitalised this word) must not be neglected. He welcomed the fact that Singapore had become a secular state, adding, “and long may she remain so.” But to have factories without churches, economic

development without sacred space, would be to impoverish the soul of the nation.

Importantly, he affirmed this principle not just for Christianity, but for all religions. In a multi-religious society, a truly secular state creates space for all faiths to flourish.

He cited the mutual accommodation between the Cathedral and the National Day Parade at the Padang to enable both the celebrations and the Cathedral's worship services to function as usual. Today, some may find the annual Singapore Grand Prix Formula 1 race, with its deafening roar, more disruptive. Still, we can note, sharing civic space requires give and take.

### **The Church's own calling**

Then the Dean turned inward. If the Church was to ask the State to fulfil its God-given responsibilities, then she must also fulfil hers.

He urged Christians to live out their faith beyond the walls of the Church. Our commitment to righteousness and justice must be seen and felt. While we may “criticise and prod”, we must also “love and serve” our society.

Towards the end of his sermon – to the political leaders likely present in the congregation – the Dean offered three points:

1. All authority comes from God: No state has authority in and of itself. True authority is derived from God and bound by His laws. It is this divine accountability that ensures the rights and dignity of every individual. If this sounds like democratic principle, the Dean insisted, it is first a divine one.
2. All are created equal: Every person – regardless of race, class, or background – is created equal in God's image. Today,





Flag flypast over the Padang, passing by the Cathedral during rehearsals for the National Day Parade 2025

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## Has the Church heeded Dean Dumper's message over the past six decades?

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this principle can be challenging in a meritocratic society like Singapore. And surely, it must also apply to foreigners in our midst, not just citizens.

3. All individuals and systems are flawed: individuals and institutions are affected by sin. Both Church and State are imperfect. So, none should have unchecked arbitrary power. We are called to hold one another accountable—government included. Even the most efficient systems and policies need to be re-examined to ensure that the vulnerable are not forgotten or unjustly treated.

### A message that endures

This sermon, delivered in 1966, spoke with clarity, courage and insight. It was preached in plain, accessible English. It reminds us that many of our core societal values—human dignity, equality, justice—are rooted in an ancient Judeo-Christian wisdom, one often shared across other faith traditions.

Has the Church heeded Dean Dumper's message over the past six decades?

In many ways, yes. The Church in Singapore has “loved and served” through education,

healthcare, and community outreach. But even in our prosperity, hidden needs remain. Social inequality persists, a by-product of individual freedom and the pursuit of one's dreams, including wealth-making.

Has the Church “prodded and criticised” well? We remain a numerical minority, yet our influence is felt. Some attribute this to economic elitism, and there may be truth in that. But it is also our unity and cohesiveness that have amplified our voice beyond our numerical strength.

This advantage may have made us cautious, preferring to engage in quiet backroom conversations rather than public discourse, which is often perceived as disruptive. Yet, if conversations are not to be had in our media, both traditional and social, how can we be an “effective prod” across society and not just in the corridors of power?

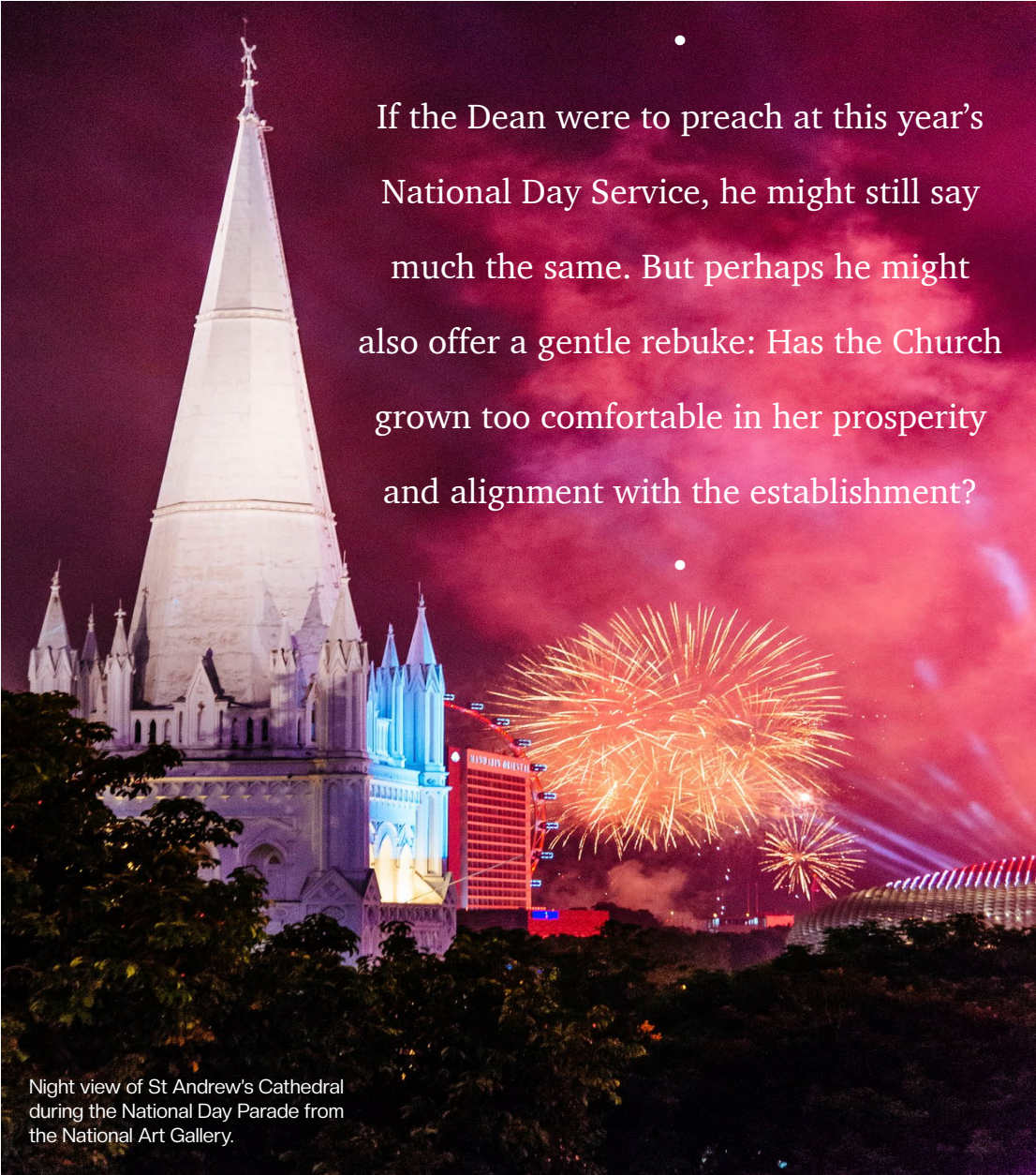
If the Dean were to preach at this year's National Day Service, he might still say much the same. But perhaps he might also offer a gentle rebuke: Has the Church grown too comfortable in her prosperity and alignment with the establishment?

The views outside the Cathedral today will be very different from the ones the Dean saw. Just outside the Nave, towering buildings rise—modern temples to commerce, status and entertainment. These are the gods of our

age. The Church must reflect honestly on her witness in the shadow of these new altars.

These are questions that today's and tomorrow's church leaders must grapple with. Dean Dumper's sermon remains a prophetic word for our time—a message to be reread, re-heard and re-lived. ☒

*The Revd Canon Terry Wong is currently Vicar of Marine Parade Christian Centre in the Diocese of Singapore. He served as Vicar of the Cathedral from 2015 to 2020.*



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Night view of St Andrew's Cathedral during the National Day Parade from the National Art Gallery.

Photo by Roger Deng



Lessons and Carols Service, 2021.

# An Overview of







Cathedral in 2020s



Worship Service at the Nave.

# Something Familiar, Something Fresh

What might the future of the Anglican Church look like?  
The Warden of St Peter's Hall ponders on the directions  
it could take in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

• Revd Dr Joshua Sudharman •





Worship Service at the Cathedral New Sanctuary (CNS).

**A**t a songwriting seminar led by Christian musician Marty Nystrom in the 1990s, he shared a powerful secret. At the time, he was part of a small group of producers at Integrity Hosanna, the recording label that produced albums of contemporary praise and worship songs. They received a continuous stream of original songs from around the United States from songwriters hoping for their songs to be picked. Out of this pool of thousands of songs, the producers had to pick the top 10 that would make it into the next album.

Faced with such a daunting task, they used this “formula”: a song had to be something familiar, something fresh.

If a song sounded too familiar, it would feel old and boring, and wouldn’t stand out from the thousands of other songs. If a song sounded too new, innovative or fresh, then it would feel jarring, strange and unappealing. But get the mix between fresh and familiar right, like a familiar chord progression and a fresh melody, or a familiar theme coupled with a fresh perspective, and the song would likely be a hit.

I never forgot that insight. It embodied a grasp of human nature, held apparently contradictory ideas in dynamic tension, and made a seemingly impossible task of finding the top 10 songs out of thousands doable. Plus, it was road-tested and proven by the popularity of Integrity Hosanna's songs, which were sung in churches around the world, at least in that era.

This same principle holds relevance for us today as we think about what it means to be an Anglican in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I believe the Anglican Church will be the best version of herself if she walks this via media between something familiar and something fresh. The term via media, which means "middle way" in Latin, refers to Anglicanism's historic approach of taking a balanced path between Protestant reform and Catholic tradition.

## CHERISH THE FAMILIAR

In *Being Christian*, a book by former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, widely acknowledged to be one of the sharpest and most profound Anglican thinkers ever, he outlines with elegance the four basic marks that are fundamental to Christian identity and practice. I believe there is no better articulation of "something familiar" that every 21<sup>st</sup>-century Anglican should cherish than these four marks: Bible, prayer, baptism and eucharist.

### 1. Cherish the Bible

As Ephraim Radner, Professor of Historical Theology at Wycliffe College, Toronto, says, "Anglicanism, beginning with (Thomas) Cranmer's reforms, was basically a Christian

movement aimed at bringing all the Scripture to all of the people all of the time."

According to church life structured by Cranmer in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, an Anglican would generally attend morning prayer and evening prayer six days a week, and Holy Communion on Sunday.

At each of the 13 or so services in a week, a substantial portion of the Bible would be read, from the Old Testament, Psalms, Epistles and Gospels, ensuring that the entire Bible would be covered within a year. Why was such a large amount of Scripture read? Because Cranmer was of the view that the public reading and hearing of Scripture was like medicine for the soul, and was the key to passionate Christianity.

Faithful Bible reading needs to make a comeback in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Anglican Church, both publicly and privately. Public reading of the Bible in worship services needs to be upgraded. Ideally, there needs to be proper training and preparation in both mindset and technique before we assign someone the task of reading the Scriptures.

As for private reading, the Bible In One Year (by Nicky and Pippa Gumbel) and other similar reading programmes are in line with the priorities of Cranmer while infusing Bible reading with fresh formats and illuminating



illustrations. They don't sacrifice breadth for depth, or vice-versa, but try to aim for both.

Admittedly, in our busy 21<sup>st</sup>-century lives, it's hard to sustain a morning-and-evening rhythm of service attendance and Scripture intake. But some form of Bible-reading structure and discipline must still be self-imposed if we are to embody the best of what it means to be Bible-based Anglicans.

## 2. Cherish the liturgy

The Book of Common Prayer, the original Anglican liturgy, is so steeped in Scripture that theologian and author J.I. Packer called it "The Bible arranged for worship". Too few modern Anglicans appreciate the fact that, together with the King James Version of the Bible and the works of Shakespeare, the Book of Common Prayer has been one of the three fundamental underpinnings of modern English. Given how English is almost universally spoken, one could even argue the Anglican Church has helped shape global communication!

More importantly, as the fountainhead from which other later liturgical revisions flowed (like Common Worship and the Alternative Service Book, on which the 1995 Diocese of Singapore Service Book is based), the Book of Common Prayer has taught millions of

Anglicans through the centuries how to pray. In fact, the liturgies of some other Protestant denominations borrow certain prayers from the Book of Common Prayer.

Archbishop Rowan Williams speaks of prayer not primarily as a means of getting God to give us what we need or want. Rather, he points out, we pray because we have to, because the Spirit is surging up inside us. He says: "Prayer, in other words, is more like sneezing – there comes a point where you can't not do it." He goes on to explain: "Prayer is not about feeling good. It is not about results, or about being pleased with yourself; it is just what God does in you when you are close to Jesus."

I find these ideas about prayer bring fresh perspective to engaging with the familiar liturgy.

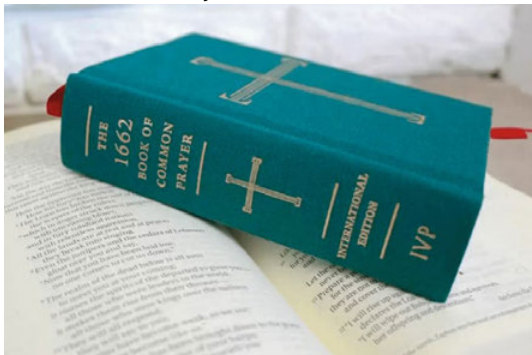
Dr Michael Lloyd, Principal of Wycliffe Hall, an evangelical theological college in Oxford, once spoke of the value of the liturgy in terms of sparing us the effort of asking ourselves every time we pray, "Is this a prayer I agree with? Does this sit well with my understanding of Scripture?" etc.

Liturgy allows us to get on with praying the words in the security and confidence that it agrees with Scripture and lifts up to God the burdens and sentiments we want to convey but don't know how.

Cherishing the liturgy, like cherishing the Bible, has a public and private aspect.

Those of us charged with the responsibility of leading the liturgy must do so with a deep appreciation for its beauty, profundity and spirituality. We must not race through it, as some of us are sometimes guilty of doing, as if we want to hastily get it over with! Neither should we deliver it in a sleep-inducing monotone. Perhaps the best approach would

Book of Common Prayer 1662.





be to deeply feel it – to connect viscerally with the words we speak, and inject the necessary conviction into our expression of the liturgy. Then it comes alive for everyone.

Privately, we need to examine our attitude to liturgy. Are we in the habit of going into auto-pilot mode due to over-familiarity with the words? If so, let's awaken ourselves from our slumber to the privilege and opportunity we are missing – the opportunity to encounter the grand truths of the Gospel afresh, and to join the worship of the heavens while still here on earth. Let us recapture an element of curiosity about the liturgy and why it is the way it is, so that as we probe beneath the familiar outer crust of the words, we unearth beautiful treasures of spiritual meaning and depth that had previously gone unmined and unappreciated.

### 3. Cherish the Baptism

Collectively known as the Sacraments, water baptism and the Eucharist were instituted by Jesus as means of grace for His disciples. As the Catechism reminds us, they mean “an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means by which we receive that grace, and a pledge to assure us thereof”.

Rev'd Moses Israeli conducting an infant baptism.



In this context, “grace” can be understood as more than mercy or pardon. It also refers to divine power or strength to live the Christian life.

There are many who still have reservations about infant baptism and prefer to wait until a child is older and can decide for himself. Parents need to appreciate that such a delay has both pros and cons. If they understand baptism as ultimately what God does for us and in us, not so much what we do for Him or for ourselves, the cons become clearer.

Here are some arguments used in support of the practice of infant baptism:

1. Promise for you and for your children (Peter's sermon in Acts 2)
2. Rebuke (Jesus' rebuke of his disciples in Luke 18)
3. Early Church (church fathers like Irenaeus, Origen, Tertullian affirmed it)
4. Articles (Article 27 of the 39)
5. Circumcision (drawing on covenant theology where infants are included in the covenant people)
6. Household (examples of whole households, possibly with infants, being baptised, such as Cornelius and the Philippian jailer)

### 4. Cherish the Eucharist

When we drive a car, we would take pains to top up our petrol tanks and make sure they don't empty. Similarly, we try to keep our mobile phones charged up. We need to be as concerned about our spiritual fuel levels.

For those of us who have been Anglicans for some time, apart from constant Bible reading and prayer, the other practice we must not neglect is faithful reception of Holy Communion. While we do not veer to



Rev. Christopher Chan serving communion to clergy and laypersons at the Nave.



The 9<sup>th</sup> Bishop of Singapore, Bishop Rennis Ponniah, preaching at the Cathedral New Sanctuary (CNS).

extreme mystical views about the Eucharist, neither should we let the pendulum swing to the opposite extreme of mere memorialism or remembrance of the cross alone. There is a power and a grace conveyed in Holy Communion, beyond our ability to articulate in words, and we do well to avail ourselves of this gift.

### CHERISH THE FRESH

Because the familiar elements of the church have been with us for centuries, much more has been written and can be written about them. Let me propose a handful of fresh emphases that I believe we need to hold in tension with the familiar:

#### 1. Updating our pulpit ministry

Preaching standards vary substantially across the Diocese. To be honest, some pulpit ministries are struggling, some are coping, while others are thriving. What makes the difference?

Many factors determine the quality and strength of a parish's pulpit ministry, but some of the more consequential ones are the preacher's own gifting as a communicator, his level of training in Bible interpretation and sermon delivery, the availability of preparation time and bandwidth for the preacher, the hunger and appetite of the congregation, and the availability of feedback channels. Every preacher can grow and improve, but they need to feel supported and challenged. A framework for the ongoing training and upgrading of preachers is being worked on at St Peter's Hall.

We also need to engage more with the issues of the day rather than studiously avoid them. We need to explain clearly what the Bible has to say about creation care, artificial intelligence (AI), end-time prophecies and space exploration, for example. These are areas that are not generally part of mainstream seminary training, and preachers will therefore need supplementary training inputs to talk about them. Alternatively, we can call upon resource people and experts as guest speakers who can handle these topics.

## 2. Seeing blended contemporary and traditional services as an art form

Blended services are nothing new, and have been around in our parishes for decades. However, we are not always blending the traditional and the contemporary with sufficient elegance and finesse, and sometimes, the result is choppy, disjointed and confusing.

Those designing worship services need to realise that farming out different segments of the service to different parties (such as the

worship team, intercessor, Scripture reader, preacher and celebrant), and stitching all these parts together on the day by means of a common order of service, is not enough. Effort needs to go into smoothening the transitions from one segment to another, and ensuring coherence around a central theme or focus.

It also takes skill and a trained eye to seize opportunities for enhancing the experience of “something familiar, something fresh” by means of music, visuals or movement.

## 3. Embracing technology without being forced

A tired joke about Anglicans goes like this: How many Anglicans does it take to change a light bulb? Answer: Change?!

Covid-19 was a dreadful time for the Church, but we did glean some positives from it, one of them being an accelerated embracing of technology in the form of Zoom meetings, QR codes, PayNow and the like. We had no choice. But now that Covid-19 has abated, will we crawl back into our shells of resisting change, especially the adoption of technology?

As with all things, technology is double-edged. It can drive a wedge between the generations, sending the older generation into despair and desperation while the younger digital natives effortlessly surf the wave.

The surge in online scams and cyber-crime is a real concern, and elders need to receive sufficient protection and help against it. But our churches need to use technology as a force-multiplier and move carefully but resolutely towards embracing the use of mobile apps, generative AI and even online platforms in engaging the young and discipling them in the responsible use of these tools.

Choir processing out at the Christmas Bicentennial Service, 2019.



Photo by Edwin Arokiyam



## CONCLUSION

What does it mean to be an Anglican in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? I believe it means embracing the familiar and embracing the fresh.

We need to cherish the familiar in terms of appreciating the gifts the Anglican Church has given to the world and prizing them as we would an family heirloom. This does not mean the Anglican church is in good shape everywhere; there is clearly ground for self-criticism. But there is no room for depression: let's be convinced that the Anglican Church has a future. Our best days are not behind us, but ahead!

For that to happen, we also need to cherish the fresh. We must be prepared to become new wineskins for the Lord to pour His new wine into. Old mindsets are double-edged: while they link us to the past and remind us of what must not be forgotten, they can also hinder us from moving fully and boldly into the future because we feel overwhelmed and threatened by the new and unfamiliar.

We need the right blend of conservatism and dynamism in the people we appoint to leadership in our parishes. They will help lead the way into the future God has in store for us, and the 21<sup>st</sup> century can be the Anglican Church's most God-honouring and fruitful. ☒

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*Revd Dr Joshua Sudharman is the Warden of St Peter's Hall, overseeing all training matters in the Diocese. Its mission is "Moulding the future of the Anglican Diocese". For more information, please refer to: [www.sph.org.sg](http://www.sph.org.sg).*

# THE CATHEDRAL

A glorious testimony of God's







# blessing

## Vicar's Warden Reflection

• Keith Chua •

**W**e thank the Lord for religious harmony and the freedom to worship in Singapore. St Andrew's Cathedral stands tall amid the many high-rise buildings in the city, owing to the unique preservation and conservation of the adjacent historic buildings of the former City Hall, Supreme Court and Parliament House.

The Cathedral spans three centuries, and is a glorious testimony of God's blessing, as well as the obedience and generosity of past and present generations of members. The recent restoration of the Nave and current maintenance of the Cathedral New Sanctuary will ensure that our services can continue to be conducted in a comfortable and conducive environment.

The Cathedral's services today include both traditional and contemporary formats, and are conducted in English and Chinese. We also have a growing Myanmar ministry. The Covid-19 pandemic required us to conduct services online for a period of time, and thankfully, we have now resumed on-site services.

As I reflect on the Cathedral today as we mark 60 years of Singapore's independence, I would like to share two verses.

The first is Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."





Members of the Myanmar congregation gathered for a family photograph alongside Archbishop Stephen Than.

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The Cathedral's services today include both traditional and contemporary formats, and are conducted in English and Chinese.

We also have a growing Myanmar ministry.

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The world today is filled with distractions, trends and fads. Technology has changed our lives, and churches have to try to stay relevant, especially to teenagers and young adults who are exposed to abundant information and new ways of social interaction and engagement.

Let us never forget, however, that the Gospel message has already taken into account all that is happening today. Let us not dilute the essence of what it means to be a Christian and to follow Christ.

The charismatic renewal of the 1970s and 1980s laid a fresh foundation of faith, obedience, sacrifice, witness and generosity. While the external fervour may have subsided in recent decades, this foundation continues to undergird our daily lives. It is best reflected in a continuing hunger to know Jesus more and more, to serve Him more and more, and to be witnesses in every circumstance.

Our services today continue to feed us with God's Word, engage us in intercession, bring us to worship, and enable opportunities

for fellowship, caring and sharing. The renewal has taught us to move with the Holy Spirit's enablement and empowerment in all that we do.

Singapore has been prophetically named the Antioch of Asia. The Diocese and the Cathedral have been actively involved in mission and church planting through the deaneries of Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Indonesia, Nepal and, most recently, Timor Leste.

While there is still much work to be done locally, we need to keep supporting the work in the deaneries. The generosity of the Cathedral's members have enabled it to continue allocating 25 percent of our tithes and offerings to mission and outreach giving each year.

The second verse I would like to share is Revelation 3:21: "The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne."

The church in Laodicea was warned for being lukewarm despite all its works, for believing it was rich, and for not realising that in God's eyes they were wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked.

As we move ahead, we must never forget that all our success comes from the Lord. Financially, we are more than sufficient, thanks to a consistent income and healthy reserves. These are for God's Kingdom purposes, and we need to keep seeking Him and His direction. It starts with each one of us as we continue to give of our time, talents and treasures.

In celebrating SG60, we have much to thank the Lord for. We also need to continue to build ourselves up spiritually. As the Vicar has exhorted us, we need to know God's Word. Let us pray that our and future generations will remain faithful stewards of God's call to the Cathedral and to the work that remains to be done, both in Singapore and beyond. 🏴

•

The Cathedral spans three centuries, and is a glorious testimony of God's blessing, as well as the obedience and generosity of past and present generations of members.

•

Prayer session during the mission trip in Mae Sot, Thailand.



Dr Lai Yi Wye attending to the sick in Cambodia.





Servers holding the acolytes' candles and the crucifer's cross during the service.





The Nave divided into 2 sections, Upper Nave and Lower Nave due to safe distancing.

DO NOT ENTER  
PLEASE STAY IN  
YOUR ZONE

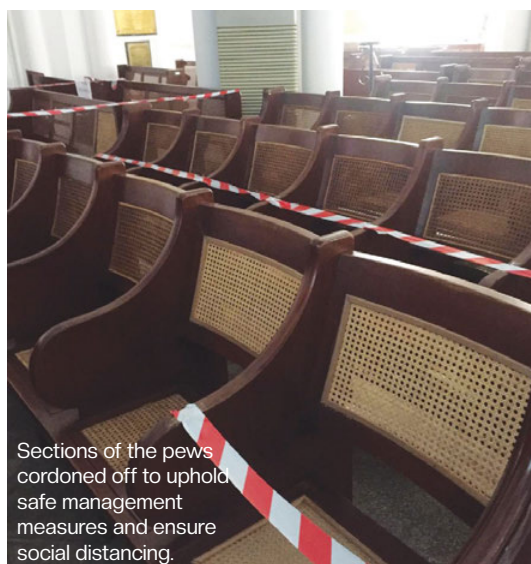
# COPING WITH Covid-19

## How the Cathedral Survived the Pandemic

• Vivien Chen •

**W**hen the Covid-19 pandemic hit Singapore in 2020, it presented an unprecedented challenge for St Andrew's Cathedral that prompted many changes, some of which can still be seen today.

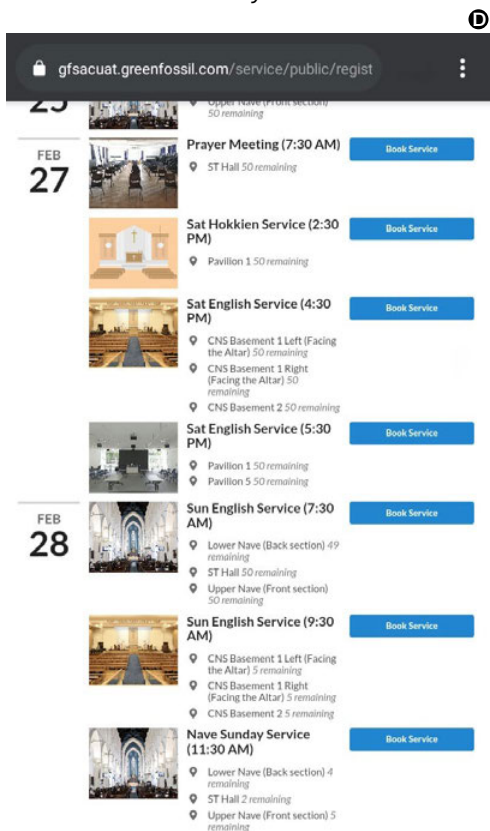
After the first case of Covid-19 was reported in January in Singapore, followed by more infections over the following months, the authorities enforced several rounds of restrictions on movements and gatherings to curb the spread of the virus. These "Circuit Breakers", which took place between 7 April and 1 June 2020, saw workplaces, schools, shopping centres, and places of worship across Singapore closed.



Sections of the pews cordoned off to uphold safe management measures and ensure social distancing.



The complete closure of the Cathedral and its grounds, from 18 March to 3 April, came as a shock to the Cathedral community. Even through the dark days of World War II and Japanese occupation, the church had remained open. But now, the gates and doors remained closed, and the Cathedral fell quiet for the first time in many decades.



**A.** Members underwent temperature checks before entering the worship venues before church was closed.  
**B.** Deaconess June Tan stationed outside the gate to inform members of the unexpected closure of the church.  
**C. & E.** Putting in place safe management measures for worship services to resume onsite.  
**D.** The booking system was implemented to ensure adherence to the maximum allowable capacity per service.



## Worshipping from home

The Cathedral community, however, rallied to keep the worship of God going, adapting quickly to the crisis with the help of technology, a dash of creativity, much resilience and, above all, the provision and grace of God.

Although in-person worship services could not be held during the Circuit Breakers, services were conducted off-site and live-streamed to members at home. Preachers recorded their sermons on video, choir members filmed themselves singing at home, and the individual videos were collated by the audio-visual teams to be broadcast over YouTube on Sundays. A special dispensation was also given for Holy Communion to be taken at home.

Staff, volunteers and members also found creative ways to meet and minister to each other. The children's and youth ministries and cell groups met online, through Zoom, as did staff reaching out to the sick and elderly. Teaching materials were also distributed online.

It was a relief when the authorities began lifting restrictions on gatherings in a three-phase re-opening that began in June 2020.



Members adhered to safe distancing rules when they gathered to worship.

## New ways of worshipping and meeting

But this also presented a new set of challenges. To prevent any potential infection from spreading in the Cathedral, comprehensive efforts had to be taken to ensure safe distances were maintained between members, which meant many changes in the way services and meetings were conducted.

Members wore masks to attend services in compliance with the mask mandate during Covid-19.



TRANSITIONING TO A NEW SYSTEM

### Attend service in 2 simple steps!

- 1 Complete your **SafeEntry** check-in with the **TraceTogether** token or app.
- 2 Present the **QR Code** from your **booking confirmation e-mail** for **scanning** and **collect your sticker**.

**If driving in...**  
Simply show the booking confirmation e-mail to our friendly service personnel at the gate for carpark entry.

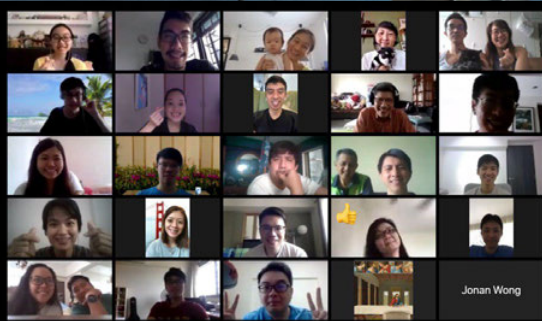
BOOK YOUR TICKETS AT [cathedral.org.sg/ws](https://cathedral.org.sg/ws)



Posters and stickers were printed to help members enter the worship venues smoothly.



# Online meetings for Services and Ministries





First, a professional cleaning firm, and the Cathedral's own vergers, were deployed to conduct a thorough disinfection of the Cathedral's premises, from the Nave and Cathedral New Sanctuary to walkways, meeting rooms and offices.

A Cathedral Task Force was then set up, to come up with and oversee changes in worship practices and operations so as to comply with national safety protocols.

As restrictions were slowly lifted, the Cathedral gradually re-opened its doors, albeit to a very small number of visitors. In June 2020, in-person worship services resumed with limited congregation sizes of 50 and a slew of safe management measures to ensure worshippers' safety. These included the mandatory wearing of masks, safe-distancing, pre-registration of visitors, restrictions on communal singing, and contactless serving of Holy Communion. Service and hymn books were removed from the pews, seats were marked to ensure sufficient safe distances between worshippers, and worship venues were disinfected between services.

Fortunately, a computerised membership database had just been installed, allowing Cathedral members to book a place online for the worship services. Eleven services were held each week, and members asked to limit themselves to attending one on-site service per month, and the others online.



Disinfection carried out at the CNS (top) and at the Reredos (below).



COVID-19 UPDATE - PHASE 3 (HEIGHTENED ALERT)

27 Jun 2021

## Resumption of Onsite Worship Services in the Cathedral



Onsite worship services will resume from **Sunday, 11 July**.

	In English	In Mandarin	In other languages
Sun - 11 July	7:30am, 9:30am, 11:30am, 4:30pm	9:30am, 11:30am, 2:30pm	8:30am (Tamil) 2:30pm (Burmese)
Wed - 14 July	12:30pm		
Sat - 17 July	4:30pm, 5:30pm	11:30am	2:30pm (Hokkien)



No Pre-Event Testing (PET);  
Max 50 worshippers per service.



Services are kept  
to under an hour.



Serving of Holy Communion  
is temporarily suspended.



Entry to each service  
is by ticket only.

\*Details on how to make a booking will be available on the Cathedral website next week.

### Let's continue to worship together!



Join us in our **Sunday 7:30am and 9:30am** live-streamed services at [cathedral.org.sg/youtube](https://cathedral.org.sg/youtube).



The Cathedral Online Holy Communion Service will be live-streamed on the last Sunday of each month.

Stay connected with St Andrew's Cathedral

[cathedral.org.sg](https://cathedral.org.sg) [standrewscath](https://www.facebook.com/standrewscath) [standrewscathedral](https://www.instagram.com/standrewscathedral)

One of the many posters published to keep members up-to-date with the latest information.



One notable change made during this time was in the serving of Communion. In 2003, when Singapore was hit by SARS infections, the Cathedral had changed the practice of allowing communicants to drink from a communal cup to intinction, in which the wafer is dipped into the wine in a communal cup. This time, intinction was replaced with the distribution of individually wrapped wafers and wine in individual plastic cups. This ensured even less contact between communicants and further reduced the risk of cross-infection.

What was encouraging was that Covid-19 did not prevent the Cathedral from holding special services during this time. These included:

- Making of Deaconesses on 26 July 2020.
- National Day Thanksgiving Service on 20 August 2020.
- The consecration and enthronement of Bishop Titus Chung as the 10th Bishop of Singapore on 18 October 2020. Though travel restrictions prevented the bishops of the Province of the Anglican Church of South East Asia from attending, pre-recorded messages were sent and the service, which included 100 attendees, was live-streamed to some 2,000 viewers.
- Induction of Revd Canon Dr Lewis Lew as Vicar on 16 March 2021.



A. The deaconesses standing before Bishop Rennis Ponniah to take their oaths.

B. Bishop Dr John Chew presents the pastoral staff to Bishop Dr Titus Chung.

C. Revd Canon Lewis Lew takes the Oath of Canonical Obedience to the Bishop of the Diocese.

What was encouraging was that Covid-19 did not prevent the Cathedral from holding special services during this time.



## Long-lasting changes

By August 2022, most of the Covid-19 restrictions had been lifted, and Singapore returned to normalcy on 13 February 2023, ending a three-year battle with the pandemic. This also meant that the Cathedral could resume services fully and cease many of the safe-distancing measures.

However, some of the measures and changes made have had a long-lasting impact and resulted in improvements in the Cathedral's practices and operations that are still in place today.

For example, the live-streaming of services was continued for many months after Covid-19 restrictions were lifted, allowing people to attend services from home. This was helpful especially in the early days, when there was much concern about infection, especially among the elderly. Though the live-streaming of entire services was later stopped, the weekly sermons continue to be recorded and shared online today.

To reduce physical contact through the Covid-19 crisis, the Cathedral encouraged members to turn to tithing online, giving via electronic payment methods instead of using offertory bags and cheques. Together with the widespread use of QR codes, live-streaming for services, and Zoom to meet online, these changes have helped many members to learn and embrace technology. Many of these practices continue today, allowing staff and ministry volunteers to conduct meetings online, for instance, which has led to much convenience and efficiency.

The Covid-19 pandemic was indeed a wake-up call for the Cathedral community. While it disrupted the Cathedral's way of life and worship for several years, it drew many members to a closer walk with God. Beyond reminding members what really mattered in worship, it showed them the value of resilience and determination as they continue seeking ways to gather to worship God and to stand firm in the faith. ☩

Members gathering to worship with safe distancing measures in place at the Cathedral New Sanctuary (CNS).



# Restoring the Cathedral

• Kevin Quek •

Old plasters were removed from each column exposing the bricks.

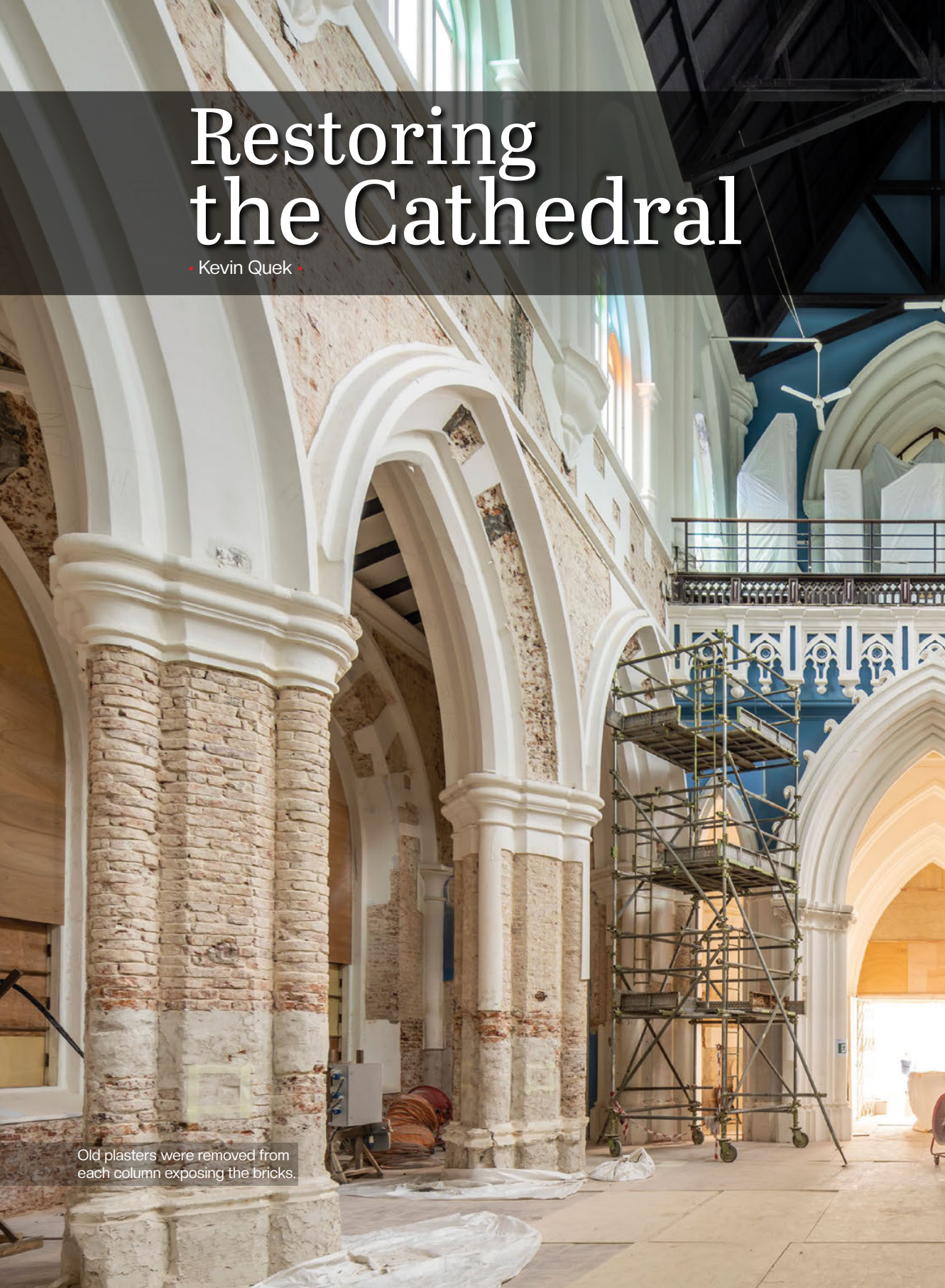






Photo by Darren Soh



Since the foundation stone for the original St Andrew's Church was laid in 1835, the church building has undergone numerous changes over the nearly 200 years. The original building was replaced by the present-day Cathedral in the 1850s; the foundation stone for this building was laid in 1856. Since then, the Cathedral has seen many rounds of repair, repainting, renovation and restoration.

The latest round of restoration – one of its biggest – began in 2015, with one of the key elements involving the repair of the plaster on the interior and exterior of the main building. Initial trials and studies, done with the help of Conservation Adviser Dr Yeo Kang Shua, showed that the outer layers of plaster applied in earlier restoration efforts had left the underlying plaster friable and crumbling. This meant that these layers had to be removed, and the bricks left to dry out before a new layer of slaked lime and proprietary lime plaster could be applied.

This process was to prove a long-drawn one. First, the decision was taken to give the Cathedral a complete and comprehensive makeover. Since the restoration of the plaster and repainting would require extensive time and effort to ensure that underlying issues were addressed properly, it was decided that

the opportunity be taken to do a thorough repair and restoration of all parts of the building.

The restoration works were to include such things as:

- Re-plastering and repainting of the Cathedral's external and internal walls;
- Cleaning of the roof slates;
- Replacement of lighting fixtures, lightning protection, air-conditioning and wiring;
- Creation of a maintenance tunnel for electrical and air-conditioning services below the floor;
- Carpentry and joinery work on the windows, doors and pews;
- Metalworks on the grilles;
- Replacement of the West Porch gate with a glass door;
- Plumbing works in the sacristy and vestry.
- Installation of protective glass for the stained-glass windows;
- Cleaning of the sanctuary's marble floor;
- Replacement of the carpet; and
- Restoration and cleaning of the artefacts such as plaques, lectern and aumbry.

It was estimated that these restoration works would take about two years. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic struck in 2020, and the resulting restrictions on movement and construction work delayed the start of the restoration process.

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This image shows the earliest town plan of Singapore, prepared by Assistant Engineer Lieutenant Philip Jackson. The map highlights land reserved for a church near the Esplanade, in the city's heart. On this site, the foundation stone for the original St. Andrew's Church was laid in 1835.



View of St Andrew's Cathedral, early 20th century



Top left: This photograph, which was likely taken in 1900 or earlier, shows the Cathedral without some of the fixtures currently in place today. For example, the apse did not have the reredos, which was installed in 1905, or the brass communion rails, which were fitted in 1900.

Top right: Likely taken in 1872 or earlier, this photograph shows the Cathedral without the Macpherson window; in its place were fixed timber louvres. The pulpit was also an earlier version; the current pulpit was donated in 1889. Punkahs were still in use and there were no hanging lights.

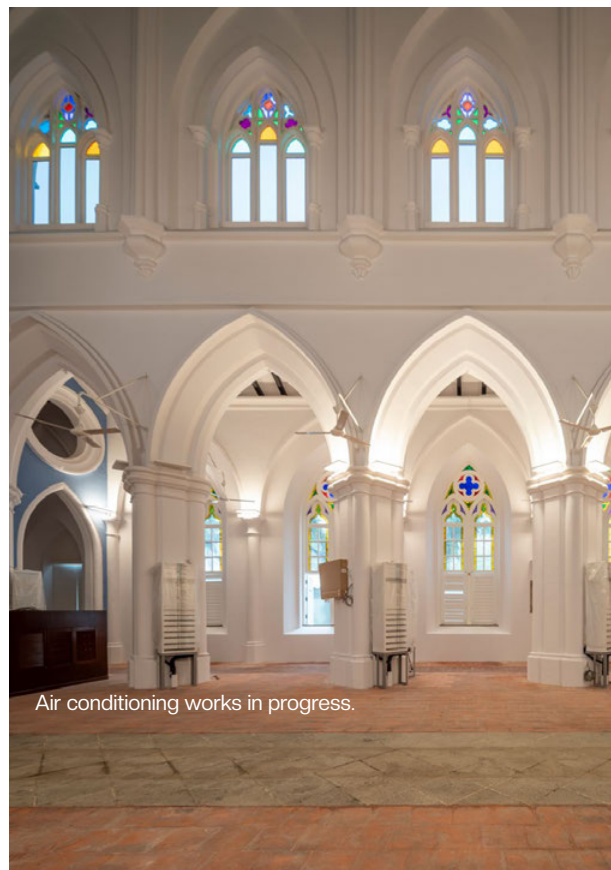




Scaffolding erected to facilitate the removal of plaster from the wall.



Worker gently removing plasters along the bricks.



Air conditioning works in progress.





Cathedral's bell tower fully wrapped for restoration works.



In early 2022, the Cathedral was cordoned off and church services moved to other locations such as the Cathedral New Sanctuary and newly built Pavilion. Restoration was completed about two years later, just in time for Christmas in 2023. There was a palpable sense of relief and joy among members when the first post-restoration Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve services were held.

The restoration story, however, does not end there. During this period, several significant historical findings were made which were of great interest to historians, architects and faithful members of the Cathedral.

Restoration of some of the plaques and decorations around the Cathedral also

showed off the original brilliant background colours. These included the insignias of the Singapore Volunteer Corps, Singapore Royal Artillery (Volunteers), Singapore Royal Engineers (Volunteers), Penang and Province Wellesley Volunteer Corps and Malacca Volunteer Corps; the Astral Crown (Air Forces) and Chinese Dragon; and the coat-of-arms of the Viceroy of India.

Restoration work on the deteriorated fleur-de-lis exposed its construction method. This was restored and patination oil was applied as a protective barrier, preventing the lead from oxidizing and forming white streaks, especially when exposed to moisture. ☒

Crack lines caused during the building of City Hall MRT Station next to the Cathedral were discovered after the removal of plaster at the upper level of the Nave.



Photo by Darren Soh





Restoration in progress: 2022-2023



Fleur-de-lis uncovered during restoration and carefully restored.



Above: A row of decorative frieze plaster moulding was discovered hidden behind a suspended vaulted ceiling in the narthex.



Left: The granite cloister vault ribs and boss were revealed.



Attempts to identify 'A.A.F.' inscribed on a memorial beneath the High Altar table have so far been unsuccessful.

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# Our Wartime Legacy

## Military Emblems at St Andrew's Cathedral

• Patrick Lau •

### Introduction

When one enters the Cathedral building through the Graham White Library at the North Transept Hall, one may not notice the faded military emblems outside on the balcony and the walls. These emblems are in fact, a reminder of the War Memorial Hall, which was officially opened in September 1952 to commemorate those who had died during the Battle of Malaya (8 December 1941 – 31 January 1942) and Battle of Singapore (8 to 15 February 1942) during World War II. These military emblems are the commemorative plaques of military forces which had fought in the 2 mentioned military campaigns and the other emblems are those commemorating allies who had fought during World War II

To mark the 80th anniversary of the Fall of Singapore, the St Andrew's Cathedral Heritage Committee decided to explore the emblems in greater detail. The Heritage Committee could not locate the actual records on why these particular emblems were chosen, although some records from the Australian Archives revealed that there were much discussions on these emblems which involved the War Office in the United Kingdom. Archival records revealed the involvement of General A.G. O'Carroll Scott's (General Officer Commanding of the Singapore Base District), whose staff

was in contact with the War Office concerning the military units which had fought in the two mentioned military Campaigns in World War II. General O'Carroll Scott stated that many military service units would be keen to have their names associated with the Memorial Hall for posterity.

The Heritage Committee had done much research on these emblems and found that many of them were those of the Volunteer Corps in Singapore and Malaya. Many of the Singapore Volunteer Corp members, including the Engineer and Artillery units, and together with their families were congregational members of St Andrew's Cathedral. They would have come together in corporate worship, to hear God's Word, celebrate Holy Communion, prayed and fellowship together with other congregational members in the Memorial Hall and elsewhere. The Cathedral was for them, a sanctuary of God's Love, Hope, Peace and Joy.

Through this essay, the Heritage Committee hopes to shed more light on the historical background of these emblems and to invite members of the public who have background information to come forward and share them with us.

This would further enhance the knowledge about the Cathedral building and its links with the history of Singapore.



## For the Fallen

*"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them."  
(Laurence Binyon)*



*As shown above, the emblem of the SAF Volunteer Corps has retained many features of the rich heritage of the Singapore Volunteer Corps.*

### Historical Background of the Volunteer Forces in Malaya and Singapore

As mentioned earlier, the emblems on the East and West Balconies of the North Transept were the badges of the various Volunteer Forces in Malaya and Singapore. This essay will begin with give some background information on the mentioned Volunteer forces.

- **1854** – The first Volunteer Force in Malaya and Singapore, was the Singapore Volunteer Rifle Corps (SVRC) which was established due to the escalating violence from the Chinese secret societies and the outbreak of the Crimean War. It was disbanded in 1887 due to dwindling numbers.
- **1888** – Singapore Volunteer Artillery Corps (SVA) was established.
- **1901** – SVA name was changed to Singapore Volunteer Corp (SVC - motto "In Oriente Primus" - "First in the East") to better reflect the diverse composition of the force with the addition of other sub units i.e., infantry, engineers.
- **1914** – The outbreak of World War I led to a further increase in the enrolment of SVC.
- **1915** – SVC took part in the suppression of the Sepoy Mutiny in Singapore.
- **1922** – SVC was absorbed into the Straits Settlements Volunteer Force (SSVF), forming the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the SSVF. Other units of the SSVF were from the Penang and

Province Wellesley Volunteer Corps (3rd Bn SSVF) and Malacca Volunteer Corp (4th Bn SSVF).

- **1930s** – With war imminent in Europe, many men from various nationalities joined the SSVF. They remained in their civilian employment and received military training at night and on weekends.
- **1942** – The SSVF were involved in the defence of Singapore during World War II and most of its members were captured by the Japanese Army in February 1942.
- **1949** – The SSVF resumed operations after the Japanese Occupation.
- **1954** – The SSVF was disbanded and was absorbed into the Singapore Military Forces (SMF).
- **1951** – SMF was renamed as the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF).
- **1965** – The People's Defence Force (PDF) was formed as a volunteer reserve combat unit to supplement the regular Singapore Army in the defence of Singapore.
- **1984** – Due to dwindling numbers, the last Volunteer battalion was disbanded. The volunteer forces had been in existence for 130 years, though in different names from colonial to post-independent Singapore.
- **2015** – Singapore Armed Forces Volunteer Corps (SAFVC) was formed to enhance the security of Singapore by having volunteers to serve alongside SAF Regulars and NS men in such areas as security surveillance operations, medical, engineering, legal, communications, supply chain and others.

## Identification of Emblems in the North Transept

### North Wall of North Transept



Royal Coat of Arms of the United Kingdom

When the North Transept was completed and officially opened in September 1952, Singapore was still a British Colony. The lion and unicorn supporting the shield represent England and Scotland respectively. The shield is quartered, depicting in the first and fourth quarters the three guardant lions of England; in the second, the rampant lion of Scotland; and in the third, a harp representing Ireland. The compartment at the base of the shield bears the motto of the British monarchy, "Dieu et mon Droit", meaning "God and my Right".





## East Balcony of North Transept



### **Federated Malay States Volunteer Force (FMSVF) Light Battery**

The badge consists of a muzzle loading cannon and surmounted by a crown and a scroll bearing the words "FMSVF Light Battery" with letter "V" at the centre of the loading gun. A light artillery battery is equipped with 105mm howitzers and is equivalent to an infantry company of 3 platoons with 100 to 200 men.



### **Kedah Volunteer Force (KVF)**

The badge has a sheaf of rice (as Kedah is known as the rice bowl of Malaya) and the words, Kedah Volunteer Force. There is also a shield at the top and a scroll at the base of the badge containing some words in the Jawi script. Kedah was part of the 5 Unfederated Malay States and which also included Johore, Kelantan, Terengganu and Perlis.

### **Johore Volunteer Engineers (JVE)**

The badge consists of the head of a rhinoceros, which used to be roaming in the Johore jungle, and a scroll at the base with the words "Johore Volunteer Engineers". Sadly, the wild rhinoceros is now extinct in Malaysia.



### **Federated Malay States Volunteer Force (FMSVF)**

The badge consists of a shield with 4 quarters representing the 4 states of the Federated Malay States (Selangor, Perak, Negeri Sembilan and Pahang) and with a crown at the top and a surrounding scroll containing the words "Federated Malay States VF. "

### **Kelantan Volunteer Force (KVF)**

The badge consists of the head of a water buffalo with the words "Kelantan Volunteer Force" and with the year 1914 at the base, probably the year when it was formed. The water buffalo is a common draft animal in Kelantan.





## West Balcony of North Transept



### **Singapore Royal Artillery (Volunteers) (SRA (V))**

The badge consists of a muzzle loading cannon with the words "Singapore Royal

Artillery" with a letter "V" in the centre of the cannon and the words "In Oriente Primus" (First in the East) below the crown.



### **Penang and Province Wellesley Volunteer Corps (P & PWVC)**

*(3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, Straits Settlements Volunteer Force)*

The badge consists of the head of a water buffalo with the Prince of Wales feathers with the German motto "Ich Dien" (I serve) above the buffalo's head. It is surrounded by the words "Penang & Province Wellesley Volunteer Corps" with a crown on top. Penang was formerly known as the Prince of Wales Island. Rice growing is an important part of Province Wellesley's (mainland Penang) economy and the water buffalo is an important part of the rice growing process.

### **Singapore Volunteer Corps (SVC)**



*(1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalions, Straits Settlements Volunteer Force)*

The badge consists of a lion next to a palm tree with the words, "Singapore Volunteer Corps" surrounding it and with

a crown at the top and the motto "In Oriente Primus" (First in the East) at the base of the lion. Singapore is known as the Lion City (Singapura).

### **Singapore Royal Engineers ((Volunteer) SRE (V))**

The badge consists of a crown at the top with the Royal Cypher GRI (Georgius Rex Imperator King George VI) in the centre and surrounded by a wreath with the words "Singapore Royal Engineers" and a letter "V" in the base. There is also the motto "In Oriente Primus" (First in the East) at the base, below the letter "V".



### **Malacca Volunteer Corps (MVC)**

*(4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Straits Settlements Volunteer Force)*

The badge consists of the Porta de Santiago gate of the A Formosa fort in Malacca and surrounded by the words "Malacca Volunteer Corps" in a scroll, a wreath and with a crown at the top. There is a letter "V" at the base of the fort with the motto "Firm though Few". The fort was originally a Portuguese fort, which was built in 1512 and is an icon of Malacca.







## Other Emblems in the East Wall of North Transept

### Identified as an Anchor



As far as we know, there is no military unit in the Malayan and Singapore Theatre during World War II with just an anchor symbol.

Based on this anchor emblem, we believe that it is associated with the Navy.

### Identified as an Astral Crown

It is an Astral crown, which has stars and wings from some of the points in the crown. It is likely that this emblem represents some Air Force, possibly the Malayan Volunteer Air Force (MVAf).



### Rod of Asclepius

The Rod of Asclepius is a simple rod entwined by a serpent, traditionally symbolising healing and medicine.



### Identified as a Mural Crown



It is a mural crown, which is a crown representing city walls and it was an ancient Roman military decoration which later became a symbol of heraldry.

Based on the mural crown emblem, we believe that it is associated with the Land Forces (Army).

### The Royal Army Medical Corps

The Royal Army Medical Corps emblem as shown above is more elaborate and besides the rod of Asclepius, includes a crown, a wreath and the Latin motto "In Ardis Fidelis" ("Faithful in Adversity").

Hence, it is likely that this emblem is associated with some Medical Corps unit.



### Identified as a Naval Crown



It is a Naval crown, which was a crown surmounted with prows of ships and it was also a Roman military award relating to

the Navy. A crown represents power, glory and sovereignty.

Another possibility could be that this emblem represents the Malayan Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve (MRNVR).



## Other Emblems in the West Wall of North Transept



### Identified as the Coat of Arms of Australia

It consists of a shield, depicting symbols of Australia's six states, and is held up by the native Australian animals, the kangaroo, on the left and the emu on the right.

The Australian 8<sup>th</sup> Division and some Australian Force elements were very much involved in the Battle of Singapore and Malaya and this Coat of Arms could have commemorated the contribution and sacrifices of the Australian Army and some Air Force elements (RAAF).



### Identified as the Coat of Arms of the United States

It consists of an American bald eagle supporting a shield with 13 stripes of red and white representing the original 13 States with a blue bar uniting the shield and representing Congress. The motto "E Pluribus Unum" (Out of many, one), refers to this union. The olive branch and 13 arrows grasped by the eagle allude to peace and war, and the constellation of stars symbolises the new nation. While the Americans were not involved

in the Singapore and Malayan campaigns, they were heavily involved in the Pacific Theatre (e.g., Iwo Jima, Tarawa, Guadalcanal, Midway, Papua New Guinea, Solomons etc and the Philippines).

However, we believe that that American seal was included as they were an important ally during the Second World War.



### Identified as a Chinese Dragon

It is a Chinese dragon, but the national emblem of the Republic of China during World War II was not this emblem – it was the Blue Sky and White Sun of the Kuomintang. Thus, it is unlikely that this dragon was intended to represent China, as no Chinese army was involved in the Singapore or Malayan campaigns. It is likely that this emblem commemorated the Singapore Overseas Chinese Anti-Japanese Volunteer Army or Dalforce, which was named after their commander, Lieutenant Col John Dalley of the Federated Malay States Police Force. It was created on 25 December 1941 and members, both men and women, were recruited from the different socio-economic groups of Chinese in

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Many of the Singapore Volunteer Corp members,  
including the Engineer and Artillery units, and together with their families  
were congregational members of St Andrew's Cathedral.  
The Cathedral was for them, a sanctuary of God's Love, Hope, Peace and Joy.

•

Singapore and this irregular force, which had no uniforms, emblems or flags was part of the Straits Settlements Volunteer Force during World War II. It was estimated that the Force suffered 300 casualties and many of them were captured and subsequently tortured and executed during the Sook Ching ("Purge") massacre. The Dalforce was considered to be among the most motivated force to fight against the Japanese in the Singapore and Malayan campaigns.



#### **Identified as the Coat of Arms of the Netherlands**

It consists of a shield with a lion within grasping a sword and some arrows and which in turn is supported by two lions with the words "Je Maintiendrai" (I Shall Maintain) at the base. Above the shield there is a mantle and pavilion and topped by a crown.

The Netherlands fell to Nazi Germany on 15 May 1940 and the nation was thereafter under German control for about 5 years during World War II. However, there was some Dutch Airforce elements that were involved in the Malayan Campaign. On 8 December 1941, the Dutch government in exile in London, declared war on Japan and some Dutch soldiers were involved in fighting against the invading

Japanese Army in the Dutch East Indies (now known as Indonesia).



#### **Identified as Star of India**

This is the Order of the Star of India, which was an order of chivalry founded by Queen Victoria in 1861. This Order had 3 classes – Knight Grand Commander, Knight Commander and Companion and it became dormant after the partition of India in 1947. The motto was "Heaven's Light our Guide" and was often used as an informal emblem of British India.

It is likely that this emblem was to commemorate the contributions and sacrifices of the Indian soldiers in the Malayan and Singapore campaigns. They comprised more than 50% of the Allied infantry forces, which totalled about 80,000, in the Malaya/Singapore campaigns. Many of them were young, inexperienced and poorly trained as the more experienced Indian officers and NCOs were sent to the Mediterranean campaign. The Indian forces in Malaya/Singapore included the 9th Indian Infantry Division, 11th Indian Infantry Division, 12<sup>th</sup> Indian Infantry Brigade, 44<sup>th</sup> and 45<sup>th</sup> Indian Infantry Brigade and 28<sup>th</sup> Gurkha Infantry Brigade. ☒

Lest we forget



# Reaching Out to Singapore: A HUB FOR THE CITY

With its central location, the Cathedral serves as a heart and hub of outreach to share God's love and Gospel to Singapore

• Revd Andrew Yap •

**S**ituated in the heart of Singapore's civic district, St Andrew's Cathedral serves not only as a place of worship, but also as a vibrant hub for outreach. With its iconic open grounds and central location, the Cathedral welcomes a steady stream of visitors every day, both from Singapore and around the world.

On weekends, especially, the Cathedral's grounds come alive with the presence of many Myanmar nationals who gather around it to connect with friends, relax and enjoy picnics together. Seeing the potential to serve

and support this community, the Cathedral launched the Befriending Migrant Workers (BMW) Ministry in 2018.

Established to reach out to migrant workers, particularly those from Myanmar, the BMW Ministry offers support to help them integrate more smoothly into life in Singapore. Initially focused on providing English tuition classes to help them overcome the language barrier, it has since grown significantly.

For example, BMW began holding ukulele classes and art workshops, providing participants with creative outlets and

Led by Patricia Aw, the ukulele class is a popular course, well attended by migrant workers.



opportunities for self-expression. It also extended the English lessons to cater to Mandarin-speaking migrant workers, thus broadening the ministry's inclusivity.

In addition, BMW runs sessions on practical life skills, such as financial stewardship and scam awareness, which are crucial for migrant workers navigating life in a foreign country. Cooking classes are another highlight, offering participants a taste of local cuisine while building friendships across cultures. These activities aim not just to teach, but to accompany our migrant worker friends on their journey—fostering community, belonging, and support.

Another significant outreach effort is the Cathedral's Alpha course, which takes advantage of the church's central location to draw a wide range of participants. Held twice a year, each Alpha run is unique, attracting individuals from various backgrounds, including students, professionals, and retirees.

The course, centred on exploring life and the Christian faith in a welcoming and informal environment, is structured around engaging video talks, open discussions and shared

Our Cathedral volunteers delivering gift packs to the residents at Bukit Merah.



Our Cathedral volunteers Audrey, Leslie, and Yew Seng conducting English lessons for migrant workers.





Senior volunteers from the Cathedral singing a joyful medley of Christmas songs, spreading cheer to the residents of Bukit Merah during the festive lunch gathering.

meals. Many participants have found Alpha to be a transformative experience, leading some to take further steps in their faith through baptism and confirmation, and continuing their faith journey in the Cathedral community.

Beyond the church grounds, the Cathedral extends its care to the broader community through the Adopt-a-Block in the Community (ABC) initiative. Focused on the Bukit Merah View area, where many elderly residents live alone in one-room rental flats, this ministry sees volunteers visiting these blocks regularly.

Each month, volunteers distribute food packs, offer companionship, and organise activities to keep residents mentally and physically active. The ministry also marks special events, such as Christmas, by organising gatherings at the Cathedral, excursions to Gardens by the Bay, and heritage tours of the Cathedral, which provide joyful highlights and strengthen the bonds between volunteers and residents.

Through these outreach initiatives, Cathedral continues to live out its mission: to be a place of hope, hospitality and healing for all who enter its doors. 🏡



A resident of Bukit Merah posing with our Cathedral volunteers during the distribution of gift packs.





**A.** Warm greetings and welcome by our members to the residents  
**B.** A happy resident receiving a gift from the blessing draw.  
**C.** Smiles all around as guests and volunteers connect and pose for a group picture.  
**D.** Special arrangements were made to ensure the residents could join the event.  
**E.** Our volunteers actively engaging with residents through a fun fishing game.

Photos by Allan Tee



## Vicar's Reflection

• Revd Christopher Chan •

**B**y the grace of God, St Andrew's Cathedral occupies a special place in Singapore's Christian landscape, both in a physical as well as spiritual sense.

Physically, the Cathedral is situated in the heart of the civic district, sitting on land allocated under the direction of Sir Stamford Raffles. This prime location is a clear display of divine providence. Spiritually, the Cathedral is widely regarded as a symbol of unity for the local Christian community, and it has a special duty towards both the Church in Singapore and the nation as a whole.

The Cathedral was gazetted as a national monument in 1973. This recognition of its historical significance is certainly noteworthy, but it is in no way a relic of the past. Instead, the Cathedral is a living organism: a Spirit-filled community of disciples with a mission to share with our nation and the world the life that is ours in Jesus Christ.

In accordance with our Lord's teaching in Matthew 5, we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world, and we must let our light shine before others so that they might see our good works

Members of the congregation actively partaking in service at the Nave.





•

The Cathedral is a living organism: a Spirit-filled community of disciples with a mission to share with our nation and the world the life that is ours in Jesus Christ.

•

and glorify our Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16). Being disciples of Christ, we should “seek the welfare of the city” (Jeremiah 29:7), doing so based not on human wisdom but according to biblical principles and values. Throughout the years, all this has been a vital part of the Cathedral's mission and ministry, and this must continue for many years to come.

I count it a privilege to be writing this article as the Vicar of St Andrew's Cathedral. My predecessors deserve much credit for laying a strong foundation for the Cathedral's

present ministry, and I will do my utmost to build on their good work. As we give thanks to God for watching over and blessing our nation in the past 60 years, let us also renew our commitment to Him and ask Him to fulfil His purpose for Singapore in and through us. To God be the glory! ☒

Providing shelter to guests attending the “Christmas is Love” lunch.



Distributing Christmas gift packs to workers involved in the Nave restoration.



Smiling faces of participants at the English class held at the Welcome Centre.





# • church in action - 1960 - 1970s •



Photos A, B, C & E from Anthony Dumper archives.

A. Cathedral Women's Fellowship arranging flowers for weekend services.

B. Verger Ah Boon preparing the stall for service.

C. Cathedral picnic with members Lee Sooh Lan and Wong Hoe Eng.

D. Children joining the procession on Palm Sunday.

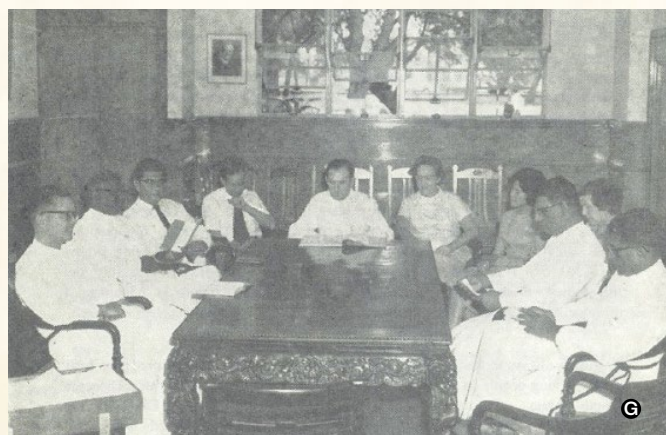
E. Choir practice in the Nave.

F. Members outside the Nave after service.





Photo B from Anthony Dumper archives.



A. Candidate being baptised by Canon Frank Lomax and Revd Alan McMahon.  
 B. Lee Sooh Lan, secretary to the Vicar attending to a call.  
 C. Parochial Church Council Meeting.  
 D. Sunday School children in a Christmas play.  
 E. Sunday School teachers gathered for a picture.  
 F. Members at a Garden Party raising funds for a meaningful cause.  
 G. Tuesday staff meeting discussing areas of concern and planning for weekend services.



# • church in action - 2020s •



A



B



D



C



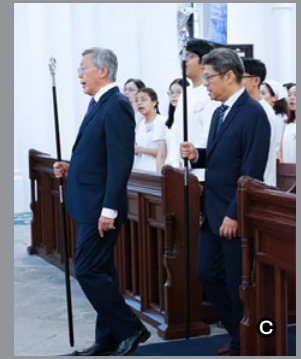
E



F

- A. Members receiving Holy Communion from licensed lay readers.
- B. Servers processing out with the closing hymn.
- C. Members on the Electoral Roll casting their votes.
- D. Choir members leading the congregation in the opening hymn.
- E. Worship team leading the congregation at the Church Camp 2025.
- F. Commissioning of the cell group leaders at the Combined Cell Group Gathering.





- A. Shalom Friends superintendent Linette Chen at the booth during the Ministry Fair.
- B. Members returning from the Parish of the Week Walk and Run.
- C. Parochial Church Council member Andrew Goh and People's Warden Soh Kim Seng serving at the Confirmation Service.
- D. Bishop Dr John Chew laying hands on a confirmand during the service.
- E. Children serving at a fellowship meal.
- F. Wedding service held in the Nave.
- G. Revd Christopher Chan baptising a member.
- H. Members participating in activities during Church Camp 2025.
- I. Cell group gathering.







- A. Young adults fellowshiping over barbecue at church.
- B. Making new friends through food and conversation.
- C. Youths gathered for a group photo after service.
- Children proudly displaying their medals at the Children's Day celebration.
- E. Youths praying for one another in response to the Ministry of the Word.
- F. Children and teachers at the combined Children's Day Celebration.





A



B



C



D



E

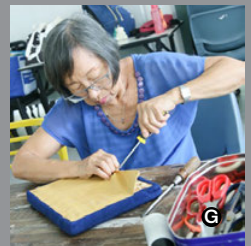
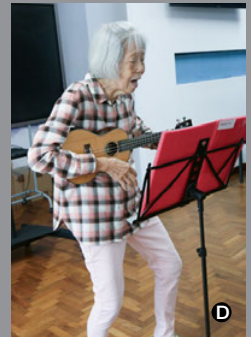
- A. Children posing with the craftwork at the Children's Camp.
- B. Children engaged in the flash card memory game during the Children's Camp.
- C. Young adults getting to know one another through an activity.
- D. Youths participating in a team activity at Youth Camp.
- E. Snapshot of the Children's Camp.
- F. Youth Camp 2024.



F



# • seniors in action •



- A. Our seniors' ukulele group practising for a visit to the nursing home.
- B. Working on a floral arrangement at the Graham White Library.
- C. Our seniors learning watercolour painting.
- D. Joyful singing and playing of the ukulele by one of our seniors.
- E. Harpists playing songs at the Welcome Centre.
- F. Our sewing team working on their latest project.
- G. Our volunteer repairing a kneeler from the Nave.
- H. Seniors keep fit through dance.
- I. The Golden Voices performing at the Welcome Centre.



# • family life in action •



A. Couples at the Marriage Retreat in Changi Cove.  
 B & D. Couples participating in a special Date Night.  
 C. Families enjoying a movie night at the Pavilion.  
 E. Cathedral's Family Life team in action at Batam.  
 F. Cathedral's Family Life team participating at the Ministry Fair.  
 G. Cathedral's Family life team dressing up to serve snacks at Movie Night.





## • staff in action •



A. Staff from the English and Mandarin congregations of Westside Anglican Church and Jurong Christian Centre (Mandarin) gather for a joyful Combined Year-End Thanksgiving Party.

B. & C. Revd Daniel Lim (B, centre) and Revd Moses Israeli (C, far left) leading a group of runners at the Parish of the Week Walk & Run!

D. Staff enjoying fellowship over a meal during the team retreat.

E. Our dedicated staff serving as bus captains during Church Camp 2025, ensuring smooth transport for all.

F. Staff member Timothy Aurora overseeing logistics and ensuring everything runs smoothly across all venues.

G. Celebrating life and community at our monthly staff birthday celebration.



# • missions •



- A. Praying for one another in Mae Sot, Thailand.
- B. A volunteer engaging students during an English lesson at the Welcome Centre.
- C. Team ministering to the villagers in Cambodia.
- D. Sharing a Bible story with children at Project Khmer H.O.P.E.
- E. Painting a vibrant mural to brighten the walls of PKH English School, Cambodia.
- F. Our missionary, Heidi, joining in worship at a church in Indonesia.
- G. Connecting with children through fun and fellowship in Mae Sot, Thailand.
- H. Our members delivering care packs in Bukit Merah as part of our local outreach.



## BISHOPS of Singapore



The Right Revd  
**CHARLES FERGUSON-DAVIE**  
1909 - 1927



The Right Revd  
**BASIL COLBY ROBERTS**  
1927 - 1941



The Right Revd  
**JOHN LEONARD WILSON**  
1941 - 1949



The Right Revd  
**HENRY WOLFE BAINES**  
1949 - 1961



The Right Revd  
**CYRIL KENNETH SAINSBURY**  
1961 - 1966



The Right Revd  
**JOSHUA CHIU BAN IT**  
1966 - 1982



The Right Revd Dr  
**MOSES TAY LENG KONG**  
1982 - 2000



The Right Revd Dr  
**JOHN CHEW HIANG CHEA**  
2000 -2012



The Right Revd  
**RENNIS PONNIAH**  
2012 - 2020



The Right Revd Dr  
**TITUS CHUNG KHIAM BOON**  
2020 - Present

## DEANS of the Cathedral



The Very Revd  
**EDWARD OSCAR SHEILD**  
1958 - 1964



The Very Revd  
**ANTHONY CHARLES DUMPER**  
1964 - 1970



The Right Revd  
**JOSHUA CHIU BAN IT**  
1970-1982



The Right Revd  
**MOSES TAY LENG KONG**  
1982 - 1991



The Very Revd  
**JOHN TAN TENG WAI**  
1991 - 1996



The Very Revd Dr  
**JOHN TAY SIN HOCK**  
1996 - 2004



The Right Revd Dr  
**JOHN CHEW HIANG CHEA**  
2004 - 2006



The Very Revd  
**KUAN KIM SENG**  
2007 - 2015



The Right Revd  
**RENNIS PONNIAH**  
2015 - 2020



The Right Revd Dr  
**TITUS CHUNG KHIAM BOON**  
2020 - Present



## VICARS of the Cathedral



The Revd Canon  
**RONALD HOWDEN WELLER**  
1970 - 1973



The Revd Canon  
**FRANK LOMAX**  
1974 - 1986



The Revd Canon Dr  
**LOUIS TAY SENG KONG**  
1986 - 1991



The Very Revd  
**JOHN TAN TENG WAI**  
1991 - 1996



The Very Revd Dr  
**JOHN TAY SIN HOCK**  
1996 - 2004



The Revd Canon  
**KUAN KIM SENG**  
2004 - 2015



The Revd Canon  
**TERRY WONG**  
2015 - 2020



The Revd Canon Dr  
**LEWIS LEW**  
2021 - 2023



The Revd  
**CHRISTOPHER CHAN**  
2024 - Present

## PRIESTS-IN-CHARGE, Mandarin Congregation of the Cathedral



The Revd Canon  
**SVERRE HOLTH**  
1954 - 1955



The Revd Canon  
**HUANG YANG YING**  
1956 - 1961



The Revd  
**DAVID DANG SING HIONG**  
1961 - 1964



The Revd  
**PETER LEUNG**  
1964 - 1967



The Revd Canon  
**DAVID DANG SING HIONG**  
1967 - 1977



Venerable  
**LAU TEIK OON**  
1978 - 1986



The Revd Canon  
**LIM KOK HENG**  
1986 - 2002



The Revd Canon  
**ONG MING KING**  
2002 - 2009



The Revd Canon Dr  
**TITUS CHUNG KHAM BOON**  
2009 - 2020



The Revd  
**AN YUE JIN**  
2020 - Present

# The Clergy and Deaconess of St Andrew's Cathedral, 2025



Revd Moses  
Israeli  
Priest, English  
Congregation



Revd An Yue Jin  
Priest-in-charge,  
Mandarin  
Congregation



Revd Christopher  
Chan  
Vicar



Revd Ng Lian Wen,  
Priest, Mandarin  
Congregation



Revd Kueh  
Chun Chiang  
Deacon, Mandarin  
Congregation



Revd Daniel Lim  
Priest, English  
Congregation



Ds Ti Lian Swan  
Deaconess,  
English  
Congregation



Revd Andrew  
Yap  
Priest, English  
Congregation



Revd Dr Timothy  
Chong  
Honorary Priest,  
English  
Congregation



## ENGLISH SERVICES

Day & Time	Holy Communion	Venue
Saturday 4:45pm	2nd and 4th week	CNS <i>Cathedral New Sanctuary</i>
Sunday 8:00am	Weekly	Nave
Sunday 9:30am	2nd and 4th week	CNS <i>Cathedral New Sanctuary</i>
Sunday 11:30am	1st, 3rd & 5th week <i>Morning Prayer every 2nd and 4th Sunday</i>	Nave
Sunday 2:00pm Youth Service	— <i>No Youth Service on the 4th Sunday of the month</i>	North Transept
Sunday 4:30pm	Weekly <i>Evensong Service is held on the last Sunday of the month (no administration of Holy Communion).</i>	Nave
Wednesday 12:30pm	Weekly	Nave

## MANDARIN SERVICES

Day & Time	Holy Communion	Venue
Sunday 9:30am	1st, 3rd & 5th Week	Nave
Sunday 11:30am	1st, 3rd & 5th Week	CNS <i>Cathedral New Sanctuary</i>
Sunday 4:30pm	1st, 3rd & 5th Week	CNS <i>Cathedral New Sanctuary</i>

## OTHER LANGUAGES

Day & Time	Holy Communion	Venue
Sunday 11:30am Hokkien Svc	2nd week	Chapel for All Peoples
Sunday 2:30pm Myanmar Svc	Weekly	CNS <i>Cathedral New Sanctuary</i>
Sunday 2:30pm Cantonese Svc	1st, 3rd & 5th Week	Nave



As we give thanks to God  
for watching over and blessing our nation  
in the past 60 years,  
let us also renew our commitment to Him  
and ask Him to fulfil His purpose for Singapore  
in and through us.  
To God be the glory!

Revd Christopher Chan  
Vicar, St Andrew's Cathedral





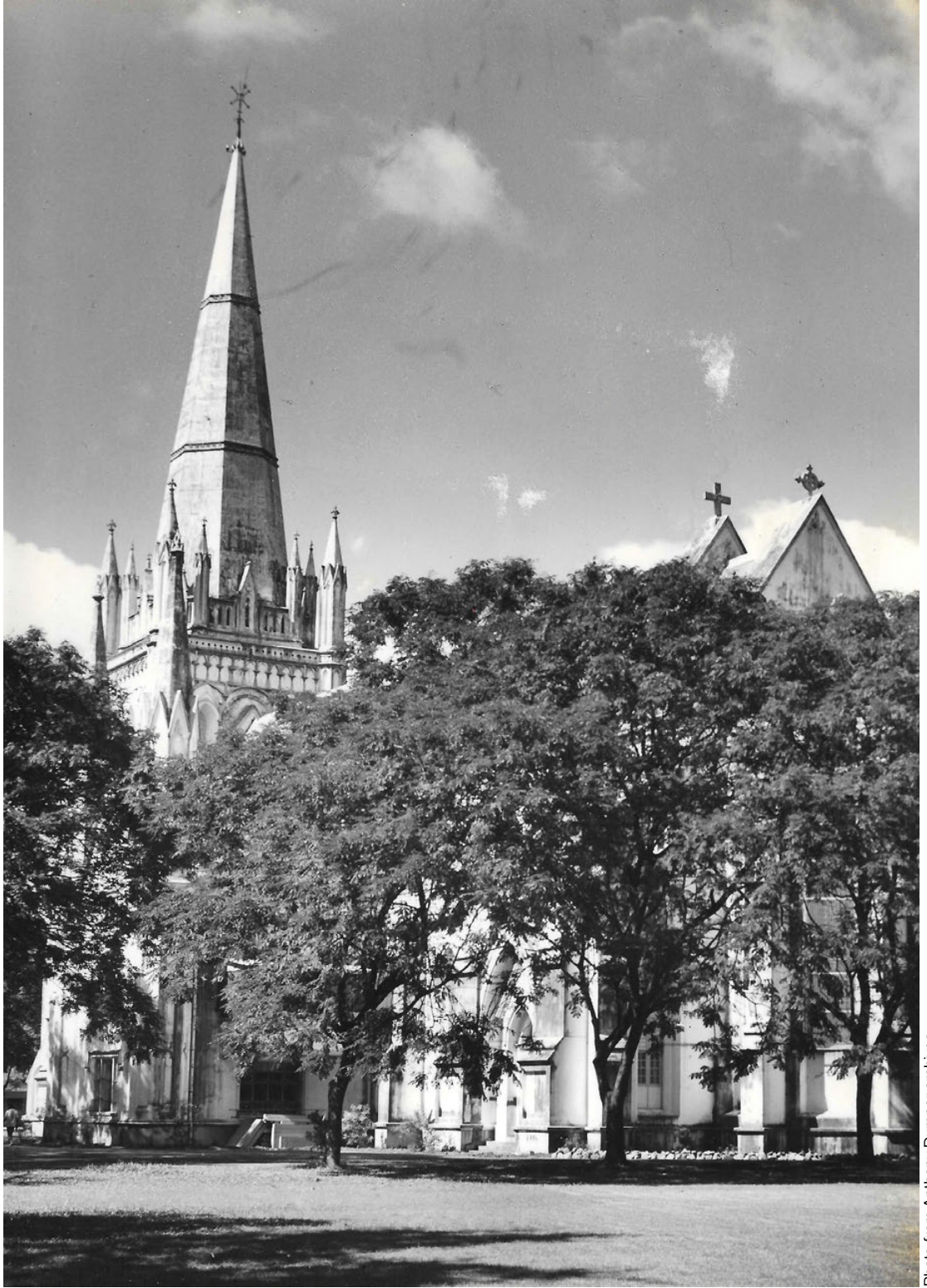


Photo from Anthony Dumper archives.