



March 2025

From the Bell Tower



News and updates for the Christ Church Bangkok community

From the Vicar's desk

I often sign off on an email or text with the word, 'Blessings' I prefer this to 'God bless' or 'yours in Jesus', etc. I use this word as I would like the recipient to receive something of God's blessing whatever the content of the email or text might be.

What does it mean to receive a blessing from God?

This year in Lent we are following a series of studies from Matthew 5: 1-12 known as The Beatitudes or, you might rename them, the road to blessing. On first inspection, these look like a set of impossible demands that we could never reach – such as 'blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven'. I know many people who are poor in spirit and have no conception that they are blessed. That is, until you turn the meaning around. The Kingdom of Heaven is Jesus himself, and the beatitudes are not a series of tests or expectations but rather a deeper understanding that we are blessed when we come to Jesus wanting a relationship with Him – it's our poverty of spirit that opens the door for this to happen. It's turning the expectations of the world upside down, it's a new radical way of thinking, and it's all undeserved – or unconditional – Grace.

So I hope you might be blessed as you consider what these Beatitudes mean for you – there are lots of ways to dig deeper into the eight blessings at CCB - the Lent and Easter leaflet explains them all so please join us on the road to blessings.

Blessings,
Rev. Norman

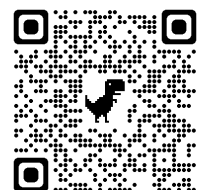
Volunteer opportunities

We are looking for ***enthusiastic and passionate volunteers*** who would like to serve in the following areas: welcoming, ushering, Bible reading, leading prayers, leading the service, teaching in Lighthouse, choir – singers, musicians.

If you are interested, please contact Okey Okafor at:

administrator@christchurchbangkok.org

or scan the QR code.



Lent and Holy Week schedule

Mondays through 14 April, Monday Break fellowship activity, 10.30 am -12 pm at the Vicarage (contact Sue Jones for details at jonessuepudsey@gmail.com)

Tuesdays through 15 April, Exploring Exodus Bible study, 7 pm on Zoom (contact the church office for details at office@christchurchbangkok.org)

Fridays through 18 April, Fasting Fridays, 8 am - 6 pm (contact Rev. Norman for details at vicar@christchurchbangkok.org)

13 April, Palm Sunday, 7.30 am and 10 am services – sermon: *Blessed are the purists*

16 April, Reading of St. Mark's gospel, 7 pm on Zoom (contact the church office for details at office@christchurchbangkok.org)

17 April, Maundy Thursday, 7 pm joint service with the Thai congregation

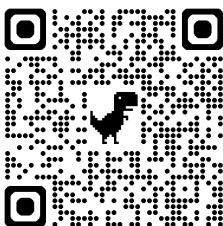
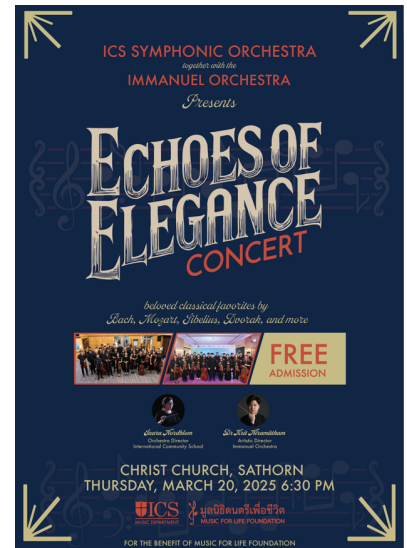
18 April, Good Friday, 2-3 pm service

20 April, Easter Sunday, 7.30 am and 10 am services – sermon: *Blessed are the blamed*

*God of goodness and mercy,
hear my prayer as I begin this Lenten journey with you. Let me be honest with
myself as I look into my heart and soul, noticing the times I turn away from you.
Guide me as I humbly seek to follow you more deeply through this season.*

Announcements

- The International Community School (ICS) Orchestra and Immanuel Orchestra will be performing at Christ Church on 20 March at 6.30 pm. Although the concert is free, donations will be accepted to benefit the Music for Life Foundation, which offers music lessons at Immanuel Lutheran Church to children from the Klong Toei neighborhood at no cost to their families, as well as university scholarships to study music.
- The Bishop of Singapore is coming to Christ Church on the 4th of May and will be holding a **Confirmation Service** at the 10 am service, which will be followed by a parish lunch.



- Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on **11 May**. Those who would like to participate need to be registered on our Electoral Roll. Please scan the QR code on the left to complete the form even if you were on the Roll in previous years. Sign-ups are due by **6 April**.

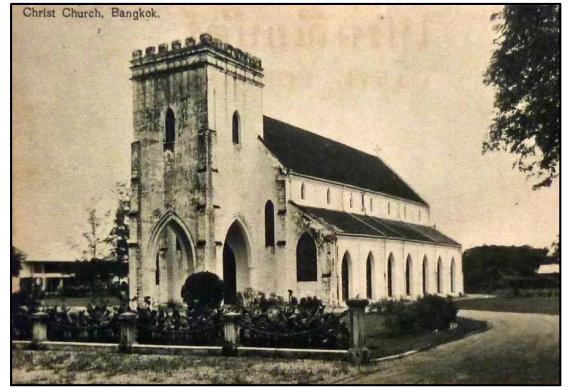
Time for a holistic renovation of Christ Church's buildings

The main church building is almost 120 years old and is showing signs of wear. Settlement of the ground has made the building lower than the surrounding areas, increasing risks of flooding. Water leakages in the exterior walls have led to weakening of the interior walls. The walls have been tilting, leading to growing cracks in the concrete – visible inside and outside the church.

As was shared during during the worship services on 9 March, the PCC has been working with experts within and outside the congregation to conduct detailed surveys of the church buildings and overall campus to assess existing conditions and damage, in order to prioritize repair needs.

The first step is to urgently fix rain gutter leakages and exterior cracks to minimize future water damage. We will simultaneously develop a longer-term renovation plan that will involve guidance from the Fine Arts Department of Thailand for technical and financial support.

We ask the congregation to please consider how we can be better stewards of our facilities so Christ Church can continue to be a “spiritual oasis” for generations to come. Please pray for the Lord to guide this initiative and contact the PCC if you would like to be involved through emailing the office at office@christchurchbangkok.org.



Meet Bob Gosling

I first came to Thailand in 1967 as a teacher under contract to the Thai Government. The fact that I obtained this contract straight after my graduate training year (a long story) was clear evidence to me that the Lord wanted me here. Also, coming here gave me the chance to marry the love of my life, Shara, whom I had met in the UK and who was then teaching at Thammasat University. We now have one daughter and a grand-daughter.



Over the years, as a Christian working mainly in education but later on as a media specialist for the US Government, I have endeavoured to serve the Lord as a “tent-maker” in the area of Bible teaching and preaching. My main ministry has been at the Asian Institute of Technology Fellowship, Rangsit, which I helped set up in the 1970s. The fellowship comprises students and staff from South East Asia and much further afield. I still minister there once a month. We had a 50-year anniversary last year and it was a joy to meet old friends from around the world.

Biblical Hebrew and Greek are of great interest to me. As a teenager in the UK, I was obliged to learn Greek at school. Our studies included reading a comedy by Aristophanes (we nicknamed him “Harry Stuffy-Knees”). The comedy, I have to say, was not a great source of laughs for us boys, but - surprise - after becoming a Christian, I realized how useful Greek is for Biblical studies, and I have continued to study it. I conducted two short courses in Greek and Hebrew for Christ Church members a year or so ago.

Errothe (Farewell/be healthy, Acts 15:29)

Update to Child Protection Policy



The church’s Child Protection Policy has been updated to ensure we maintain high standards to keep our children and youth safe. This and related documents are available on our website at <https://www.christchurchbangkok.org/ministry>. The new Child Protection Officers are Brenda Coughlan and Annette Sohn. Please contact the office if you have questions at office@christchurchbangkok.org.

Bible verses for the Lent season

Is this not the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house – Isaiah 58:6-7

“Yet even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments.” Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and He relents over disaster – Joel 2:12-13

Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking Him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes – Daniel 9:3

And He said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me – Luke 9:23

Reflections from participants in the Confirmation course and Alpha

From 2 March, Rev. Norman began Confirmation classes for those wishing to publicly affirm their faith and an Alpha course for those looking to learn more about what it means to live out their lives as a Christian.

I wanted to be confirmed at Christ Church Bangkok because I was baptised in the Anglican tradition and I have a good relationship and experience with many church members from both the English and Thai congregations. And I have been volunteering to welcome people and for many other activities. Christ Church is my home and my safe zone.

- Nine Kanchanatemiya has been at CCB for 2 years and attends the 730 am service.

I absolutely adore the Alpha course! It's a super important conversation that we often miss in our crazy lives. I'm hoping that by volunteering for the course, I'll get to meet people who are looking for God. Through open and friendly discussions or even actions, maybe the Holy Spirit will plant a seed that leads them to the Lord. Some people think Alpha is only for people who are looking for God or new believers, but after doing the course multiple times, I think it's also great for discipleship, bonding, and even for some believers to rediscover their love for Jesus.

- Reacheany En has been at CCB for 5 years and attends the 10 am service.

