



February 2025

From the Bell Tower

News and updates for the Christ Church Bangkok community

From the Vicar's desk

I have now been in post as Vicar for about two months, it's been a busy and demanding time. When I look at what needs repairing at Christ Church, I sometimes feel rather overwhelmed, I can relate to the feelings of the Psalmist in Psalm 61:

"From the ends of the earth I cry to you, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I."

Increasingly I need to find the 'higher ground', well not just me - we all feel 'swamped' from time to time, that's just the stuff of life. I have been very encouraged in our worship over these past weeks to see some evidence of members of the congregation discovering the 'higher ground' for themselves. This has been especially true through the season of Epiphany when we have been thinking about 'The gifts we bring' and how our gifts can be used by God in His church.

There are some big decisions that the PCC will need to make in the next few months, as we move forward as a church - not looking back but in faith advancing together. I ask for your prayers for all those involved in the leadership of the church, especially the PCC.

Our verse for the year, (2 Corinthians 13.11) uses the phrase, 'Strive for full Restoration....' I see my role as one who helps, with others, to bring Restoration, to that which needs repairing.

Pray for me, as I pray for you,
Rev. Norman Jones

Announcements

- 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. If you are thinking about Confirmation, or confirming faith for yourself, please contact Rev. Norman at vicar@christchurchbangkok.org, as he will be leading a course starting on 2 March, which will meet on Sundays from 8.30-9.30 am in the Prayer Room.
- Thanks to Shirley Langgie for her service as Vicar's Warden through January! She will remain on the PCC and Chris Rajakarier will take up the Warden role.

Meet choir and PCC member, Lynda Rolph

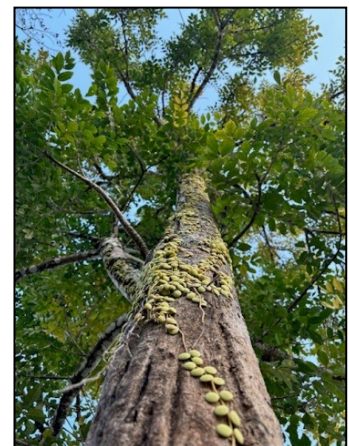
Waking to the sound of gibbons singing across the forest was never something I imagined would be a regular part of my life. My first visit to Thailand was around 1994 when I volunteered for six months with Girl Guides Thailand, supporting the development of nursery schools in Chiang Rai. It was at this time that my connection with Christ Church began.

I had grown up in St Alban's Church North Harrow. As a member of the youth, I played flute or guitar in the music band. We travelled to Christian youth rallies with Anglican Young People's Association (AYPA) and joined other events. All of this exposed me to different types of worship and the opportunity to be involved in leading and praying.

Three years after returning from volunteering, I received a letter from a school in Chiang Mai, inviting me to join their staff to teach junior school science. After two years, I moved to work for an environmental education program in Bangkok. At that time, most work took place with international school students aboard a wooden boat on the Chao Phraya River. Long-term members of Christ Church may remember women's retreats and Lighthouse outings on that little boat.

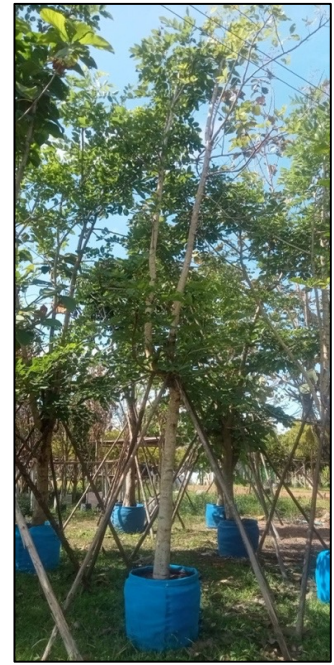
Today, the program is about increasing awareness of the importance of biodiversity and helping young people to be aware of lifestyle choices that lead to a more sustainable life and world. There are many variables in my life, yet being part of Christ Church remains a constant. Over the years, I have served in Sunday School, on different PCC committees, been part of a small group, and sung in the choir. I value the fellowship of Christ Church friends as I continue my own Christian journey.

If you don't see me in church, it probably means I have returned to the forests of Khao Yai, a farm in Chiang Mai, the mangroves of Chanthaburi, or a number of other amazing environments around the country. How incredible to help young people develop curiosity about our world, detach from their gadgets, and observe a spider making its web, or to walk in the forest as gibbons duet overhead!



New trees for the compound

A storm took down one of our trees around the children's play area in October. We will replace it and bring in others to provide additional shade. Thanks to Rev. Ching Wah and Mary Vongsuly for their help to organize this effort!



Bible verses for renewed hope in the new year

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! - 2 Corinthians 5.17

...but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint - Isaiah 40.31

Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert” - Isaiah 4.18-19

Prayer requests for...

Peace in the many areas of the world in conflict and war

Recovery for members of the congregation after recent surgeries and major illnesses

Encouragement for those struggling with their faith in the face of daily challenges

Volunteer opportunities

There will be an *Alpha Course* starting on 2 March for 10 weeks, which will meet on Sundays at 12 pm in the Prayer Room. Interested people can contact the church office at office@christchurchbangkok.org or administrator@christchurchbangkok.org.

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.

