

ONE YEAR IN A CHAT WITH FR DREW

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It's been a year since the Revd Drew Courtright arrived in Hong Kong with his family to take up his new role. He's now settled into life at the Cathedral as Chaplain, while also looking after Discovery Bay Church. So how has it been?

First things first: if he had to sum up the past year in 3 words?



**FRUITFUL.
EXCITING.
TRANSFOR-
MATIVE.**



A TALE OF TWO WORLDS

One thing I've always wondered is what it's like to go between 2 such different communities—the Cathedral in Central and the congregation in Discovery Bay.

'The main difference is the sense of scale', he says. 'At DBC, I've got to know just about everyone—oldtimers and newcomers alike—pretty well. At the Cathedral, I'm often leading a service for people I don't know personally. That's a new one for me!'

He describes DB as 'intimate, homey, and relaxed'. The Cathedral, by contrast, has 'more gravitas'. He adds: 'Being in that building, with a full choir and 200-plus people, standing in that pulpit or at the altar—it's got the weight of 176 years and the heart of the city'.

But he's careful not to compare. 'Neither is better than the other. The Holy Spirit is clearly at work in both places, bringing people to faith in Christ through very different styles of worship'.



A MEMORABLE START

I asked if anything funny happened on his first Sundays. His answer didn't disappoint. 'I hand wrote my sermon! Both times!' he laughs.



His first Sunday at DBC was 5 January, and the Dean was there to officially install him. The problem? He'd only landed on 29 December and hadn't yet set up the printer. So out came the pen and paper.

Then came his first sermon at the Cathedral, for Choral Evensong on 16 February. He'd been watching old videos to brush up on the sung parts—but they were from COVID times, when there was no sermon. 'So I hadn't prepared one', he admits. 'Of course, I could have just asked a colleague, but that would have been too simple for someone like me who tends to overcomplicate things!'



He found out 10 minutes before the service that he was preaching. 'Again, I hand wrote my sermon notes on a piece of paper—blue this time—and I must say, it was a great sermon. The Lord provides. Let's just say I haven't made that mistake again'.

WHAT SURPRISED HIM MOST

At the Cathedral, he's been struck by the diversity. 'So many cultures and languages. Long-time members, newcomers, visitors, tourists. And I've been genuinely surprised by how much the weekday Eucharists mean to people. The regulars' dedication always lifts me up'.

At DBC, it's the challenge—and the beauty—of worshipping in a rented space. Every Sunday, everything has to be set up and then packed away. 'We've got a good store room, and it fits everything—as long as you put things back in the right order. It's like Tetris!'

He admits it can be tough not having a permanent kids' corner or refreshments station. 'But on the other hand, everyone mucks in. I'm still getting used to the sound of plastic chairs being stacked right after the final hymn. But the Holy Spirit feels very present—despite, or maybe because of, the circumstances'.



Looking Ahead

So what's next?

'I'm excited to keep doing what we've been doing in DB—proclaiming and embodying God's grace. The congregation has been so welcoming and trusting. I want to keep getting to know people and reach out more to the wider DB community. We're also hoping to expand our outreach partnerships'.

At the Cathedral, he simply wants to 'keep enjoying being part of such a dynamic church'.

We ended with a short prayer—his own words, and a fitting way to close: 'Gracious God, thank you for bringing me to Hong Kong. You knew it would be a perfect fit, and it is. Guide and empower me to be your faithful servant in DB and at the Cathedral, as we proclaim and embody the Good News of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen'.

Here's to year two!

