

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

Saint Stephen's welcomes everyone who wishes to follow Christ, worship together, grow in faith and share God's love through service to others.



Wednesday, 24 January 2024 9:30am
The feast of Florence Li Tim-Oi

From [Wikipedia](#)



Florence Li Tim-Oi (traditional Chinese: 李添嫻; simplified Chinese: 李添媛; **Jyutping**: *lei5 tim1 oi3*; **pinyin**: *Lǐ Tiān'ài*; 5 May 1907 in [Hong Kong](#) – 26 February 1992 in [Toronto](#)) was the first woman to be [ordained](#) to the priesthood in the [Anglican Communion](#), on 25 January 1944.

Biography

In 1931, Florence Li was present at the ordination of Deaconess [Lucy Vincent](#) at [St. John's Cathedral in Hong Kong](#) when the preacher had asked for women to give their lives to work for Christian ministry. Inspired by this, Li would eventually go to [Canton Union Theological College](#) to receive her theological education before returning to Hong Kong in 1938. After working for two years in [All Saints Church](#), in [Kowloon](#), helping refugees

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Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Allison Cornell

The Greeting

Presider Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

Presider “Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.”—Isaiah 60: 3.

Gloria: The Song of Simeon Luke 2:29-32

**Lord, you now have set your servant free *
to go in peace as you have promised;
For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior, *
whom you have prepared for all the world to see:
A Light to enlighten the nations, *
and the glory of your people Israel.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

The Collect of the Day

Presider *The Lord be with you.*

People **And also with you.**

Presider *Let us pray.*

All: Almighty God, who pours out your Spirit upon your sons and daughters: Grant that we, following the example of your servant Florence Li Tim-Oi, chosen priest in your church, may with faithfulness, patience, and tenacity proclaim your holy gospel to all the nations, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

The Lessons from Scripture *(Please be seated)*

New Testament: A reading from Galatians (3:23-29):

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.

Reader The Word of the Lord

People Thanks be to God

The Psalm:

Psalm 116:1-12

- 1 I love the Lord, because he has heard the voice of my supplication, *
because he has inclined his ear to me whenever I called upon him.**
- 2 The cords of death entangled me;
the grip of the grave took hold of me; *
I came to grief and sorrow.**
- 3 Then I called upon the Name of the Lord: *
"O Lord, I pray you, save my life."**
- 4 Gracious is the Lord and righteous; *
our God is full of compassion.**
- 5 The Lord watches over the innocent; *
I was brought very low, and he helped me.**
- 6 Turn again to your rest, O my soul, *
for the Lord has treated you well.**
- 7 For you have rescued my life from death, *
my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling.**
- 8 I will walk in the presence of the Lord *
in the land of the living.**

**9 I believed, even when I said,
“I have been brought very low.” *
In my distress I said, “No one can be trusted.”**

**10 How shall I repay the Lord *
for all the good things he has done for me?**

**11 I will lift up the cup of salvation *
and call upon the Name of the Lord.**

**12 I will fulfill my vows to the Lord *
in the presence of all his people.**

Gospel Lesson:

Deacon: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to
Luke (5:1-11):

People: **Glory to you Lord Christ.**

Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." Simon answered, "Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets." When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people." When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

Deacon: The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you Lord Christ.**

Sermon/Meditation

Nicene Creed *(Traditional)*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Leader: Let us pray to God, who is made manifest in Jesus Christ. As the prophet Isaiah rang out, “Arise, shine; for your light has come”;

People: Empower your Church, O God, to ring out the Good News of the Light of your son Jesus, which pierces even the deepest darkness.

Leader: As a star rose high into the nighttime sky to draw the nations to the Christ-child;

People: send your blessing, O God, on this nation, and every nation, and draw the whole world to your peace and truth.

Leader: As John the Baptist guided throngs of people to the edge of the wilderness and baptized Jesus in the River Jordan,

People: we pray that you would guide our country and our leaders to the ways of justice and righteousness.

Leader: Like the Magi who traveled from afar to bring gifts and celebrate the Savior’s birth;

People: we pray for this community, and for those who celebrate their own birthdays and anniversaries and other happy occasions.

Leader: As Jesus climbed the mountaintop, and proclaimed blessings on the people of the world;

People: we pray for healing of the sick and comfort for the distressed, relief for the poor, and good news for the desperate.

Leader: As Jesus called his disciples to leave their nets and boats, everything of their former life, and follow him;

People: we pray for those we love and who have answered your call to follow Jesus into your Heavenly Kingdom. Give them your peace.

Leader: In the Anglican cycle of prayer, we pray for **The Diocese of Butare – Eglise Anglicane du Rwanda**. In the diocesan cycle of prayer we pray for **St. Paul's, in Winslow**. With honor and respect we remember the first peoples of this land, especially the Apache and Tohono O’odham, who call this area home.

People: May God bless and keep them healthy and protected.

Presider: Lord Jesus, Light of the World, hear our prayers, and make us

reflections of your Light, that the places of darkness in our world would be pierced by your Light, and that all nations would be drawn to you and be overwhelmed with joy. **Amen.**

Exchange of the Peace

Presider The peace of Christ be always with you.

All **And also with you.**

(The Ministers and People exchange socially distant signs of peace (peace sign, namaste, virtual hug)

Offertory

Presider: Through Christ let us continually offer to God the sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his Name.

The Holy Communion

The Great Thanksgiving

Rite II Prayer B BCP p. 367

Presider *The Lord be with you.*

People **And also with you.**

Presider *Lift up your hearts.*

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Presider: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give knowledge of your glory in the face of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

All:

Sanctus - Hymnal 1982 #S-125

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might
Heaven and earth are full of your glory
Hosana in the highest, Hosana in the highest
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord
Hosana in the highest, Hosana in the highest**

The people stand, sit, or kneel.

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son.

For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said,:

"Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said,

"Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

**We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;**

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts (+) that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant.

Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified (+) by the Holy Spirit.

In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever. **AMEN.**

And now as our savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

The Lord's Prayer:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Fraction: The Breaking of the Bread

(In silence the Presider breaks the bread)

Fraction Anthem

H1982 # S-155

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore, let us keep the feast
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

Invitation to Communion:

Presider: The gifts of God for the people of God.

(In this church, everyone is welcome to receive the bread and wine of Holy Communion. Gluten free bread and real wine are used. If you prefer to dip/intinct your bread into the wine, please come to the left altar rail. If you prefer to take a sip of wine from the cup, please come to the right altar rail. If you prefer to receive a priest blessing instead of the bread and wine, come to either rail and cross your arms over your chest. .

Presider: Let us pray: *Presider and People*

Lord Jesus Christ, by your incarnation you united things earthly and things heavenly. Fill us with the sweetness of inward peace and goodwill, that we may join the heavenly host in singing praises to your glory; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

The Blessing

The Presider says

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child. And may Almighty God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

The Dismissal:

Deacon: *Let us go forth in the peace and spirit of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia!*

People **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia, (Alleluia!)**

Continued from front in Hong Kong who fled mainland China in the midst of the [Second Sino-Japanese War](#), Li was sent by Bishop [Ronald Hall](#) to help with refugees in [Macau](#) at the [Macau Protestant Chapel](#). Six months into her new post, she returned to Hong Kong to be ordained as a deaconess on 22 May 1941 by Bishop Hall at St. John's Cathedral, where she received her first call.^[1]

The Japanese occupation of Hong Kong and of parts of China had made it impossible for Anglican priests to get to neutral Macau, where there was no resident Anglican priest; Li was, despite not being ordained a priest at that time, given permission by Hall to give the sacraments to Anglicans. Hall explained to the [Archbishop of Canterbury](#) at the time, [William Temple](#): "I have given her permission to celebrate the Lord's Supper. If I could reach her physically I should ordain her priest rather than give her permission ... I'm not an advocate for the ordination of women. I am, however, determined that no prejudices should prevent the congregations committed to my care having the sacraments of the Church."^[2]

In January 1944, Li travelled through Japanese-occupied territory to the small town of [Hsinxing](#), as yet unoccupied by the Japanese, to meet with Hall; from there they proceeded to [Shaoqing](#) where he regularised her administration of the sacraments by ordaining her as a priest on 25 January 1944.^[3] [William Temple](#) confided to others his conflicting views but he felt compelled to take a public stand against it.^[2] It was to be 30 years before any Anglican church regularised the [ordination of women](#); to avoid further controversy she resigned her licence (though not her priest's orders) after the end of the war.^{[4][5]}

The Communist government in China closed all churches from 1958 to 1974, during which time Li was compelled to work on a farm and then in a factory. She was forced to undergo political re-education because she was designated as a counter-revolutionary. Li Tim-Oi went to the mountains to pray during that era because she was scared to be seen with her fellow Christian friends. She said that she nearly committed suicide during those long years of persecution. The Red Guards even forced her to cut up her own church vestments with scissors.^{[6][7]}

When Hong Kong ordained two further women priests ([Joyce M. Bennett](#) and Jane Hwang Hsien Yuen) in 1971, she was officially recognised as a priest in the diocese.^[8]

She was appointed an honorary (nonstipendiary) assistant priest in Toronto in 1983, where she spent the remainder of her life.

Tributes

In 2003, the [Episcopal Church](#) fixed [24 January](#) as her [feast day](#) in [Lesser Feasts and Fasts](#),^[9]^{[10][11]} based on the eve of the anniversary of her ordination. In 2007, the Anglican Communion celebrated the [centennial](#) of her birth.^[12] In 2018, she was made a permanent part of the Episcopal Church's calendar of saints.^[13]

She is also memorialized in the calendar of the [Anglican Church of Canada](#) with a feast day on February 26, the anniversary of her death.

Her archives are held in the Lusi Wong Library at [Renison University College](#), the [Anglican](#) college at the [University of Waterloo](#).

