

# Shatin Family Life

A monthly newsletter by and for the Shatin Anglican Church family  
January 2019

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## Get to Know the Church Family

### Sarah and Trevor Sofield



Trevor and Sarah Sofield have been part of Shatin Church for the past 7 years. They are semi-retired professors who for the past 20 years have been engaged in development projects for poverty alleviation in Asia/Pacific. Recently, Sarah was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and underwent a long and serious operation on 26<sup>th</sup> October to remove the tumor. Through this difficult journey, Sarah and Trevor continue to see God's loving, invisible hand at work.

“Since coming home from hospital, the days have proceeded quietly – although with a steady stream of visitors - and Sarah has been resting. Her appetite has remained strong but her weight has dropped by about 6 kgs from pre-operation days. In the last few days however, her digestion has improved, a prerequisite to gaining strength for chemotherapy.

Sarah was very apprehensive about chemotherapy, questioning whether it was necessary given the success of the operation, the very low rate of cure for pancreatic cancer despite

chemotherapy, and the long-drawn-out process it entails with numerous side effects. This has been her main prayer point as she has struggled with the issue. We had lots of discussions and prayers with family and friends (including 5 or 6 doctor friends), and our pastor had counselled Sarah, drawing in particular on Paul's letter to the Philippians when he was in jail, and Paul questioned whether he should continue living and serving God through pain and suffering since a better life awaited him in God's house. Our associate pastor also called by with the same message of the Lord. **This has been Sarah's pivot: she has no fear of death because of her faith in the promise that the door of the Lord's house is open to her.** She remains cheerful throughout, surprising everybody with her chirpy demeanor.

When we met with the surgeon, Prof Lo, he cautioned that if the cancer returned then there was no cure and he described chemotherapy as "her last chance". But he also repeated the oncologist, Prof Chan's comment that for a case like hers the statistics were inconclusive and there was no guarantee. However, he said that if he were in her shoes he would undertake it.

That was a powerful message, coming as it did from her surgeon and it had Sarah wondering if God was answering her prayers and using Prof Lo and Prof Chan as his messengers.

On the first day of chemotherapy, Sarah said she felt nauseous and did not sleep at all well. But in the morning she was fine, and has remained fine ever since, virtually as if she had taken nothing. However, the drugs are cumulative in building up side effects, particularly as they begin to destroy her immune system and reduce her white blood cell count, leaving her open to infections. In the meantime, she is blessed with so many friends and family coming to see her and psychologically and spiritually they are great. Sarah's strength is remarkable and she has been handling the visits well, but as the chemotherapy starts to take effect she will have to cut down because it is tiring, and the risk of infection with visitors needs to be minimized.

**Welcome!** Hong Kong is a very transient place and Shatin Church is no exception. We will try to provide regular updates when there are new faces on Sundays. Below are some of the new friends and families attending Shatin Church on Sundays. Why not get to know these friends better over a coffee or meal.



**Corbin, Chris, Dahn, Cierra & Kai Walker**

We are a homeschooling family that loves to open our home to share the love of Jesus with others. We enjoy nature activities - hiking, kayaking, paragliding (Chris). We love to travel and experience new cultures and countries.



**Lilibeth Esmalde**

I was introduced to Shatin Church through my sister, Liberty, who has been in PF for more than a year and is a member of Shatin Church. I'm interested in learning more about Christianity, especially about God. My hobbies are cooking and singing if I have free time.



**Calvin Chu**

I teach History at a local school. I was born in Hong Kong but grew up overseas in Australia and the United States. I like football, basketball and cycling.

