

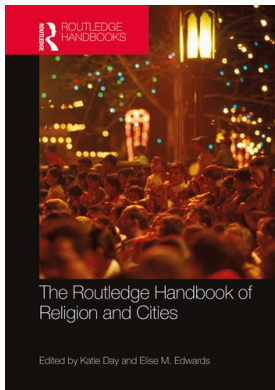
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A LIBERATION NARRATIVE OF RELIGIOUS PRESENCE AMID THE PROTESTS

Hong Kong theology

Tsz Him Lai

Introduction

In February, 2019, the Hong Kong government proposed a bill that, if passed, would have allowed the extradition of persons from the territory of Hong Kong to mainland China. Millions of people came out in protest of the proposed changes, and the bill was eventually withdrawn the following September. However, the protests morphed into a broader movement about protecting freedom, the demand for universal suffrage, and police accountability. From June 12, 2019, the first day when the police fired tear gas and rubber bullets at protesters, to the end of December 2019, the Hong Kong police force has fired over 16,000 canisters of tear gas and 10,000 rubber bullets throughout the city. Hong Kong has literally become a city of tears. The police have arrested more than 6,000 people.¹ Hong Kongers have collectively mourned the amount of loss and suffering the protesters have experienced as a result of Hong Kong police violence.²

In Hong Kong, similar to other Chinese culture-dominant societies, Christianity is not the dominant religion. According to statistics from the Hong Kong government, out of a population of 7,200,000 (2018), there are approximately 379,000 Roman Catholics and 480,000 Protestants living in Hong Kong, comprising just under 12%.³ However, Christianity has been playing an influential role in awakening the people's political consciousness since the history of British colonization.⁴ Without doubt, once again, the role of Christianity is even more striking in the 2019 protests.

To examine the kind of role Christianity, including Protestants and Roman Catholics, has played in the 2019 protests, this chapter chronologically summarizes the participation of Christians in the protests. The data in this paper was collected from various sources on social media, including traditional newspapers and internet media. Facebook and Telegram, cloud-based instant messaging apps, are other crucial sources for first-hand information.

The first section explains the connection between the Umbrella Movement in 2014 and the Anti-Extradition Bill Protests in 2019. The involvement of Christianity during the Umbrella Movement has developed into preliminary maneuvers for protests in 2019. The second section examines the role that Christianity has played in shaping the Anti-Extradition Bill Protests. The work of Christian participation can be divided into four different parts,⁵ with each action being distinct yet somewhat interconnected. The final section will give a summary and interpret how that Christian participation can be interpreted as a new cry of liberation theology in the context of Hong Kong.

Lessons of the Umbrella Movement in 2014

Since Hong Kong was reinstated to China from England in 1997, the frequency of massive protests calling for democracy has increased. In the fall of 2014, the citizens of Hong Kong engaged in a large-scale pro-democracy occupation movement. Protesters occupied the main streets of three different busy commercial districts of Hong Kong. The media labeled these protests the “Umbrella Movement” because protesters used their umbrellas as shields to protect themselves from pepper spray and tear gas fired by police. The occupation lasted for 79 days.

Over a period of three months, many Protestant and Catholic individuals and communities participated in the protest movement.⁶ When the police first fired 87 canisters of tear gas into the crowds of protesters gathered outside the Central Government Complex (the headquarters of the government of Hong Kong) on 28 September 2014, some churches in Hong Kong Island were opened overnight to serve as shelters for the people. No matter who the protesters were, be they reporters or neighbors, they were all welcome to stay. Those churches organized prayer meetings for the community to join, and provided snacks, drinks, and first-aid supplies for people who needed them. Their hospitality became exemplary for how the church can support social movements in the context of Hong Kong.

In addition to learning how to provide material support in protests, the second lesson Christians learned in the Umbrella Movement was how to provide spiritual support during the moments of protest. In the early stages of the Umbrella Movement, before the Hong Kong police began firing the tear gas, some Christian seminarians and college students organized public prayer gatherings several times outside the Central Government Complex. Eventually, protesters occupied three different zones. Some Protestant clergy formed an action group called Clergy Care Group (*Jiaomu guanhuai tuan* 教牧關懷團) and aimed to provide pastoral care through their presence during the occupation. They set up a clergy station with a wooden cross in one of the occupied zones. Clergy from different denominations voluntarily took shifts in the station.⁷

The use of different digital and social media to mobilize people is another significant lesson for the Christians in the Umbrella Movement. Digital media, such as Facebook’s public pages or online news websites, allowed people to voice their opinions and share thoughts with one another.⁸ The extensive use of communication apps, particularly Telegram, helped people communicate and facilitated the exchange of information. Telegram allowed users to create a public channel or a private group for people to join anonymously. Protesters would enable these apps to receive real-time information about the police force and decide their next strategy. During the Umbrella Movement, the Clergy Care Group created their channel on Telegram and shared information to subscribers. This kind of online communication helped Christians from different denominations connect with one another and share perspectives and tactical information.

The last essential lesson Christians learned from the Umbrella Movement is the agency of decentralized actions. The reason why there were three occupied zones in the Umbrella Movement was not because of the top-down decision made by social movement leaders, but because of an accidental movement and an improvisational action. When the Hong Kong police first fired tear gas into the crowds, some of the protesters decided to occupy other city areas in order to sustain the movement. Since protesters occupied three different zones, they developed these three zones like “villages” for people to both stay and visit. Tents and study tables were built for protesters, as some of them were students; a first-aid shelter was set up for emergencies; and a “Lennon Wall,” inspired by the original created in Prague, Czech Republic in 1980, was developed in one of the occupied zones. Instead of political graffiti, people wrote messages on sticky notes and stuck them on the wall. Protesters and citizens were doing different things depending on their interests and abilities. It was the first time Hong Kongers participated in decentralized and leaderless social protests.

The spirit of these decentralized and leaderless actions also influenced Christians during the Umbrella Movement. A temporary, small tent chapel called “St. Francis Chapel on the street” was built in Mong Kok, one of the occupied zones. Inspired by the establishment of a Chinese temple of Guandi (the Chinese god of war) built in the same zone, a group of young Christians from different denominations built the St. Francis Chapel in order to show the presence of Christianity as well as the companionship with Guandi during the occupation.⁹ Different from the Clergy Care Group, this group of young Christians were just laypeople in their denominations. Their work shows the agency of laypersons using religious symbols and language to support the protest.

The role of Christianity in the Anti-Extradition Bill Protests of 2019

Some may argue that the Umbrella Movement should be marked as a failure because no progress was made in the democratization of Hong Kong’s voting system. However, the experience of opening churches as shelters, the use of social media for communication, and the spirit of decentralized and leaderless actions proved to be the foundation upon which Christians could find their own ways to support the Anti-Extradition Bill Protests of 2019. In the following section, I will describe how the participation of Christians in 2019 can be considered as an evolution of their work in the Umbrella Movement of 2014.

Signing Anti-Extradition Bill Petitions

Before June 9, 2019, the first protest occurred with one million citizens demonstrating in the streets. Hundreds of petitions appeared online throughout the month of May in opposition to the government’s extradition bill. According to the documentation by Hong Kong Christian historian Dr. Fuk-Tsang Ying, the first online petition from Christians was on May 9, co-organized by 4 Protestant communities and signed by 4,500 people.¹⁰ Since then, other Protestant institutions, churches,¹¹ and individual Catholics have all publicly expressed their concerns about the controversial extradition bill.¹² They were concerned that the proposed bill would be a threat to freedom of speech and religion, putting at risk any ministers and laypeople in Hong Kong who have carried out missionary work related to mainland China.

Most of the petitions were circulated online via Google Forms, which is a more manageable platform for organizers to collect signatures and deliver the message to the government and wider society. As a result, the convenience of using online platforms encouraged citizens

to initiate petitions within their own working and living communities. While numerous petitions were linked to schools, professions, and neighborhoods, the same was true for churches. In addition to the Catholic Church, petitions launched from a broad range of Protestant denominations, including the Mainline, Evangelical, Fundamentalist, and Pentecostal churches.¹³ A bottom-up approach of expressing a political voice emerged in this protest, which did not happen in churches during the time of the Umbrella Movement. The anti-extradition bill awakened more Christians to express their political opinion within their faith communities.

Organizing public prayer meetings

On June 9, 2019, the first day when one million citizens marched in Hong Kong, both Catholics and Protestants organized a joint public prayer meeting before the start of the march (see Appendix 1). At night, three other Protestant groups, namely the Hong Kong Protestant Clergy Co-signing Committee (*xianggang jidujiao jiaomu lianshu chouweihui* 香港基督教教牧聯署籌委會), the Clergy Care Group, and the Christian Social Concern Fellowship, launched another public prayer meeting, this time at Tamar Park, a public area next to the government headquarters that was also the destination of the march. These two public prayer meetings marked the first day in which Christians were noticeably present in the protest.

After the June 9th demonstration, the government did not show any goodwill in undertaking negotiations with citizens. The government continued to seek the passing of the second reading of the extradition bill on June 12, 2019. The public demonstrations intensified in the days between June 9 and June 12. The student unions from seven universities asked students to go on strike from their classes and encircle the government headquarters on June 12, as another demonstration was called for that day.

To show solidarity, the three aforementioned Protestant action groups continued their public prayer meeting, which lasted for 72 hours. According to Hong Kong's Public Order Ordinance, all gatherings or assemblies must be launched with a permit issued by the government; however, this did not apply for religious gatherings. As a result, this prayer meeting not only became a religious gathering for Christians but was also the only activity the public could participate in outside of the government headquarters during that time.

On the night of June 11, the prayer meeting became a buffer zone between the protesters and the police. When the crowd started to sing "Sing Hallelujah to the Lord"¹⁴ as their last song, they repeated it for nine hours. This action helped to release the tension between the protesters and the police because the police did not know how to react to this situation. In the nine hours of singing, Christians and non-Christians both joined together in order to show their intention of staying peaceful. Although the police eventually fired tear gas and rubber bullets the following afternoon, this song successfully prevented violence for at least one night and became one of the popular songs for Christians and non-Christians during the protests.¹⁵ One of the pastors who organized the prayer meeting commented on that night,

It was the work of God ... the Hymn has an amazing power, a gentle power. It is the power of the powerless, like Jesus crucified on the cross, defeating death. We are not that great, but we use our gentle power to defend against the police with full gear (my own translation).¹⁶

The witnesses of that night encouraged Christians to organize more public prayer meetings. From June to August, at least 27 public prayer meetings (see Appendix 1) were held, almost 2 times every

week. Most of them were organized by the groups which had been active since the Umbrella Movement, such as the Clergy Care Group and the Justice and Peace Commission of the HK Catholic Diocese (*xianggang tianzhujiao zhengyi heping weiyuanhui* 香港天主教正義和平委員會). However, there were also some new groups who participated, such as those who had launched the prayer meetings in Chater Garden every Saturday between July 13 and August 24 (see Appendix 1). These prayer meetings demonstrated several characteristics of the protest. First, the organizers were anonymous laypeople in the church. The tendency of the decentralized and leaderless action was also happening among Christians. The privilege of organizing a prayer meeting was no longer a privilege only for the clergy. Second, the organizers created a public channel on Telegram to deliver the most updated information. Participants could receive information continuously, even after the prayer gatherings. This way of communication, now adopted by the Christians, was common among other protesters.

Opening the church for protesters

Compared to the Umbrella Movement, in which there were only three specific occupied zones, clashes between protesters and police occurred throughout the entire city in the 2019 protests. Protesters did not adopt the tactic of occupation as in the prior movement. Rather, protesters demonstrated with fluidly and flexibly. Like the famous slogan frequently used in the protest, “be (like) water,”¹⁷ protesters not only marched to the government headquarters but also started rallies in different areas in order to make it harder for the police to arrest them. Protesters fully embraced this logic of protest, especially after the occupation of the Legislative Council on July 1, the anniversary of the transfer of sovereignty over Hong Kong from Great Britain to China. On that night, protesters successfully occupied the Legislative Council, vandalized the building, and defaced walls with graffiti,¹⁸ and the fear of arrest lead protesters to organize rallies all over the city.

The police intensified their use of weapons to repress the new methods of protest. They fired tear gas and rubber bullets on a regular basis and used water cannons to fire blue dye with a painful pepper solution. In retaliation, protesters dressed in all black with protective gear, making it more difficult for the police to identify them. Some protesters threw Molotov cocktails at the police, creating a temporary barrier of fire between the two sides. A new cycle of violent protests became a weekly activity. On the weekends, marches and assemblies would begin in peace, but, by nightfall, clashes occurred between the police and radical protesters.

To help citizens and protesters avoid the stinging and burning sensation from the tear gas, some churches would open their buildings to serve as shelters for people to rest. While protests were launched out of the government headquarters located in Admiralty,¹⁹ churches were open when the clashes moved into their neighborhood (see Appendix 2). Similar to the pattern of signing anti-extradition bill petitions, the churches who opened their buildings to the public were from different denominations. The determining factor in the opening up of a given church was dependent on the individual will of pastors and the congregation, rather than the political standpoint of their denominations.

During the 2014 Umbrella Movement, the pro-Beijing political parties and newspapers criticized the actions of the churches.²⁰ The same thing happened again in 2019. On September 19 and October 2, Wenweipo²¹ and Takungpao,²² two Chinese government-owned newspapers, accused three denominations of hiding protesters from the police, naming them “rioters.” These three denominations, namely the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Methodist Church of Hong Kong, and the Catholic Church, all helped protesters in the 2019 protests.²³ Although

four pastors made a statement not long after the accusation emphasizing that their churches were (and still are as of this writing) open for public use, including both the police and citizens,²⁴ the fear of harassment has challenged the churches to rethink whether they should open their buildings to protesters. Since those accusations, some churches have opened their spaces secretly, without announcing their doing so online.

Pastoral care in the frontline of protests

After seeing the effects of singing “Sing Hallelujah to the Lord,” Christianity has received a better reputation among protesters. It seems more natural for clergy to speak to protesters on the frontlines. On the evening of June 16, when two million citizens marched on the streets, Rev. Joseph Chi-Sing Ha, Auxiliary Bishop of the Catholic Church, made a persuasive speech to protesters in front of the government headquarters. He said,

Where the sheep are, the pastor should be also! The pastor is not merely among the sheep, but also needs to lead them. During the pastor’s interaction with the sheep, the pastor will know more about his (or her) identity, and recognize the difficulty and the pain that the sheep are suffering (my own translation).²⁵

His speech clearly demonstrates the role of Christianity in the protest. Action groups such as the Clergy Care Group and Protect the Children (a volunteer group organized by Good Neighbour North District Church [*hao linshe beiqu jiaohui* 好鄰舍北區教會]), tried to mediate between police and protesters. During tense moments, they stood between the two sides and asked them to calm down in order to prevent further clashes. Their intention may be called noble but it was also dangerous to all involved. Some of these Christians were arrested, beaten,²⁶ and risked being shot by the police.²⁷ Their work did not successfully shift the protest far from the use of violence, but their presence made the protesters feel that they were not alone.

Discussion and conclusion

In their book, *Contentious Politics*, Charles Tarrow and Sidney Tilly predict that the conflict between Hong Kong citizens and the Chinese government “will endure for years—perhaps generations.”²⁸ Five years after the Umbrella Movement, their prediction came true. Hong Kong citizens are demanding political reform once again. The original claim at the beginning of the Hong Kong 2019 protest was the withdrawal of the extradition bill. However, given the escalation of violence from both sides, notably as the police used excessive violence against protesters, reporters, and innocent citizens, protesters have changed their political claims to a broader movement about protecting freedom, the demand for universal suffrage, and police accountability. But this time, in 2019, the cycles of conflict are even longer and the scale of the protests is even greater. The protests have transformed from a single issue to broader anti-authoritarian protests.²⁹ As this volume goes to publication, the protests continue. There is no evidence that Hong Kong people will stop protesting until an independent inquiry into police brutality and political reforms occurs. In the current situation, as long as the Hong Kong government allows the repression of protesters through direct violence by police, the protesters and the civic society will not be silent.

The use of digital media and the decentralized and leaderless practice are the keys to the mobilization of Hong Kong protesters. In the mainstream media, most of them describe the

Hong Kong protesters as leaderless, but perhaps as Joe Raelin suggests, “leaderful” is a better word to describe the decentralized practice.³⁰ Although the word “leaderless” is correct to use in understanding the participatory and democratic values among protesters, it does not mean that there is no leadership among the protesters. In the case of the 2019 Hong Kong Protests, instead of no leadership, every protester is collectively participating in the leadership of the movement throughout the extensive use of digital media. Everyone can contribute their leadership skills and abilities through a variety of activities.

Similar to that of the protests, the “leaderful” practice is emerging among different denominations in Hong Kong Christianity among both Catholics and Protestants. From launching anti-extradition bill petitions, singing “Sing Hallelujah to the Lord,” to being with protesters in the frontline of protests, clergy and laypeople demonstrated their agency in using their religious identity and knowledge to support the movement. The solidarity displayed among the clergy, laypeople, and protesters embodies the praxis of nonviolent resistance. Their leadership directs the community to engage in peaceful protests. Christianity, as it did during the Umbrella Movement, served as a primary resource to nurture the protest. Regardless of religious affiliations, clergy and laypeople connected Christians, non-Christians, and protesters to defend against injustice and affirm human dignity.

Among the discussion of the relationship between religion and social movements lies one of the paradoxical characteristics that religion can either serve as social tranquilizers or social agitators, mobilizing or demobilizing people to participate in social movements.³¹ Smith proposes that religion can be disruptive to society, offering religious motivation, moral imperatives, a sense of belonging, and organizational resources to facilitate social movements.³² In the case of Hong Kong, as the previous paragraphs illustrate, Christianity has shown that it can also offer tremendous material resources such as first-aid kits, safe shelter, and pre-existing communication networks, as well as provide symbolic resources and emotional support to sustain the protest over time. Hymns and prayer meetings are no longer just religious practices in the church—they can also serve as a political manifestos in front of the public.

Social movements and liberation theologies have a dialectical relationship. In the history of liberation theologies—including black theology, feminist theology, and queer theology—one of the common themes is that they are born from the struggle of the oppressed, namely black, female, and LGBTQI people. The formation of all those liberation theologies affirms the identity of the oppressed in spite of the secular world and the Christian tradition. The voice of the oppressed matters to the theological reflection and their social movements inform theology.³³

To what extent can we argue that the political actions of Christianity in Hong Kong, as a “leaderful” movement, can be theorized in the construction of a Hong Kong theology? First, we need to imagine what a Hong Kong theology can be. Instead of using the term “liberation theology of Hong Kong,” I suggest to use “Hong Kong theology.” The reason for putting Hong Kong in front of theology is that it allows Hong Kong’s subjectivity to be emphasized in the process of theological reflection. Similar to other liberation theologies, Hong Kong theology uses the lens of being a Hong Konger to reinterpret the understanding of God and the meaning of being a Christ-follower. Under the current political situation, Hong Kong theology serves to affirm the pain of being a Hong Konger under the control of the Chinese authoritarian regime. Hong Kong theology advocates any protest, which fights for freedom and human dignity, as God-given to God’s people.

From the Umbrella Movement to the 2019 protest, besides the continuity of fighting for democracy, another consistent theme in these two protests is about the identity of being a

Hong Konger. According to the survey conducted by the Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute, the personal identity index of being a “Hong Kong citizen” reached a 10-year high, at 82.63 on a 100-point scale.³⁴ At the same time, in 2019, the index identifying as a “Chinese citizen” touched a new low, at 57.27 on a 100-point scale.³⁵ The results of the survey pinpoint a series of questions that the people of Hong Kong must answer for themselves; particularly, what does it mean to be a Hong Konger? Why is being a Hong Konger more important than being Chinese? And, to Christians, the question will be to ask, what is the correlation of being a Hong Konger and being Christian? If the present political reality considers Hong Kong to be a victim of colonization, such as the lack of democracy in the future, the question to Christians will be, what kind of role should Christianity play in affirming the dignity and cultural identity of Hong Kongers?

Brian Kai-ping Leung, a Hong Kong Ph.D. student in Political Science, a Christian, and the only protester who took off his mask after protesters occupied the Legislative Council building on July 1, 2019 (making his arrest more likely as his identity was revealed), tries to answer what being a Hong Konger means to him:

Only then did I realize what really connects Hongkongers, apart from our common language and values, is the pain we share ... Feeling pain makes your life more truthful. This political subjectivity is a recognition of the Hongkongers’ dignity, which is the most seminal trait of the movement. This will characterize Hong Kong’s future resistance.³⁶

To further collaborate with his thought, I suggest that Hong Kong theology should start by acknowledging the pain of the protesters and conceptualizing their experience with the suffering God. While pastors and laypeople have been in the frontline of protests, enduring police brutality, Hong Kong theology should bear the responsibility of commemorating their experience and also deliver the liberative message of the Christian narrative.

In her book *Regarding the Pain of Others*, Susan Sontag asked an ethical question to her readers, including Leung, myself, and all Hong Kong Christians:

Compassion is an unstable emotion. It needs to be translated into action, or it withers. The question is what to do with the feelings that have been aroused, the knowledge that has been communicated. If one feels that there is nothing “we” can do—but who is that “we”?—and nothing “they” can do either—and who are “they”?—then one starts to get bored, cynical, apathetic.³⁷

One of the strengths of the 2019 protests is the emergence of “leaderful” practice. Joe Raelin suggests that there are “four C’s” in leaderful practice, namely, collectiveness, concurrency, collaboration, and compassion.³⁸ To echo Leung’s vision of sharing pain and to answer Sontag’s question on who we are to take action, I ask our Hong Kong Christians to commit to preserving the dignity of every single member living in the city, regardless of background, race, or gender. While scholars in Hong Kong suggest that Hong Kong is at the heart of a new Cold War,³⁹ being on the frontlines to challenge the authoritarian regime, we must start to construct our Hong Kong theology and share the pain of the city as part of our collective pain we suffer together.

Note: As this book goes to publication in 2020, the protests are continuing.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Public prayers in Hong Kong Island from June to August in 2019

Date	Time	Location	Organization(s)
June 9 (Sunday)	2:30–3:15pm	The pedestrian road in front of Hong Kong Central Library	Justice & Peace Commission of the HK Catholic Diocese, Umbrella City Cyberchurch, Christians For Hong Kong Society (<i>jidutu guanhuai xianggang xuehui</i> 基督徒關懷香港學會), Christian Social Concern Fellowship, Good Neighbour North District Church, Hong Kong Christian Institute (<i>xianggang jidutu xuehui</i> 香港基督徒學會), Ecumenical Pastoral Platform for Youth (<i>heyi qingnian muyang pingtai</i> 合一青年牧養平台)
June 9 (Sunday)	8:00–9:00pm	Tamar Park (next to Central Government Complex)	Hong Kong Protestant Clergy Co-signing Committee (<i>xianggang jidujiao jiaomu lianshu chouweihui</i> 香港基督教牧聯署籌委會), Clergy Care Group, Christian Social Concern Fellowship
June 10 (Monday)	8:00–9:00pm	Tamar Park	Hong Kong Protestant Clergy Co-signing Committee, Clergy Care Group, Christian Social Concern Fellowship
June 11 (Tuesday)	8:00–9:00pm	Tamar Park	Hong Kong Protestant Clergy Co-signing Committee, Clergy Care Group, Christian Social Concern Fellowship
June 11-12 (Tuesday-Wednesday)	10:00pm– 9:30am	Tamar Park	Hong Kong Federation of Catholic Students (<i>xianggang tianzhujiao dazhuan lianhui</i> 香港天主教大專聯會)
June 12 (Wednesday)	7:30–8:30am	Central Government Complex East Wing Forecourt	Hong Kong Protestant Clergy Co-signing Committee, Clergy Care Group, Christian Social Concern Fellowship
June 16 (Sunday)	9:30–10:30am	Culture Plaza in Central and Western District Promenade	Justice & Peace Commission of the HK Catholic Diocese, Diocesan Youth Commission Hong Kong (<i>jiaogu qingnian mumun weiyuanhui</i> 教區青年牧民委員會)
June 16 (Sunday)	2:15–2:45pm	The pedestrian road in front of Hong Kong Central Library	Justice & Peace Commission of the HK Catholic Diocese, Diocesan Youth Commission Hong Kong, Hong Kong Federation of Catholic Students, Franciscan Order Hong Kong JPIC Group (<i>fangjihui zhengyi heping zu</i> 方濟會正義和平組), Youth Boiling Point (<i>fei dian</i> 沸點)

June 16 (Sunday)	2:30–3:00pm	The ground floor of Hong Kong Central Library	Umbrella City Cyberchurch
June 16 (Sunday)	4:00–5:00pm	Chater Garden	Hong Kong Protestant Clergy Co-signing Committee
June 23 (Sunday)	6:00–7:00pm	Tamar Park	Hong Kong Protestant Clergy Co-signing Committee
July 1 (Monday)	12:30–1:30pm	Causeway Bay East Point Road Pedestrian Zone	Hong Kong Protestant Clergy Co-signing Committee, Clergy Care Group
July 1 (Monday)	2:00–2:45pm	Victoria Park Bandstand	Justice & Peace Commission of the HK Catholic Diocese, Christians For Hong Kong Society, Hong Kong Christian Institute, Hong Kong Federation of Catholic Students, Christian Social Concern Fellowship, Hong Kong Catholic Commission For Labour Affairs (<i>xianggang tianzhujiao laogong shiwu weiyu anhui</i> 香港天主教勞工事務委員會)
July 1 (Monday)	2:30–3:00pm	The ground floor of Hong Kong Central Library	Umbrella City Cyberchurch
July 5 (Friday)	7:30–8:30pm	Admiralty Centre (Exit to Harcourt Road)	Good Neighbour North District Church
July 6 (Monday)	5:00–7:00pm	Admiralty Centre (Exit to Harcourt Road)	A group of Catholic laypeople and clergy
July 13 (Saturday)	7:00–10:00pm	Chater Garden, then walking to Government House	A group of Christians
July 20 (Saturday)	10:30am–12:00pm	Chater Garden, then walking to Government House	Clergy Care Group
July 20 (Saturday)	7:00–10:00pm	Chater Garden, then walking to Government House	A group of Christians
July 27 (Saturday)	7:00–10:00pm	Chater Garden, then walking to Government House	A group of Christians

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August 3 (Saturday)	7:00–10:00pm	Chater Garden, then walking to to Government House	A group of Christians
August 8 (Thursday)	7:30–9:00pm	Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception to The Court of Final Appeal Building	Justice & Peace Commission of the HK Catholic Diocese, Hong Kong Federation of Catholic Students, Diocesan Youth Commission Hong Kong, St. Margaret's Church Social Concern Group (<i>shengmajiali datang guanshezu</i> 聖瑪加利大堂關社組), St. Benedict Parish Social Concern Group (<i>shengbendutang guanshezu</i> 聖本篤堂關社組)
August 10 (Saturday)	7:00–10:00pm	Chater Garden, then walking to Government House	A group of Christians
August 17 (Saturday)	7:00–10:00pm	Chater Garden, then walking to Government House	A group of Christians
August 23 (Friday)	7:00–9:00pm	Chater Garden	A group of Christians
August 24 (Saturday)	7:00–10:00pm	Chater Garden, then walking to Government House	A group of Christians
August 30 (Friday)	7:00–10:00pm	Statue Square	Aspire, Worship Nations (<i>bolihai yuetuan</i> 玻璃海樂團)

Sources: Facebook posts from the *Christian Times* (*shidai luntan* 時代論壇); telegram messages from Christian Information Channel (https://t.me/Christian_AntiELAB_823)

Appendix 2. The number of churches opened as shelters from June to August in 2019

<i>Date</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Number of churches</i>
June 9 (Sunday)	Admiralty	4
June 12 (Wednesday)	Admiralty	3
June 21 (Friday)	Admiralty	3
July 1 (Monday)	Admiralty	3
July 7 (Sunday)	Mong Kok	5
July 13 (Saturday)	Sheung Shui	6
July 14 (Sunday)	Shatin	4
July 21 (Sunday)	Admiralty	3
	Yuen Long	6
July 22 (Monday)	Yuen Long	7
July 27 (Saturday)	Yuen Long	6
July 28 (Sunday)	Sheung Wan and Admiralty	5
August 3 (Saturday)	Tai Kok Tsui	6

	Yau Tsim Mong	11
August 4 (Sunday)	Tseung Kwan O	4
	Sheung Wan and Sai Wan	5
	Wong Tai Sin	1
August 5 (Monday)	Admiralty	1
	Yau Tsim Mong	8
	Wong Tai Sin	6
	Tsuen Wan	6
	Shatin	3
	Tai Po	9
	Tuen Mun	3
August 10 (Saturday)	Tai Po	9
August 11 (Sunday)	Sham Shui Po	10
	Yau Tsim Mong	4
August 17 (Saturday)	Hong Kong Island	5
	Mong Kok	1
	Hung Hom and To Kwa Wan	5
	Kowloon City	1
	Wong Tai Sin	1
August 18 (Sunday)	Admiralty	1
August 24 (Saturday)	Kwun Tong	10
August 25 (Sunday)	Kwai Tsing	3
	Tsuen Wan	7

Sources: Facebook posts from *Christian Times* (*shidai luntan* 時代論壇)

Notes

- 1 Kris Cheng, “Hong Kong Police Used Crowd Control Weapons 30,000 Times since June; Over 6,000 Arrested,” *Hong Kong Free Press*, December 10, 2019, accessed January 15, 2020, <https://hongkongfp.com/2019/12/10/hong-kong-police-used-crowd-control-weapons-30000-times-since-june-6000-arrests/>.
- 2 For details of Hong Kong Police violence, please see the report “How Not to Police a Protest: Unlawful Use of Force by Hong Kong Police” written by Amnesty International, accessed January 15, 2020, www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/ASA1705762019ENGLISH.pdf.
- 3 For details, please see “Hong Kong: The Facts—Religion and Custom” written by Home Affairs Bureau, HKSAR, accessed January 15, 2020, www.gov.hk/en/about/abouthk/factsheets/docs/religion.pdf.
- 4 Carl T. Smith, *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); Beatrice Leung and Shun-hing Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong, 1950–2000* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003); Justin K.H. Tse, “Grounded Theologies: ‘Religion’ and the ‘Secular’ in Human Geography,” *Progress in Human Geography* 38, No. 2 (2014): pp. 201–20.
- 5 In this chapter, I will use “Christian” more often than “the church” or “churches” because I want to distinguish participants as individuals rather than members of an institution. Broadly speaking, the meaning of “church” is not about a building, but of a group of people. However, using the term “church” to generalize all Christian participation in the protests would be problematic because not all Christians support the protest. The Chief Executive (city leader) of Hong Kong who proposed the extradition bill, Carrie Lam, is a Catholic. Moreover, even within one denomination; for example, the Catholic Church in Hong Kong, multiple voices of the protests exist, from giving their full support or remaining neutral, to those who disagree entirely. In this polarized situation, using “Christian” may be the appropriate term to describe how participants act on their own agency instead of an institutional mandate.
- 6 For theological reflections on the relationship between Christianity and the Movement, see Justin K.H. Tse and Jonathan Y. Tan, eds, *Theological Reflections on the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement* (New York:

- Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).; Nancy Ng and Andreas Fulda, "The Religious Dimension of Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement," *Journal of Church & State* 60, No. 3 (Summer 2018): pp. 377–97.
- 7 Shun-hing Chan, "The Protestant Community and the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 16, No. 3 (2015): pp. 389–90.
 - 8 Francis L.F. Lee and Joseph M. Chan, *Media and Protest Logics in the Digital Era: The Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).
 - 9 Chan, "The Protestant Community and the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong," pp. 390–92.
 - 10 Namely, those four Protestant communities were: Clergy Care Group, Umbrella City Cyberchurch (*sancheng wangshang jiaohui* 傘城網上教會), Christian Social Concern Fellowship (*xianggang jidutu she-guan tuanqi* 香港基督徒社關團契), and Christians to the World (*lidi jidutu* 蒞地基督徒). For the online petition, see "A Joint Petition of Christian's Concern on Extradition Bill," accessed January 15, 2020, https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1dJvi-tKrLcOr60BIsNpSqhl3HzpISDwVnHksNEW3Uus/viewform?edit_requested=true.
 - 11 Those communities were the Clergy Group of the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China (*xianggang zhonghua jidujiaohui xianggang quhui shenxue muzhibu zhiyuanhui* 香港中華基督教會香港區會神學牧職部職員會), Executive Committee of the Hong Kong Christian Council (*Jidujiao xiejinhui zhiweihui* 基督教協進會執委會), Justice and Social Concern Committee of the Hong Kong Christian Council (*xianggang jidujiao xiejinhui she-huigongyi yu minsheng guan-zhu weiyuanhui* 香港基督教協進會社會公義與民生關注委員會), Hong Kong Christian Service (*xianggang jidujiao fuwu-chu* 香港基督教服務處), The Clergy Group of the Methodist Church, Hong Kong (*xundaowei lianhe jiaohui mushibu* 循道衛理聯合教會牧師部), Hong Kong Association of Christian Organizations (*xianggang jidujiao jigou xiehui* 香港基督教機構協會), and Cumberland Presbyterian Church Hong Kong Presbytery (*Jinbalun zhanglaohui xianggang quhui* 金巴崙長老會香港區會).
 - 12 Ying Fuk-Tsang, "Fanxiuli yundong zhong di xianggang jidu zongjiao" 反修例運動中的香港基督宗教 [Hong Kong Christianity in Anti-Extradition Bill Protests] (in Chinese), *Initium Media*, October 18, 2019, accessed January 15, 2020, <https://theinitium.com/article/20191018-opinion-hk-protest-christian/>.
 - 13 Among the denominations were the Methodist, Lutheran, Anglican, Baptist, Cumberland Presbyterian Church Hong Kong Presbytery, Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong (*jidujiao xiang-gang xhongzhenhui* 基督教香港崇真會), Christian and Missionary Alliance (*xuandaohui* 宣道會), Evangelical Free Church of China (*zhonghua jidujiao bodaohui* 中華基督教播道會), The Chinese Rhenish Church (*zhonghua jidujiao lixianhui* 中華基督教禮賢會), Swatow Christian Church (*chaoren shengmingtang* 潮人生命堂), Peace Evangelical Centre (*pingan fuyintang* 平安福音堂), Hong Kong Tsz Kwong Bethel Church (香港伯特利教會慈光堂), Ling Liang Worldwide Evangelistic Mission (靈糧堂), Assemblies of God (*shenzhaohui* 神召會), Hong Kong Pentecostal Holiness Church (*wux-unjie shengjieshui* 五旬節聖潔會).
 - 14 Linda Stassen-Benjamin, a US composer, wrote this song in 1974. It is a simple praise song with five words, as the title suggests. For details of this song, see William Petersen and Ardythe Petersen, *The Complete Book of Hymns* (Carol Stream: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2006), p. 74.
 - 15 Jessie Pang and Marius Zaharia, "Sing Hallelujah to the Lord' an unlikely anthem of Hong Kong protests," *Reuters*, June 18, 2019, accessed January 15, 2020, www.reuters.com/article/us-hongkong-extradition-protesters-halle/sing-hallelujah-to-the-lord-an-unlikely-anthem-of-hong-kong-protests-idUSKCN1TJ16T.
 - 16 Yeung ji-kei, "Yundong zhong di jiu-huo mushi tamen dang jingcha chang shengshi zhiyuan nianqingren" 運動中的「救火」牧師：他們擋警察、唱聖詩、支援年輕人 [Pastors in the protest: They defend police, sing hymns and support young people] (in Chinese), *Initium Media*, July 05, 2019, accessed January 15, 2020, <https://theinitium.com/article/20190705-hongkong-chritian-protest-pastors/>.
 - 17 "Be Water, My friend" is a famous quote by Hong Kong Kung-Fu star, Bruce Lee.
 - 18 A well-known graffiti on the night was "it was you who taught me peaceful marches do not work."
 - 19 Admiralty is the name of the central business district on the Hong Kong Island of Hong Kong.
 - 20 For details of the Umbrella Movement, please see Chan, "The Protestant Community and the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong," p. 389.
 - 21 Wen Sen and Xiao JingYuan, "Baotu xian jingfang chongwei xuandaohui yigong bi suo" 暴徒陷警方重圍 宣道會疑供庇所 [A Church is suspicious to hide rioters] (in Chinese), *Wen Wei Po*, Spetember 19, 2019, accessed January 15, 2020, <http://paper.wenweipo.com/2019/09/19/HK1909190001.html>.
 - 22 Zhang Zhen and Duan Yuncheng, "Jiaohui bian baotu sidou you shanhuan you liangchong" 教會變暴徒私竇 有衫換 有涼沖 [The church is a hiding place for rioters to change clothes and take showers] (in

- Chinese), *Ta Kung Pao*, October 2, 2019, accessed January 15, 2020, www.takungpao.com.hk/news/232109/2019/1002/356570.html.
- 23 Wenweipo and Takungpao both are owned by the same company, Hong Kong Ta Kung Wen Wei Media Group, which is also fully controlled by the Liaison Office of the Central Government (the Chinese government).
 - 24 “Public Statment on Opening Churches,” *The Methodist Church, Hong Kong*, October 3, 2019, accessed January 15, 2020, www.methodist.org.hk/media/filehotlink/2019/10/04/S191003-ChurchesOpen.pdf.
 - 25 Bishop Joseph Ha Chi-shing, “Yang zai na li muzhe jiu yao zai nali” 羊在哪裏,牧者就要在哪裏! [Where our sheep are, the pastor should be also!] (in Chinese), *Salt and Light Media*, June 17, 2019, accessed January 15, 2020, <https://saltandlighttv.org/blogfeed/getpost.php?id=22885&language=ch>.
 - 26 One of the volunteers from Protect the Children was brutally beaten by the police. The police denied their action and claimed this victim as a “yellow object” instead of a human being.
 - 27 A pastor spread his arms and said “Do not open fire” in front of a policeman, with his gun drawn. He became a symbol of courage and received the title, “Hong Kong tank man.”
 - 28 Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Second Edn (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 89–93.
 - 29 Francis L F Lee et al., “Hong Kong’s Summer of Uprising: From Anti-Extradition to Anti-Authoritarian Protests,” *The China Review* 19 No. 4 (2019): pp. 1–32.
 - 30 Leaderful practice is described as “(each team member) is full of leadership ... everyone is participating in the leadership of the entity both collectively and concurrently; in other words, not just sequentially, but all together and at the same time.” For details, see Joe Raelin, “From Leadership-as-Practice to Leaderful Practice,” *Leadership* 7, No. 2 (2011): p. 9.
 - 31 Tao Yu, “Agitators, Tranquilizers, or Something Else: Do Religious Groups Increase or Decrease Contentious Collective Action?,” *Religions; Basel* 9, No. 7 (2018): pp. 1–12.
 - 32 Christian Smith, “Correcting a Curious Neglect, or Bringing Religion Back in,” in *Disruptive Religion: The Force of Faith in Social Movement Activism*, ed., Christian Smith (New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 9–22.
 - 33 Miguel A. De La Torre, “Introduction,” in *Introducing Liberative Theologies*, ed., Miguel A. De La Torre (New York: Orbis Books, 2015), xxiii.
 - 34 “Identity Index of Being HongKongers(Half-yearly average)(12/2008-12/2019),” *Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute*, accessed January 15, 2020, www.hkupop.hku.hk/pori_table_chart/EthnicIdentity/Q002I/Q002I_halfyr_chart.html.
 - 35 “Identity Index of Being Chinese(Half-yearly average)(12/2008-12/2019),” *Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute*, accessed January 15, 2020, www.hkupop.hku.hk/pori_table_chart/EthnicIdentity/Q003I/Q003I_halfyr_chart.html.
 - 36 Humans of Hong Kong, “Hong Kong Belongs to Everyone Who Shares Its Pain: The Vision of July 1st’s Only Unmasked Protester,” *Stand News*, November 17, 2019, accessed January 15, 2020, <https://thestandnews.com/politics/hong-kong-belongs-to-everyone-who-shares-its-pain-the-vision-of-july-1st-s-only-unmasked-protester/>.
 - 37 Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, First Paperback Edn (New York: Picador, 2004), 101.
 - 38 Raelin, “From Leadership-as-Practice to Leaderful Practice,” p. 10.
 - 39 Benny Yiu-Ting Tai and Eric Yan-Ho Lai, eds, *One Country, One System* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Civil Hun, 2019).

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