

H5 THE CATO VISITOR AND TRUST

The Cato Lecturer for the Seventeenth Assembly is Prof Rev Dr Grace Ji-Sun Kim.



Grace Ji-Sun Kim (Ph.D. University of St. Michael's College) was born in Korea, educated in Canada and now teaches in the USA as Professor of Theology at Earlham School of Religion, Richmond, Indiana. She is the author or editor of 24 books, most recently, *When God Became White*, *Suffering God*, *Invisible*, and *Spirit Life*.

Kim is the host of [Madang podcast](#) which is sponsored by the Christian Century. She blogs on her [substack: Loving Life](#): Loving Life and has written for *Huffington Post*, *The Nation*, *Sojourners*, *Baptist News Global*, *Faith and Leadership* and *TIME*. Kim has appeared on MSNBC <https://www.msnbc.com/>, PBS https://www.pbs.org/show/fight-power-how-hip-hop-changed-world/?gad_source=1&qclid=CjwKCAjwouexBhAuEiwAtW_Zx2THNWgIKVpxgy4niv_3oQYjwfyJ1yWF_XAGuMN5iMcqJrppEm1awIhoCKbsQAvD_BwE and

C-Span <https://www.c-span.org/>. She has been a guest on BBC Radio, Soul Search Radio, WBEZ Radio, and Keep Hope Alive Radio. She is an ordained PC(USA) minister and enjoys being a guest preacher on most Sundays. She is a book series Co-Editor for Palgrave Macmillan Series, "[Asian Christianity in the Diaspora](#)," and has served on the American Academy of Religion's Board of Directors.

Kim is honored to be included in the **Englewood Review of Book's** list of "[Ten Important Women Theologians That You Should Be Reading](#)" and *Sojourners* included Kim as one of "[8 Christian Women Shaping the Church in 2023](#)."

FREDERICK JOHN CATO 1858-1935

Fred Cato was born in a tent on the goldfields of Stawell, a town in the Wimmera District of the State of Victoria. His father Edward had little success as a goldminer, and the family continued to live in a tent during Fred's early years, Edward managing to sustain his family as a part-time carpenter. Fred showed early aptitude for learning, encouraged by his mother, and after leaving school, attended night classes at the Mechanics Institute and became an assistant school teacher.

On becoming an accredited teacher Fred travelled to New Zealand in 1879 and taught in three schools, the last in Invercargill where he met fellow teacher and daughter of a local Presbyterian minister, Fanny Bethune, whom he was later to marry. He returned to Australia in 1882 at the



invitation of his cousin Edwin Moran, to work in his grocery store. When Fred became a partner soon after in the business to be called Moran and Cato's, he determined to set aside a proportion of his weekly salary for charitable purposes. Moran and Cato's flourished with stores throughout Victoria, and Fred became known in the local press as a 'merchant prince' while continuing to set aside the same proportion of his income 'for good works.'

This commitment to philanthropy, arising from a deeper commitment to Christ whom he had come to know within the Wesleyan Methodist community, was remarkable both in amount and extent. His biographer notes that he gave to every public hospital in Victoria and his generosity made possible the founding of Epworth Hospital in 1923 (now the largest not-for-profit hospital in Australia.) On his last birthday he gave the largest sum ever received by one of Melbourne's major charities, the Lord Mayor's Hospital Fund. He financed stained glass windows in Wesley's Chapel, City Road, London. He gave large sums to build church, hospital and mission houses, and to pay the salaries of missionaries, in places as far apart as the Sudan, India, Fiji, New Guinea and Arnhem Land. Every Methodist educational institution in Melbourne (primary, secondary and tertiary) received scholarships, buildings or large monetary gifts during his lifetime, and continue as beneficiaries.

To ensure that these works would continue, he established in 1928 the F.J.Cato Charitable Fund for 'the advancement of education and religion, the relief of sickness and poverty, and other charitable purposes beneficial to the community.' The Fund still exists, and its Trustees annually disburse funds especially to those whose needs are not met by Government or other welfare funding.

It was the same commitment to education and religion that led to his setting up, in 1932, the Cato Lectureship. Its three stated purposes were: the promotion and enhancement of religion and / or education; the presentation of material of interest to the general body of church members; the goodwill and friendly relations between Methodist or related churches in Australia and other countries. It was stipulated that the Lecturer was to come from overseas, and the Lecture to be given within the proceedings of the triennial Methodist General Conference (or, he had the foresight to state, any Church with which the Methodist Church in Australia might merge). It was customary, in addition, for the Lecturer to tour around the Australian States, speaking and preaching in various contexts, with the visit lasting overall from six to eight weeks. Notable scholars have been Cato Lecturers, and their Lectures published - Newton Flew, Harold Roberts, C.K. Barrett, Gordon Rupp to name a few from Methodist days, Leander Keck, C.S Song, Ivor Jones, Mvume Dandala, Daniel Smith Christopher and Rev. Dr Manhong Lin since Union.

As a leading Methodist layman, Cato played a crucial part in bringing the four Australian Methodist churches into union in 1902, something which was not to occur in the UK until some 30 years later. Melbourne historian Ann Blainey has written a biography of Fred Cato's life *If God Prospers Me*, a portrait of Frederick John Cato (Chandos, 1990).

Robert Gribben (Rev. Prof. Emeritus)
Chair, F J Cato Charitable Trust

