

Next Sunday

February 19, 2023, @ 10am
Epiphany +7

Leader: Deok Hee
Preacher Deok Hee

Exodus 24:12–18 Psalm 2 or Psalm 99 2 Peter 1:16–21

Matthew 17:1–9

Church Council

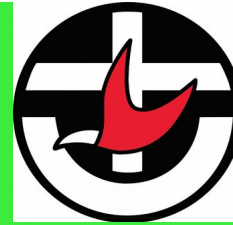
Chair Dinah Roepers
Secretary Richard Goodman
Treasurer John Baglin

Councillors Dorothy Makasa (2023) Robert M°Alpine (2023)
Sue Baglin (2025)

Elders John Baglin (2023) Richard Goodman (2024)
Dinah Roepers (2023)

Safe Church Contact Person Richard Goodman

(1 Corinthians 3:1-9)



The Uniting Church in Australia

KOGARAH UNITING CHURCH

We welcome people of all cultures and lifestyles,
We create a safe place for the community
We share the journey of life and faith.

February 12, 2023, @ 10am
Epiphany + 6 – From the Heart

Leader: Deok Hee
Preacher Deok Hee
Holy Communion Deok Hee

Deuteronomy 30:15–20 or Sirach 15:15–20; Psalm 119:1–8
1 Corinthians 3:1–9; Matthew 5:21–37



For details and information about our church activities and The Kogarah Storehouse, check out the websites: kogarah.uca.org.au and www.kogarahstorehouse.org.au

For pastoral concerns, please contact the
Rev Deok Hee Cho
on 0401 975 745

Face to face Services Kogarah Uniting Church At 10:00am

Some COVID Conditions have changed

We are in the middle of a new wave

Masks are highly recommended given the vulnerability of some of our members. Please do not come in if you are feeling unwell.

Social distancing is also to be observed.

Watch this space for any changes.

Planning Ahead

1. 14.02.2023 next Church Council meeting 7pm via Zoom
2. 15.02 2023 Storehouse Board of Management meeting
3. 8.03.2023 Worship Task Group 7pm via Zoom

The Journey to Easter

Add these dates to your diary. Friends are welcome.
22.02.2023 Ash Wednesday 7:30pm – the Lenten journey begins.

2.04.2023 Palm/Passion Sunday 10am

6.04.2023 Maundy Thursday 7:30pm

7.04 2023 Good Friday 9am + Hot Cross Buns

9.04.2023 Easter Day 10am

From 24.02 2023 every Friday @ 12noon Lenten Bible Study (6 sessions)

Please pray for ...

The mission and ministry of our congregation and for our Minister, Deok Hee

Worship leaders; helpers, leaders, followers as we prepare for the new year.

The Kogarah Storehouse and its many clients; Lala and staff of the Storehouse.

Dorothy and Godfrey and the work of LACLA.

Nick Hedges and the scripture teaching at JCBTHS and MGHS

The team, parents and children in the Early Learning Centre.

Those who are sick, sad or lonely:

We pray especially today for Brian and Rhonda and their wider family as they grieve for their son Malcolm who recently died.

And for Prema, and others whom we name in our hearts; health care workers in this time of COVID-19, including Richard, Millin and Roseline Goodman and Dorothy Makasa and Elin.

We pray this Sunday for the people of Turkiye and Syria who are suffering after the devastation caused by the earthquake in their region. May help soon arrive and the grieving people who survived the disaster receive God's comfort.

Presbytery Prayer Roster

Today we hold in our prayers Rev Steve Aynsley, Pastoral Relations Presbytery Minister.



From the Heart

Explorer of our hearts, discerner of our souls, we invite you into the depths of our struggles. We open the locked doors. With words of love and boldness of truth, we ask you to knock on the hardest places of our hearts and soften them so we may love you and love our neighbours. Amen.

Seven weeks into the new year and our resolutions might now feel more like routines than resolutions. We can be lulled back into living by habits and behaviours and might stop questioning what is at the heart of the matter.

This week, Jesus' teachings in the Sermon on Mount help us take another look at some commandments to discover what is at the heart of the law. As the people of Israel look toward a land of promise, the author is clear – following in God's way leads to life.

Deuteronomy 30:15–20 makes plain our choice as citizens of a global world, children of an interconnected creation: "I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity." The advice of Deuteronomy 30 is about more than by which to live; it's about right relationships. Faithfulness to God and God's ways are life-giving. Sirach 15:15–20 echoes the themes of faithfulness and our freedom of choice.

Happiness lies in keeping God's commandments, as the psalmist prays in **Psalms 119:1–8** and thus asks for an "upright heart." The Israelites considered the heart the centre of thought and intention. Psalm 119 is written as an acrostic using the Hebrew alphabet in a repetitive form to aid in memorization. Saying this psalm is a way of inscribing the heart with thoughts and intentions to love God and God's commandments.

The Corinthian church seems to have been full of conflict. In **1 Corinthians 3:1–9**, Paul cautions against jealousy and rivalry within the Christian community. Those who are jealous of one another are not living according to God's way. Instead, they act in immature ways. Paul uses the metaphor of the garden to show that God gives life and growth when we work together.

Matthew 5:21–37 Torah, the first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures, contains many regulations and commandments about specific details of everyday life. Jesus' followers sought to discover what it meant to apply these teachings in new situations. Applying a traditional rabbinic method: "You have heard it said...but I say..." Jesus addresses the difficult topics of daily life and deepens their meaning for an ethical life. As he discusses anger (vv. 21–26), adultery (vv. 27–30), divorce (vv. 31–32), and true speech (vv. 33–37), Jesus tells his audience not just how to act but how to be – be in the image of God.

On first hearing, the rules Jesus sets out seem like stricter replacements for the commandments given in Deuteronomy. At a closer look, they deconstruct actions of murder, retribution, betrayal, abandonment, and lying into symptoms of our hard-heartedness and refusal to be reconciled to each other. In holding up the vision of each person with hearts reconciled to God and one another, Jesus claims personhood for all parties involved. The judged and the judger are not bound in the past but together liable for the justice and reconciliation of the future. Condemnation of adultery – thought as well as deed – challenges our tendency to treat others as objects rather than as subjects. This idea, along with coming down on the accepted practice of men divorcing their wives, furthers Jesus' campaign for the equal personhood of women.

The lesson on oath-taking seeks not merely to rid an antiquated practice but to open our eyes to the insidiousness of self-interest. We are either too concerned with being liked or accepted or so unconcerned with the hearer of our words and the receiver of our pledges and vows that we do not take care in speaking words that are true or in making sure they stay true. Life is full of opportunities, especially for those living in an industrialized and technological society. Still, options aren't the same as the choices we make that change the course of our lives.

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Jesus shows us a new way of being human, of being peacemakers, of reconciling conflict, of telling the truth. As Christians, how should we handle conflict and rivalries within the Body of Christ? What does it mean to hold fast to God from the heart? What does it mean to live in ways that restore relationships and strengthen community?

Sirach

[The Book of Sirach] or Ecclesiasticus (abbreviated Ecclus.) – not to be confused with Ecclesiastes, is a Jewish work, originally in Hebrew, of ethical teachings, from approximately 200 to 175 BCE, written by the Judahite scribe Ben Sira of Jerusalem, on the inspiration of his father Joshua son of Sirach, sometimes called Jesus son of Sirach or Yeshua ben Eliezer ben Sira.

In Egypt, it was translated into Greek by the author's unnamed grandson, who added a prologue. This prologue is generally considered the earliest witness to a canon of the books of the prophets, and thus the date of the

*text is the subject of intense scrutiny. The book itself is the largest wisdom book from antiquity to have survived. (Wikipedia)]
The book is found among the books of the Apocrypha.*

Sirach 15:15-20 (The reading for today)

If you choose, you can keep the commandments,
and to act faithfully is a matter of your own choice.
He has placed before you fire and water;
stretch out your hand for whichever you choose.
Before each person are life and death,
and whichever one chooses will be given.
For great is the wisdom of the Lord;
he is mighty in power and sees everything;
his eyes are on those who fear him,
and he knows every human action.
He has not commanded anyone to be wicked,
and he has not given anyone permission to sin.

Bankstown District Uniting Church

We would like to invite you and your friends to a free afternoon's entertainment in the Church

When: On Sunday, 19th February, 2023.

With thanks to the wonderful, talented group, "Loosely Woven", We are able to present the free concert and afternoon tea with all donations received going to support the Refugee Children's Camps in Leb-anon.

Our minister, Rev.Dr.Gaby Kobrossi and the Bankstown Congregation have supported this camp for the past few years, and this year in July , there will be two camps from 13-15 & 20-22 July for the Syrian refugees , street kids (displaced and orphaned children who live and beg on the streets) as well as local village children.

We are hoping for donations which will be used for site hire, meals, accommodation and activities for these children.

We also have four Youth members who are going to travel to assist in the running of these camps, preparing entertainment and Christian teaching for the children.