

Next Sunday

April 9th, 2023, @ 10am
Easter Day!
Joy Comes Alive!

Leader: Deok Hee
Preacher Deok Hee
Holy Communion Deok Hee

Acts 10: 34–43 or Jeremiah 31:1–6; Psalm 118:1–2, 14–24
Colossians 3:1–4; John 20:1–18 or Matthew 28:1–10

Church Council

Chair
Secretary
Treasurer

Dinah Roepers
Richard Goodman
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



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.

April 2nd, 2023, @ 10am
Palm/Passion Sunday Lent 6
Among Palms and Betrayals

Leader: Richard
Preacher Deok Hee

Isaiah 50:4–9a; Psalm 31:9–16; Psalm 118:1–2, 19–29;
Philippians 2:5–11; Matthew 26:14–27:66/ Matthew 27:11–54



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 continuing 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. 16.04.2023 Special Church meeting after church – bring lunch**
- 2. 18.04.2023 Worship Task Group @ 7:00pm via Zoom**

The Journey to Easter

Add these dates to your diary. Friends are welcome.
– the Lenten journey has begun.

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 17.03 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 , Prema, Jim and Bobbie, Christopher Cho, 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.

Pray for Türkiye, Syria, Ukraine, Russia, New Zealand, and the newly elected government in NSW.

Presbytery Prayer Roster

Today we hold in our prayers Rev Simon Hansford, Moderator of the UCA NSW/ACT Synod



Among Palms and Betrayals

O God, in our times of loneliness, doubt, and turmoil, may we be reminded to entrust ourselves to your unfailing love. Grant us discernment about when to protect ourselves and when to make ourselves vulnerable. Empower us as communities of faith to witness in word and deed to your steadfast, never-failing, liberating, and transforming love.

This is a Sunday full of contradictions. Even if the Palm Sunday narrative is only heard, we can hardly celebrate it with unbridled joy. For those that know the story well, the layers of what will come after that grand entrance are felt in each palm wave. We would be wise to ask, how would we tell this whole story from Palms to Passion if we did not know how it ended? Would we tell this story at all?

The narrative illustrates the wavering faithfulness of human beings, yet we are reminded in **Psalms 118:1–2, 19–29** that God's never-failing love can be trusted. We are not alone – we live and worship in community, which helps define and shape our relationship with God.

Matthew's gospel demonstrates how Jesus' life fulfills the Hebrew scriptures. In Matthew 21:5, we hear echoes of Isaiah 62:11 and Zechariah 9:9.

Matthew 21:1–11 starts in the relative quiet of a hillside and ends in the middle of the city of Jerusalem, with shouting and a melee of palms and pilgrims. The reading is full of anticipation, drama, and contrasts. The disciples and the crowd lay down

their cloaks for Jesus in a powerful gesture of adoration and self-sacrifice.

This adoration falters when the disciples fall asleep when Jesus asks them to keep watch and pray (26:36). When soldiers arrest Jesus, they flee into the night (26:56). These disciples are not at the cross, as the women disciples keep vigil.

In **Matthew 26:14–27:66**, the disciples cloak themselves in self-protection and denial. The adulation of Jesus stems from the crowd's hysteria. That same hysteria will prompt them to shout "Crucify."

Some have judged Matthew and the other gospel writers to be anti-Semitic because of the language they use in the Passion narratives. In Matthew's account, the problem is not the religious beliefs of the leaders involved – the problem is leaders driven by fear and rush to judgment. The difficulties arise because of the choices made by certain leaders like Pilate, who chooses to "go along to get along." Matthew's Jewish readers would have recognized a powerful symbolism in Pilate's seemingly simple act of washing his hands. According to Deuteronomy 21:1–9, this could have been a way of declaring Jesus' innocence, but Pilate – through his cowardice – reduces it to something meaningless.

When death comes, Earth reflects the significance of what happened: the temple curtain split in two, Earth shakes, and rocks split. The foundations have been fractured. Earth protests. It is an event of global significance. It would appear the forces of destruction have had the last say.

The question of Jesus' identity reverberates through Matthew's account. "Tell us if you are the Messiah." The writer uses several titles for Jesus in these chapters, including "Son of Man," "Son

of God,” and even “King.” What does it mean for us now to use these titles to claim our faith in the one who saves?

Jesus leans on the scriptures that have preceded him. **Isaiah 50:4–9a** is part of the Servant Song and alludes to the mystery of suffering alongside obedience to God. “I listen to God,” says the author of this passage, reminding us that suffering need not diminish trust in God. “The Lord God helps me,” is repeated to witness the extraordinary trust made in the midst of so much pain.

Despite all that death can strip away, God’s people declare with the psalmist in **Psalms 31:9–16** that “my times are in your hand.” Against this utter despair, the psalmist, like Isaiah, trusts God and turns to the light of God. In the face of scorn and rejection by humans, God is steadfast.

Philippians 2:5–11 declares that Jesus’ death is not a loss of hope. Jesus chooses God’s way over all else. Jesus’ life is lived in love and obedience to God. Jesus models how to be human – we are to become like him, to surrender to God utterly and to shun the exploitation of others. The author of the letter to the Philippians says Jesus accordingly has “the name above all names,” and everything in the universe is to be submitted to him. We are reminded of the cataclysmic impact the crucifixion has on the world, as described in the gospel of Matthew.



For many, this story is as present as if it were being reported in real time. This story comes alive in our telling and touches on our own betrayals. How does our world deny and reject Christ even today? How are we complicit in that?

Special Day Commentary

April 6 – Passover begins (*Judaism*)

It is the Jewish community’s annual retelling of the Israelites’ redemption from slavery in Egypt, as originally told in the book of Exodus.

The focus on the celebration is the retelling of the story in interactive and multi-sensory fashion. An elaborate meal, called a *Seder*, is performed by Jews worldwide. At this meal, the story of redemption is retold with the help of special foods: *haroset* to resemble mortar used to make bricks in Egypt; salt water to remind them of tears; bitter herbs to remember the bitterness of slavery; and unleavened bread (*matzo*) to commemorate the bread that had no time to rise before the Israelites fled Egypt. Although the obligation to retell the story of redemption has its roots in the Bible, the actual Seder meal has evolved and developed over the centuries, adopting customs and practices from the myriad of communities in which Jews have resided.

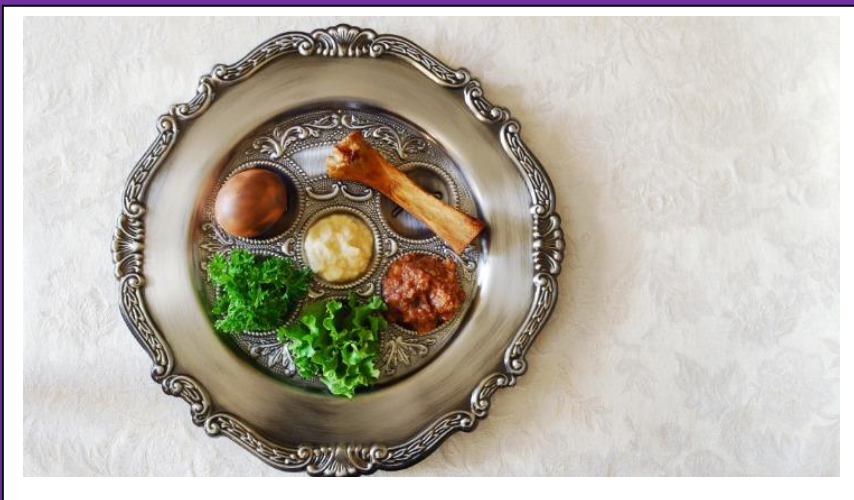
For many Jews, the Passover observance continues beyond the Seder, held on the first or second night of this seven- or eight-day festival (depending on which denomination one asks). Jews refrain from eating foods with leavening agents (*chametz*) in them. However, understanding what is or is not a leavening agent is open to interpretation. Matzo is eaten in place of bread, and the flour-like substance (matzo meal) is used in many recipes. Observance of this part of the festival can be very particular, even including the changing of dishes for the duration of the holiday.

In contemporary surveys of the Jewish community, the ritual observed the most by the most religious Jews to those who would describe themselves as secular Jews is the Passover

Seder. This is probably due to a number of reasons: it occurs in the home, lending itself to variant interpretations and creativity; it is a bridge to the past and between generations, both living and dead; and while the Seder is a retelling of the story of redemption, the story is told not merely to celebrate freedom but to remind Jews of their obligation to fight for freedom and justice in our world. This message is relevant to every Jew and human being, regardless of observance, theology, or affiliation.

Rabbi Adam Morris

Passover Seder Plate



Want more information on the Voice? Go to the Synod website (below) for lots of information to help you understand the issues

<https://uniting.church/voice/>

Implementing our Mission Plan Sunday 16th April after church

How can you contribute to the life of our congregation?

Church Council has determined which objectives are a priority and achievable but we need your help.

With this in view, we plan to meet over lunch after worship on SUNDAY, APRIL 16 – bring your own sandwich. Please plan to be there; your input is most important.





Christian Alliance invites you to the

Easter Celebration

at Rockdale Town Hall

We welcome you to join us in celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

There will be performances from various denominations, cultures and ethnicities.

Live music, food, face painting and Easter messages. Free entry.



Rockdale Town Hall
448 Princes Highway, Rockdale

Saturday 22 April 2023
11:00am - 2:00pm

For more information
please contact, christianallianceinc@gmail.com



Courses & Events you may be interested in

LAY LEADERSHIP MINISTRY & PREACHING

MISSION



POSSIBLE #1

SAT 22 APR

9.30AM - 12PM

JANNALI UNITING CHURCH

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Rev Tevita Siuhengalu (GRP)

Rev Ben Gilmore & Dr Matthew Anslow
(UME, Vital Leadership)



1-3 NOV
2023

■ Sydney
■ Melbourne
and Online

PreachFest

*Proclaiming the Inspirational
and Transformational Word*

PreachFest brings together preachers from all backgrounds and cultures who share a passion for proclaiming the inspirational and transformational Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is a space designed for you to connect, learn and be inspired by other ministers, pastors, as well as teachers of bible, theology and preaching.

Sign up to the *PreachFest* mailing list for more information and to gain access to **special early bird ticket prices!** Scan the QR code or visit tinyurl.com/52zvmm3w



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Hosted by the Uniting
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NSW/ACT and Vic/Tas.

