

Next Sunday

April 16th, 2023, @ 10am

Easter 2

Resurrection Witness

Leader: Robert
Preacher Deok Hee

Acts 2:12a, 22–32; Psalm 16; 1 Peter 1:3–9; John 20:19–31

Mission Plan Implementation Meeting over lunch

Church Council

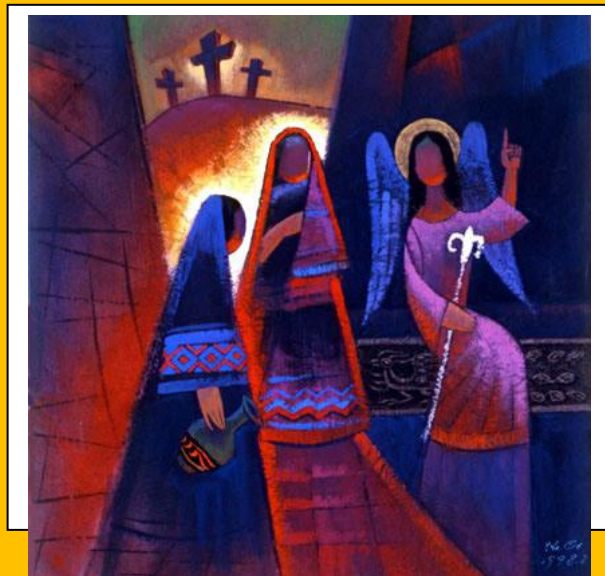
Chair
Secretary
Treasurer

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 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



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
2. 18.04.2023 Worship Task Group @ 7:00pm via Zoom

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/>

Don't forget to try our website. There are lots of interesting articles and links for you to peruse. Simply Google **Kogarah Uniting Church** and follow the prompts. Thanks, Millin, for producing such an excellent site for us.

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:

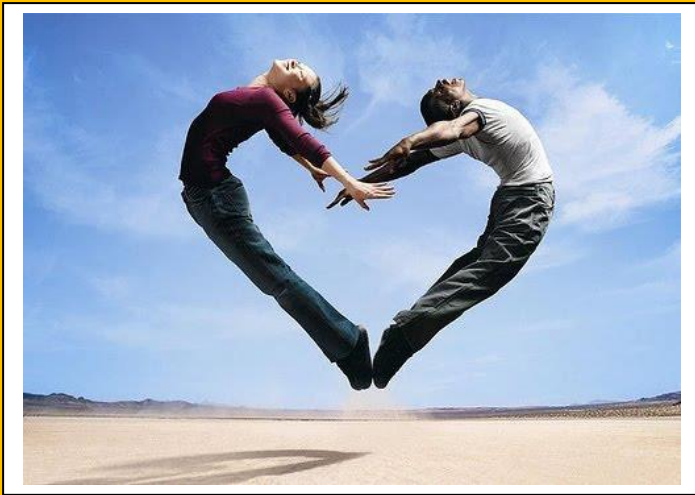
We pray especially today for Brian and Rhonda , Prema, Jim and Bobbie, Christopher Cho, and others whom we name in our hearts; health care workers in this time of COVID-19, including Richard, Millin and Roseline Goodman and Dorothy Makasa and Elin.

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



Joy Comes Alive

God of grace, open our eyes to see you. Open our hearts to let our vision change our lives. Amen.



If we pay attention to the news, even on a semi-regular basis, it can be easy enough for us to live as though every day were Good Friday. Living our call as Christians to be an Easter people can seem foolish, if not impossible. Today's readings remind us that we are not the first generation to face this hurdle and that we can learn (as so many before us) to see the presence of the living God right before us.

We are a curious species, then and now, trying to understand the world in which we live. We often try to fit our understandings into the framework of our human senses and collective memories. The scriptures call us to broader views,

setting our human experience into the larger relationship of the people with God.

Jeremiah 31:1–6 recounts the Israelites' return from exile in Babylon in terms that those who participated in the journey would not have experienced. These are not people who remember the times of peace and joy and growth in Israel; their lives have, for generations, included political machinations, occupation, and deportation. They experienced death: of their homeland, practices of faith, and identity.

And all humans know that death is final. Or do we? We are continually surrounded with endings that are beginnings. In our quest for learning, the evidence that we have the hardest time seeing is that our senses are not reliable sources. As the writer of Psalm 118:1–2, 14–24 reminds us, the evidence points to us being pounded down, but we are lifted up. The stone that humans would discard is the one that God considers most crucial. The meaning we make of events in this world is not the only meaning. God is bigger, more creative, more grace-filled than we are. Death is not final. For this we should rejoice.

We can live in death, as Paul reminds us in Colossians 3:1–4. In choosing to live by faith, certain possibilities for our lives die. However positive such a choice might be, major choices and changes in our lives will necessarily involve grief. Death and life are deeply intertwined; resurrection is with us each day if we can learn to see it.

It is this learning to see that forms such a crucial component of John's Easter narrative in John 20:1–18. As Karoline Lewis notes in her commentary on this gospel (*John*. Fortress Press 2014), John does not tell us about God's grace but invites us to

use all our senses to experience it. In John, grace tastes like the best wine; smells like a broad expanse of a grassy field when Jesus fed 5000, or like the very-dead stench of Lazarus giving way to the pound of perfume poured upon Jesus by Mary. Here, at the beginning of the 20th chapter, grace is the scent of a springtime garden at dawn; the sound of a beloved voice speaking our name; the leaping, uncontainable joy that propels Mary back into town, crying out that she has seen the Lord!

It is important to note that Mary alone stays until the morning light breaks. In John's gospel, light is a symbol of belief and understanding. So, while Peter and the Beloved Disciple see the empty tomb and the discarded cloths, they remain in the dark of human perception and understanding. Mary's stillness, her willingness to remain present in a space of grief, allows the light to shine around her. Like the light of dawn, her understanding and her vision grow until she can experience the fullness of the Resurrection; until it is the joy of God's presence rather than the fear of God's absence that compels her to proclaim what she has experienced: grace upon grace.

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The scripture passages for this Easter Day pull us out of narrow human viewpoints to remind us of the boundary-breaking presence of the living God. The task then is not merely to read the words but to experience these stories in our lives – for if we can taste and see God's grace, how do we not cry out in joy that we have seen our God?

BY SHIRLEY ERENA MURRAY

*Christ is alive, and the universe must celebrate,
and the stars and the suns shout on this Easter Day!*

Christ is alive, and his family must celebrate

in a great alleluia,

a great alleluia

to praise the power that made the stone roll away.

Here is our hope: in the mystery of suffering

is the heartbeat of Love, Love that will not let go,

here is our hope, that in God we are not separate,

and we sing alleluia,

we sing alleluia

to praise the power that made the stone roll away.

Christ Spirit, dance through the dullness of humanity

to the music of God, God who has set us free!

You are the pulse of the new creation's energy;

with a great alleluia,

a great alleluia

to praise the power that made the stone roll away.

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Mission Plan Implementation Meeting Sunday 16.04.2023
Lunch Time (Bring your lunch)



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 next SUNDAY, APRIL 16 – bring your own sandwich. Please plan to be there; your input is most important.

Discussion on the Voice
20 May at Revesby UC, 219 The River Road
REVESBY 10 am-12 noon

Nathan Tyler, Director First Peoples Strategy and Engagement from the Synod Office will share with us about why "The Voice" is important for our First Peoples, not only in terms of their present and future in this country, but also in terms of how they understand it as part of the journeying together with the rest of us later-comers towards the type of society we want in this land.
Please come along to listen and share; to ask questions and hear answers.

