

## Next Sunday

**July 9th, 2023, @ 10am**  
**Pentecost +6 – Choose**

Leader: Deok Hee  
Preacher Deok Hee  
Holy Communion Deok Hee

Genesis 24:34–38, 42–49, 58–67; Psalm 45:10–17 or Song of  
Solomon 2:8–13; Romans 7:15–25a; Matthew 11:16–19, 25–30

### Church Council

Chair Dinah Roepers  
Secretary Richard Goodman  
Treasurer John Baglin

Councillors 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.

**July 2nd, 2023, @ 10am**  
**Pentecost +5 – Welcoming Community**  
**NAIDOC Week begins**

Leader: Dinah  
Preacher Deok Hee

Genesis 22:1–14; Psalm 13; Romans 6:12–23;  
Matthew 10:40–42



*For details and information about our church activities and The Kogarah Storehouse, check out the websites: [kogarah.uca.org.au](http://kogarah.uca.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 still 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. 5.07.2023 Church Council Meeting 7pm via Zoom
2. 11.07 2023 Worship Task Group meeting 7pm via Zoom
3. 17, 18<sup>th</sup> July + 24, 25 July 9am till 5pm Seminar for practical skills in dealing with Domestic and Family Violence, conducted by Moving Forward in the church space.

**Presbytery Events**

- 25 July - Safe Church Workshop – Kingsgrove UC
- 11 November - Safe Church Workshop – Caringbah UC
- 9 December – Christmas Event for whole of Presbytery

**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, Denis and Dolly, Jim Bird. Russell Foxe, Deok Hee 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, and the newly elected government in NSW.*

*Today, from our Presbytery Prayer List, we hold Caringbah and their minister, Rev Hyun Keun Lee.*



# Welcoming Community

*Loving God, you graciously welcome and love each of us exactly as we are, and you model how we should be with each other. May you be patient with us and help us as we seek to understand what your true welcome and your hospitality mean for how we should be in our communities. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Texts of grace received and given come together this week. They invite us to trust God's presence. They urge us to welcome and tend to others. They beckon us to open ourselves to receive the hospitality brought by others.

**Genesis 22:1–14** narrates the story of Abraham's near-sacrifice of Isaac. Some interpret this story as giving all that we can. Some interpret it as an allegory about switching away from human sacrifice, and some see it as a story of Abraham's trust that God is not cruel and would intervene. Others interpret it as Abraham's unquestioning obedience. There is tension in the story. It is painful and difficult to read, no matter how one interprets it. Sometimes, it can be difficult to sense the presence of God, trust God fully, or believe in God's unconditional love.

"How long," laments the writer of **Psalms 13**. Pain, suffering, and despair go hand in hand with hope and the need for assurance of God's presence. There is trust in God's steadfast love.

In **Romans 6:12–23**, Paul describes what leads to freedom. Following God means living a life that serves and welcomes one another. In the context of community in biblical times, one is not simply choosing life for self but choosing to be in life-giving service to one another.

**Matthew 10:40–42** concludes a section of Jesus' teaching sometimes called the "Missionary Discourse," and speaks of the costs and rewards of discipleship.

The arid regions of ancient Israel made water a precious commodity and a powerful symbol. Life depended on water and welcome. Hospitality was the greatest obligation, and there were strict social conventions regarding hospitality in the traditions of all the people of this region. A household was obliged to offer any visitor or traveller – known or a stranger – food and water, the opportunity to wash, shelter, and protection.

A messenger or servant was to be treated with the same hospitality as the person(s) who sent them. One welcomed not just an individual but the community from which they came. In essence, a host became integrally bound with those they welcomed.

This is the world into which Jesus is sending his disciples. While Matthew's Jesus promotes the idea that those who welcome a disciple also welcome Jesus and God, he prepares them for the possibility that they will not be welcomed. In this time of the early church, it could be risky to welcome followers of Jesus – risky to the host and to the disciple. The "reward" might well be persecution from the Roman authorities or the wider community.

Disciples are numbered among the prophets, the righteous, and the vulnerable "little ones." While it is not clear if Matthew is referring to distinct roles within the community, or whether these are simply alternative ways of describing those sent out as missionaries, it implies that times are still perilous for Christians. Their reliance on the hospitality of the people they encounter and the welcome they receive is, in a sense, the key to the success of their mission.

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Matthew 10:40–42 encourages us to go beyond what is comfortable and go into our communities showing God's love through even our most simple actions, such as giving a cup of water. Even when God's love is difficult to sense, such as in Genesis 22:1–14, or we wonder what God has in store for us, as in Psalm 13, Romans 6:12–23 reminds us that living as faithful disciples includes serving and welcoming one another into diverse



communities where God is the host, where all are guests, and where no one is a stranger.

#### **Personal reflection**

*Our church signs boldly proclaim, "All are welcome." Some congregations have pushed beyond this reflexive phrase to write statements of intention around inclusion to the LGBTQIA+ community and interest in being a multicultural community. Others have committed to particular ministries to welcome the differently abled, but even these bold intentions can fail. This week, reflect on your own intentions and failures in radical hospitality.*

**Q What has your community tried?**

**Q What are they still learning about welcome?**

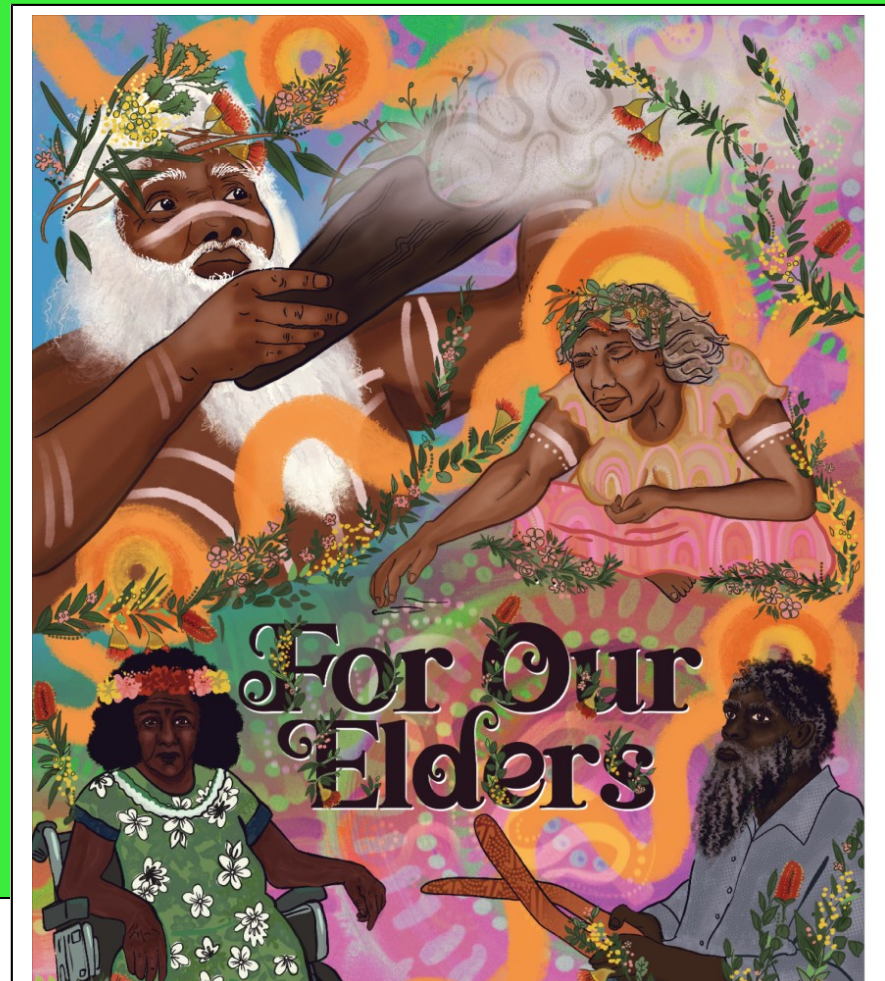
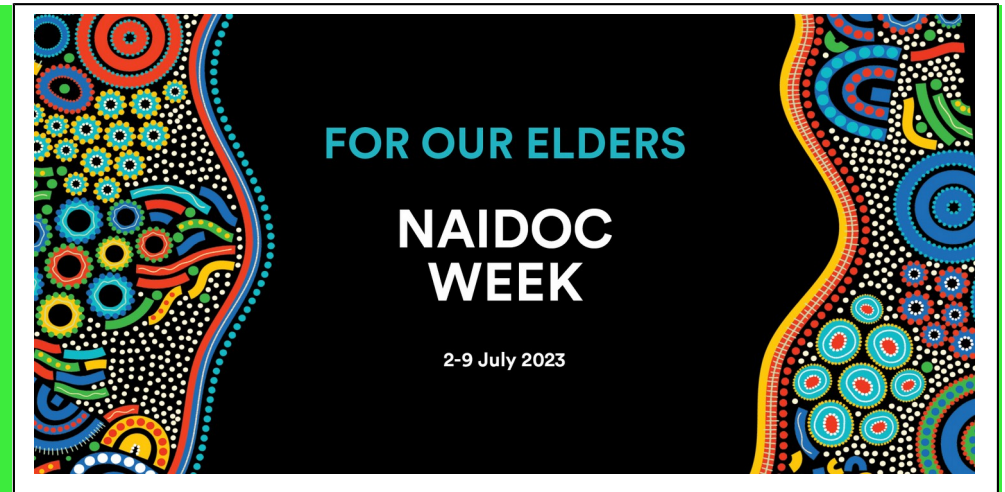
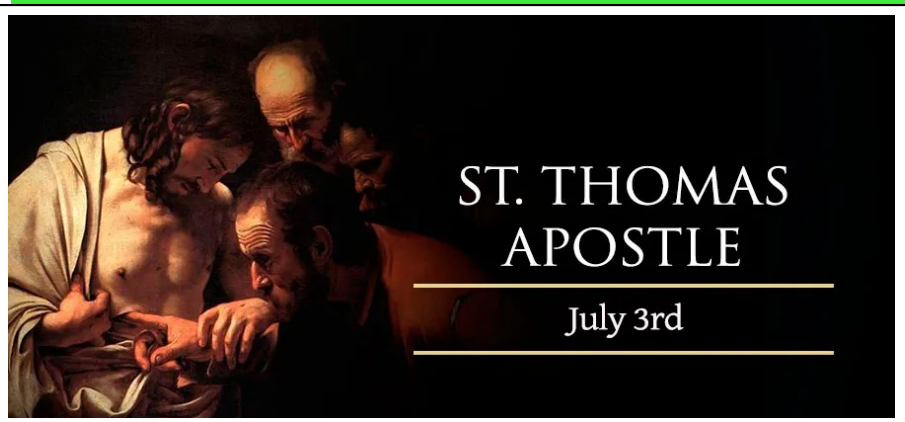
#### **Special Days Commentary**

##### **July 2 – Feast of the Visitation**

Observed by some churches on May 31, this day recalls the visit of Mary to her cousin Elizabeth as recorded in Luke 2:39–56.

##### **July 3 – St. Thomas the Apostle**

Thomas is most commonly remembered as the disciple who doubted the stories of Jesus' resurrection until he saw Christ himself. Tradition claims that Thomas took the gospel to India. Many scholars use the apocryphal gospel of Thomas to enrich their study of the life of Jesus.



### *About the poster ...*

*Bobbi Lockyer, a proud Ngarluma, Kariyarra, Nyulnyul and Yawuru artist, born and based on Kariyarra Country in Port Hedland, is the winner of the prestigious National NAIDOC Week Poster Competition for 2023 with her entry, For Our Elders.*

*“Where there is knowledge there are our Elders. Our Elders paved the pathways for us, taught us our knowledge, our history, they passed down their art, stories and wisdom. Our Elders are the foundation of our communities and role models for our children. With this poster I wanted to showcase how important our Elders are in passing down traditions and culture to our children and future.” said Bobbi.*

