

Next Sunday

July 23rd, 2023, @ 10am
Pentecost +8 – Blessed

Leader: Sue B
Preacher Matagi Vilitama

Genesis 28:10–19a Psalm 139: 1–12, 23–24 Romans 8:12–25
Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43

Church Council

Chair Richard Goodman
Secretary Sue Baglin
Treasurer John Baglin

Councillors Robert M°Alpine (2024) Sue Baglin (2025)

Elders John Baglin (2025) Richard Goodman (2024)
Dinah Roepers (2024)

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 16th, 2023, @ 10am
Pentecost +7 – Struggle

Leader: Richard
Preacher Richard

Genesis 25:19–34; Psalm 119:105–112 Romans 8:1–11
Matthew 13:1–9, 18–23



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

For pastoral concerns, while Deok Hee is away,
please contact Dinah Roepers
on 0407 104 858

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. 17, 18th 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.
 2. 8th August Church Council via Zoom @ 7pm
 3. 22.08 Worship Task Group meeting @ 7pm via Zoom
- Presbytery Events

📅 23.07 Ignite Youth Event at Bexley UC from 6pm

- 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 Deok Hee's absence. 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

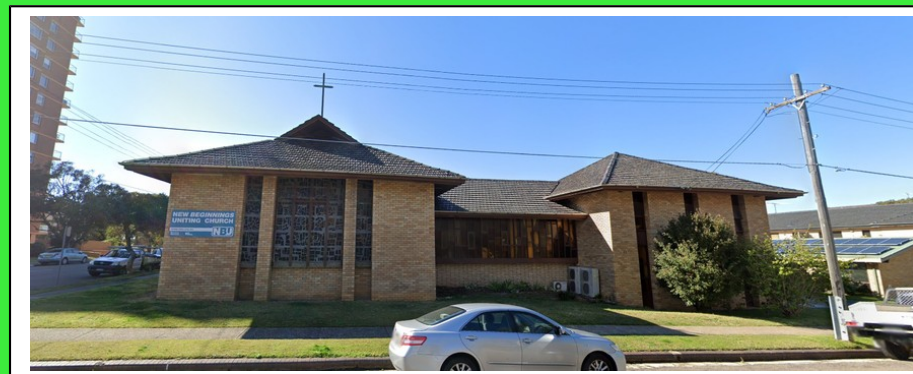
The team, parents and children in the Early Learning Centre.

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. (Deok Hee will be on extended leave until early October.)

Pray for Türkiye, Syria, Ukraine, Russia.

Today, from our Presbytery Prayer List, we hold Cronulla - New Beginnings UC in our prayers. Cronulla are currently seeking a new minister.



Struggle

Ever-present God, bless us now as we open ourselves to these sometimes difficult stories that hold tensions, lies, and rivalry. May we wander through them with an open heart to the ways that your presence, truth, and love are near. Amen.

The family narrative continues with struggles between siblings who seek advantage over one another. What good news can there be for such a house divided? God's word is counsel for navigating the tensions and struggles of community. God's steadfast love offers forgiveness that frees from the bondage of past errors. God's Spirit is generous, providing abundant opportunities for growth.

Genesis 25:19–34 opens with Rebekah and Isaac who, having been childless for many years, are blessed with the news that Rebekah is pregnant with twins. It is a difficult pregnancy, and Rebekah prays that the struggling of her unborn children might cease. God offers a vision of the struggle that will continue after their births: “The elder shall serve the younger” (v. 22). For the Hebrews in exile, this story of the reversal of societal norms reassured them that God is with the underling not the powerful. Esau is born first and appears “red” and “hairy.” The name Esau sounds like the Hebrew word for “hairy.” Jacob is grasping Esau's heel as he is born. His name is from the Hebrew word for “heel.” The differences continue. Esau is a hunter, and Jacob prefers to work around the home. Esau is Isaac's favourite; Jacob is Rebekah's favourite. The brothers' tension peaks when Esau returns from a hunting trip. Hungry for Jacob's stew, he trades his birthright – disregarding it or despising it. The verb despise is used elsewhere in Hebrew scriptures to refer to an act of despising God. For Jacob and Esau's era, birthright refers to the honour

and privilege conferred upon the family's oldest son. Being the first-born twin, Esau would have a double share of the family inheritance, a larger role within the family, and take on leadership responsibilities when the father died. A birthright could be transferred or revoked. Genesis 27 records how Esau's sale of his birthright is confirmed when Jacob tricks Isaac into giving him the blessing of the oldest son.

This is another very human story. The people and incidences are so messy and so real – the favouritism of parents for one child over another, the uneasy relationship between siblings, poor decision-making and lack of insight/long-sight opportunism for self-gain. In all this, there is God – always present.

God's word guides the life of the writer of Psalm 119:105–112. The path walked has not been easy (an echo of what we have learned of the path of the disciples in previous weeks), but the psalmist vows to continue to observe God's “law” and to recognize dependence on the continuing blessings of God. God's Spirit empowers people to live in harmonious relationships with God and neighbour.

In Romans 8:1–11, Paul describes a tension between “flesh” and “spirit,” not to designate two parts of human nature but two ways of living.

Living “in the flesh” is to focus on the material world. To dwell “in the Spirit” is to focus on God's ways. God's Spirit empowers people to live in harmonious relationships with God and neighbour.

God's generous and surprising ways are addressed in Jesus' parable of the sower, found in Matthew 13:1–9, 18–23. God sows the seed of God's word generously among all people. The work of God's realm will yield a certain harvest, despite the tensions and struggles among those who receive the word.

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How do we, the people who hold dear the idea of oneness, live and struggle in a divided world? Perhaps the mindset we would do well to adopt is that of the sower, that God's generosity and kindness is constant and available to all, fully aware that God is eternally of the mind that normal, imperfect people will change the world.

Forgive Us Now

73 Vs 1 Forgive us now, O God of love
For all the pain that we have sown
For all the broken hearts we've left
And all the words we've left unsaid
Forgive us gracious God of life

Vs 2 Forgive us now, O Mother love
For all the idols we have built
For all the time we've worshipped there
In company of dark despair
Forgive us Mother of all hope

Ch As we forgive, may we be healed
As we reach out, may you be near
And take our hand to comfort bring
So we can face the start again

Vs 3 Forgive us now, O Holy One
For crimes committed in your name
For all the holy wars we wage
For all the children we enslave
Forgive us now O Holy One

Vs 4 Forgive us now, O Jesus Christ
For all the pride before the fall
For all the times our heart was cold
For all the monologues we've told
Forgive us Jesus of new life

Dave Brown
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This song of repentance started as a very personal song, with 'I' instead of 'we'. However, by verse two it had transformed itself into a collective petition for forgiveness. It stays with me more than many other songs.

Further Update on Deok Hee

You will remember that Deok Hee informed us at church last Sunday, that he was suffering from myasthenia gravis and would have to take extended sick leave. Deok Hee has been granted three months sick leave, until the beginning of October. During that time, we will receive significant support from Presbytery and Synod.

The Worship Committee will cover services until 30th July with the help of Matagi Vilitama on the 23rd July. Richard has been granted permission to celebrate Holy Communion during Deok Hee's absence when another minister is unavailable to celebrate for us.

We are indeed fortunate that we will receive a 50% supply minister for the last two months. Rev Young Dae Lee has been appointed by Presbytery to help us out. He will take services on the second and fourth Sundays of the month with Holy Communion. Young Dae is currently the minister at Jannali UC where he is on a 50% load. We thank Jannali for enabling Young Dae to meet our needs.

We ask you all to hold Deok Hee and his family in your prayers as he undertakes treatment for his quite serious condition. Deok Hee may be able to worship with us from time to time over this period.