

Next Sunday

October 1st, 2023, @ 10am Pentecost + 18 Questions & Quarrels

Leader: Rev Steve Aynsley
Preacher Rev Steve Aynsley

Exodus 17:1–7; Psalm 78:1–4, 12–16
Philippians 2:1–13; Matthew 21:23–32

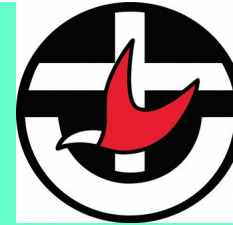
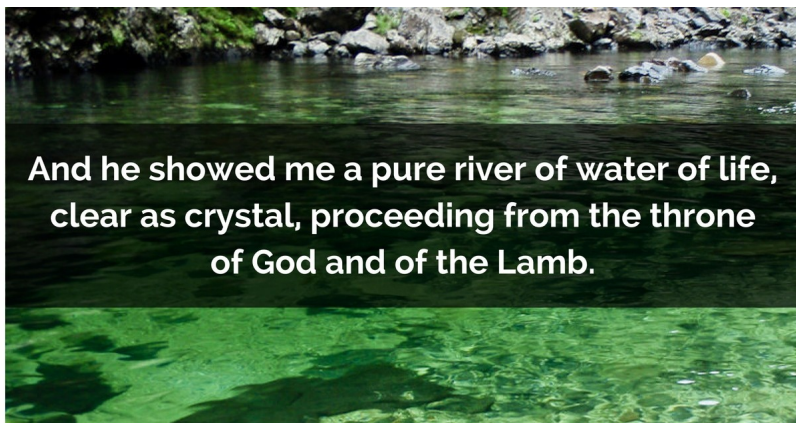
Church Council

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.*

September 24th, 2023, @ 10am Season of Creation 4 – River

Leader: Young-Dae
Preacher Young-Dae
Holy Communion Young-Dae

Genesis 8:20–22; 9:12–17; Psalm 104:27–33;
Revelation 22:1–5; Matthew 28:1–10
Libya's Catastrophic Flood



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

**There are fewer cases at the moment, but there is
still a need to be careful.**

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. 19th October Kogarah UC Church Council @ 7pm via Zoom
2. 1st November Kogarah Storehouse Board of Management
AGM (Time TBA)

Presbytery Events

- 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 work together in Deok Hee's absence. For Young-Dae Lee as he guides us during 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 Matagi Vilitama, Brian and Rhonda, Prema and Priya, Jim and Bobbie, Denis and Dolly, Jim Bird, Naghuia, 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 the people of Türkiye, Syria, Ukraine, Russia, Niger, Sudan, Morocco. Libya

Today, the people from Georges River Presbytery will be praying for Loftus Uniting Church and their minister Rev 'Oto Faiva'



River Sunday

I am River. Creator, offer life through me to creation. Sing your song as I tickle rocks and filter through Land to give Forest and Wilderness water for roots and creatures. And after the groaning of waiting, may all taste the fruits of your renewed creation. Amen.

The Season of Creation offers intentional time to consider the role of creation in Bible stories and in our lives and to remember that humans are just one part of the ever-unfolding story of God's Creation. This week's texts call us to reconnect with our relationship with River, the Tree of Life beside them, the holy water flowing from the heart of Holy One. How will we sit beside River, enjoy their company, hear their story, and find ourselves invited into worship of Creator?

Genesis 8:20–22, 9:12–17 recounts the covenant God makes with Noah after the great flood that displayed the power of water to destroy. But the covenant stands as a reminder of the mutual responsibility that God and humanity hold for preserving creation against such destructive forces. In ancient Near Eastern cultures, covenants were sacred oaths between two parties. Each party promised to perform an action or uphold a promise at the threat of a curse or punishment. In this case, Noah provides pleasing worship of God, and God promises never to destroy creation by flood again. The rainbow remains a sign of the ongoing continuation of this covenant.

The precariousness and cyclical nature of life is highlighted in **Psalms 104:27–33**. The psalmist expresses God's power and presence within creation. God's awesome Spirit of creation and renewal offers hope and garners praise. Again, we witness the mutuality of right relationship with God: "I will sing praise to [divine presence,] my God, while I have being" may be heard as an

expression of radical participation in the unfolding of creation, our pleasing worship in response to God's enacted promise of life.

Matthew 28:1–10 highlights the impact of Jesus's resurrection. The Good News is not limited to humanity; all Creation participates. Earth quakes and an angel appears. The angel's appearance resembles natural elements of lightning and snow. The message of the Resurrection brings new life and hope for Mary Magdalene, Mary, the other disciples, and for all creation.

Revelation 22:1–5 Revelation is apocalyptic literature – an extended vision or revealing. We don't know much about John, the named author who presents a vision of the coming of God's reign. Revelation 22:1–5 is the end of John's vision and presented in highly symbolic language.

River, in this vision, rises in Genesis 2:10 and flows out of Eden to water Garden. River flows on through the vision of Ezekiel, who sees the water flowing from below the temple sanctuary where God dwells (Ezekiel 47:1). Ezekiel sees trees on both sides of River. He hears the promise that wherever River goes every part of creation "will live" (47:9).

In Revelation, Ezekiel's vision is fully realized with the presence of Christ, the Lamb. As if to underscore the restoration of Eden, the trees on either side of River now produce twelve kinds of fruit for the healing of the nations.

In the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt, mighty rivers were the waters of life, an expression of divine love. Agriculture, industry, religion, economics, and cultural life of whole nations depended on the flood cycles of the rivers. Rivers symbolized the saving action of God.

While this image serves as a promise of renewal and fullness of life for all of creation, it also requires close examination by readers. Access to necessary resources is limited to those who fit within John's view of right belief in God. The passage raises questions about who has access to life-giving water and resources for healing both within the walled city and in our world today.

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This week's texts highlight the inherent mutuality of God and creation. Water serves as a powerful force that brings both destruction and new life. Through John's vision, River calls all that lives back into the flow of life for renewal and transformation with God.

River Stories

Before there were plants growing in Land, there were streams that “would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground” (Genesis 2:6). From that muddy humus, God first imagined our beings. God formed us in connection to other things God created. This is how our story with River began.

There have been many more stories. Water comes with many stories from four waterways that weaved through the Garden of Eden to the Jordan River. These stories have shaped us, just as River has changed our landscape. Even with all these stories, we still have more to learn from water.

Water Is Life

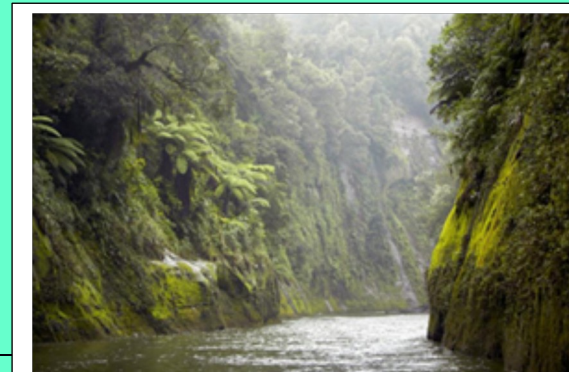
Water has power. We know this as Christians who embrace the symbolism of Baptism. With water, we become different people. In water, we find our whole lives and this has endless power.

In 2014, the Lakota tribe of the American Dakotas raised a protest chant saying, “Mní wičhóni,” or “Water is life.” Water is not abundant in the Great Plains. A Canadian company intended to develop and build a pipeline from Alberta, Canada, to Steele City, Nebraska. The pipeline would reach all the way to Texas on the southern end of the United States of America, but the company's proposal ignored the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 and

Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 that protected this land. The pipeline's construction would demolish sacred burial grounds and threaten the Ogallala Aquifer, the main water supply in that region for natives and non-natives. The protest proclaimed the native faith that water is sacred. River, Land, and all creation are relatives and deserve respect and protection.

Protecting Rivers and Water

In Aotearoa New Zealand, the Maori people gave River new life by granting the waters of the Whanganui River personhood. In those flowing waters, their ancestors lived. They feel called to protect these 290 km/180 mi of flowing waters in the familiar saying, “I am the river, the river is me.” It is a part of them. After 160 years of legal battles to protect this part of themselves, they finally gave legal personhood to the Whanganui River, allowing it to have “all the rights, powers, duties, and liabilities of a legal person.” Kaitlin Curtice, an enrolled citizen of the Potawatomi Nation and author of *Native: Identity, Belonging, and Rediscovering God*, reflects upon this “beautiful story of overcoming colonial systems, a story of recognizing the rights of the water and of the people who care for those waters” by asking, “What if our stories of baptism in the church were rooted in that same idea of new beginnings, of personhood, just like the new beginning after a flood, after everything is drenched and overcome? What might we learn from the water? What might we learn if we listen, if we waded in – unafraid, untethered, and uninhibited – ready to become the ones we were created to become?”



Whanganui
River



Lala at the wedding in Timor Leste where she was “the mother of the bride”! A very happy day.

Today is Young Dae’s last service with us. We thank him sincerely for his help in our time of need and for the beautiful music he brought to our services through his talented family.

Please stay behind after the service for a special Morning Tea. You can tell him and his family personally how much you have enjoyed his time with us.

We hope to see Deok-Hee back with us on the 8th October.

