



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.*

25th August 2024, at 10am

Pentecost + 14

Jesus: The Bread of Life – 5

Leader: Deok Hee

Reflection: Deok Hee

Holy Communion Deok Hee

**1 Kings 8:(1,6,10–11), 22–30, 41–43 ; Psalm 84; Ephesians 6:10–20;
John 6:56–69**



For details and information about our church activities and The Kogarah Storehouse, check out the websites: kogarah.uca.org.au and <https://www.kogarahstorehouse.org.au/>

For pastoral concerns,
please contact Rev Deok Hee Cho on 0401 975 745

Scriptures

1 Kings 8:(1,6,10–11), 22–30, 41–43

Solomon brings the ark into the new Temple, and he says a prayer of dedication.

Psalm 84

The psalmist sings in praise of God's dwelling place and longs to be in God's presence.

Ephesians 6:10–20

Paul uses the image of spiritual armour to describe how the Ephesians should protect themselves against the forces of evil.

John 6:56–69

Many disciples desert Jesus as they find his teaching difficult.

Theme Focus

Rattled by Jesus' teaching, many disciples find it too hard to commit to the life Jesus offers, stirring us to conceive what it means to say 'yes' to the life Jesus offers.

Word for the Day

In John 6:56–69, we come to the end of a long string of bread stories concluding with this odd encounter. A group of disciples choose to turn back and no longer follow Jesus. These are not ‘church shoppers’ stopping by to try Jesus out; these are disciples committed to following Jesus’ way. So, what is it that causes them to leave? Is it simply that they have had enough of the bread talk? Or is there something more?

The text suggests that what Jesus is teaching is simply too hard for these people. Perhaps this was not the Christ they had hoped for. Like many today, maybe they wanted a saviour with a magic wand who would fix the problems of the world. Instead, Jesus is asking for full participation from his disciples. His talk of bread ends with Jesus suggesting he is the bread of life, and they must eat.

Of course, a literal, physical understanding completely misses Jesus’ point. Jesus drew crowds wherever he travelled. People would come and listen to his teaching or would stand by in hope of healing. Here, though, Jesus is saying don’t just stand by waiting for some miracle; devour my teaching, let it become part of you so that you too are transformed and become part of this life-giving movement. Jesus is seeking a ‘yes’ to the life he offers, a commitment that requires getting involved.

Ideas for Reflection

Richard Rohr talks about two types of faith. He calls them positive faith and negative faith, or maybe more simply, ‘Yes’ faith and ‘No’ faith. Rohr argues it is much easier to gather people around a ‘No’ faith. People who want to say no to abortion, or ill-treatment of refugees, or violence against women, or marriage equality. Whatever the issue may be, if people want to say no, there is a lot of energy, and crowds will gather. Gathering people to say ‘yes’ to something is much more difficult. A ‘yes’ faith is intimate. It is not about what you are fighting or what you are against; instead, it focuses on the thing you are in love with, the thing you desire, that which gets you out of bed each morning.

We see these two played out in John 6:60–69. The disciples who turned away followed Jesus, hoping he would have the answers to changing the world around them. Perhaps, they and the crowds gathered with a ‘no’ to

Roman domination, a 'no' to the injustices they were experiencing, a 'no' to corruption and hypocrisy. In hearing Jesus' teaching, the fear that drives them kicks in. Perhaps it is the fear of losing their tradition, their family, their life. Jesus is asking too much in asking them to say 'yes'.

- How does seeing Jesus as the "bread keeper" challenge you in your Christian walk? (See poem below)

Poetry as a contemplative practice

Instructions

1. Try to let your mind drop into your heart as you quietly read or listen to the poem. You might like to start by centring on your breath.
2. Read or listen to the poem through more than one time.
3. Notice what arises in you each time.

This activity is a way of entering into the scriptural themes in a contemplative way – not unlike how one might engage in a *lectio divina* process.

Bread Keeper

The word *lord* comes from the Old English word *hlāford*. This word was formed from the words *hlāf*, meaning 'loaf of bread,' and *weard*, meaning 'keeper, guard' This "bread keeper," however, actually had no more to do with bread than our modern "breadwinner." <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/lord#kidsdictionary>

Bread maker, bread keeper, bread winner
feeds civilisation since early time.

bread around the campfire
bless, break, bolster

bread at the table
break-fast, butter, belong

knife to apportion
fork to hold
spoon to convey
table rituals

bread from wheat
bread from heaven

© John Howell

3 This Table

The centuries have settled on this table
Deepened the grain beneath a clean white cloth
Which bears afresh our changing elements.
Year after year of prayer, in hope and trouble,
Were poured out here and blessed and broken, both
In aching absence and in absent presence.

This table too the earth herself has given
And human hands have made. Where candle-flame
At corners burns and turns the air to light
The oak once held its branches up to heaven,
Blessing the elements which it became,
Rooting the dew and rain, branching the light.

Because another tree can bear, unbearable,
For us, the weight of Love, so can this table

Malcolm Guite
(from *3 Sonnets on Communion*)



Season of Creation begins next Sunday

A Statement from the World Council of Churches

Care for creation and justice are at the centre of WCC work on climate change. The Bible teaches the wholeness of creation and calls human beings to take care of the garden of Eden (Gen 2:15). The God of the Bible is a God of justice who protects, loves and cares for the most vulnerable among his creatures.

The present world development model is threatening the lives and livelihoods of many, especially among the world's poorest people, and destroying biodiversity. The ecumenical vision is to overcome this model based on over-consumption and greed.

Since the 1970s, the WCC has helped develop the concept of sustainable communities. Since the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was adopted in 1992, the WCC has been present at all UN climate change conferences.

Over the years, the WCC helped foster a movement for climate justice touching millions of people around the world.

It's time for climate justice. When creation is threatened, churches and Christians are called to speak out and act as an expression of their commitment to life, justice and love.

Planning Ahead

- 24th October 2024 Kogarah Church Council via Zoom @ 7pm
- 7th November 2024 Worship Task Group via Zoom @ 7pm

Please pray for ...

The mission and ministry of our congregation and for our Minister, Deok Hee.

Worship leaders; helpers, leaders, followers 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 Dennis and Robyn Lyons, Brian and Rhonda who have had COVID , Prema and Priya, Jim and Bobbie, Denis and Dolly, Naghuia, John and Sue and especially John's mother and father; Peter and Sue; Dinah; Ern Edwards; Godfrey; Jim Bird; Sue de B; health care workers at this time, including Richard, Millin and Roseline Goodman and Dorothy Makasa and Elin. For others whom we name in our hearts.

Pray for the people of Syria, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Ukraine, Russia, Israel and Palestine, especially the people of Gaza. The USA.

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Next Sunday

1st September 2024, at 10am

Season of Creation - 1

“To hope and act with Creation”

Earth Sunday

Leader: Deok Hee
Reflection: Deok Hee

Genesis 1:1-25; Psalm 33:1-9; Romans 1:18-23;
John 1:1-14



Church Council 2024-2025

Chair
Secretary
Treasurer
Councillors

Richard Goodman
Sue Baglin
John Baglin
Robert M^cAlpine (2026)
Sue Baglin (2025)
Dinah Roepers (2025)
John Baglin (2025)
Bobbie Miller (2025)
Richard Goodman (2027)

Elders

Safe Church Contact Person Richard Goodman