



**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.*

**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**



**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) and <https://www.kogarahstorehouse.org.au/>**

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

## **Scriptures outside of the Season of Creation (You may care to read these scriptures on your own)**

### **Song of Solomon 2:8–13**

In these verses, the female writer describes her lover as a young stag who peeks through the windows into her. Love is described as the season of spring, calling love into being.

### **Psalms 45:1–2, 6–9**

The psalmist describes the king as handsome, sweet-smelling, blessed, and full of righteousness, justice, and grace.

### **James 1:17–27**

James reminds the reader that all good gifts come from God and that the gifts of love, justice and humility should be shared within community.

### **Mark 7:1–8, 14–15, 21–23**

When the religious authorities question Jesus about ritual purity, Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah and reminds those gathered that what truly matters is what is in one's heart.

## **Theme Focus**

This week's readings emphasise love in action, illustrating both the joyful celebration of love and the consequences of its absence, reminding us that true expressions of love require action and prompting us to listen closely to those who act with love.

## Word for the Day

Song of Solomon 2:9 indicates that a woman is speaking. In the Bible, it is incredibly rare for us to hear the voice of a woman, and this book describes a woman seeking out erotic love from her lover. For some, this has been so scandalous that it has been said that this book should not be included in the scriptures. Others have addressed these issues by allegorising it, suggesting that the Songs of Songs describe Christ's love for the church.

Is the scandal because this is a woman speaking? Or are we uncomfortable with this idea of love that does not seem to be connected with marriage or other socially acceptable demonstrations of love?

### Ideas for Reflection

If you were speaking of someone you love, what words or phrases would you use to describe them? Do the words change when we are talking about the love of a friend, or the love between our ageing grandparents, or the love of between siblings?

- Traditionally, the Church has reduced love to that between a man and a woman. The woman is given from her father to her husband, she 'takes' his surname, and she moves from being a 'miss' to a 'mrs' while he remains a 'mr.' What might it mean if we moved to a broader understanding of love, inclusive of those who are never married, no longer married, not married but not single and all those in between?
- What do you think this book of erotic love adds to the scriptures? What understanding of God might be removed if we did not have the Songs of Solomon, which is also known as the Song of Songs or the Canticle of Canticles? How does it change our understanding of this book when we think it was written by Solomon, who reportedly had 700 wives and 300 concubines?
- In Hebrew, the name suggests that this is the best of all songs. What makes a good song? What songs are sung in this community the best? What is it that makes them the best?

## 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.

### An Opening Prayer by Dario Barolin

Your vocal chords vibrated, O God,  
and your creation was set in motion.  
In millions of years  
Your enunciated words were gestated  
and it was the good, the beautiful, the just.  
In your immensity and love  
You opened a space for your creatures.  
We rejoice and rejoice in colors and sounds  
in textures, tastes, and smells that you have given us.  
I inhale the life you have given me,  
my vocal cords vibrate,  
my heart fills with gratitude:  
Hallelujah!  
Praise be to You, God of life.

### And a final blessing ...

May your feet walk steadfast in righteousness,  
may your hands be outstretched in compassion,  
may your heart beat with joy,  
may your tears comfort sorrows,  
may your lips utter love.  
And until we meet again  
may God, one and triune, delight you in God's justice,  
nourishing you with God's joy,  
and may you never lack the hope  
to begin again.

## Poem based on John 1:1-14

In the darkness of the eternal night  
in an emptiness of void  
burst forth the light  
upon all that was not  
and became life  
and all that was  
is  
and will be  
and there was  
at this before time and place  
Love  
created in its own  
a universe  
born of its word  
and living in the light of  
this love  
exploding onto the nothingness of all  
the joy  
color  
laughter  
song  
that in the untouched reaches of our memory  
still sing

hammered and molded into a world  
full of need  
and yet longing for that love  
kindled in the sweet lullaby  
of a mother  
in a far off forgotten place  
singing  
from the untouched reaches of our memory  
to the light  
created anew  
from before all time and place  
in the helpless innocence  
of this  
(Emmanuel)

child

*posted by Pastor Dan 2012 – A Lutheran Pastor from Anchorage ALASKA*



**Gamma-ray  
burst  
Science Times**

# Planning Ahead

- 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024 Storehouse Management Committee @ 4pm @ The Storehouse
- 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.**



**Gaza**

**(The New Humanitarian)**

**Next Sunday**

**8th September 2024 @ 10am**

**Season of Creation 2 – Humanity**

**Leader Robert**

**Reflection (Robert)**

**Deok Hee is at a course in Adelaide today**

**Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 2:7-8, 15, 19; Psalm 8;**

**Philippians 2:1-8; Mark 10:41-45**



**Church Council 2024-2025**

**Chair**  
**Secretary**  
**Treasurer**  
**Councillors**

**Richard Goodman**  
**Sue Baglin**  
**John Baglin**  
**Robert M<sup>c</sup>Alpine (2026)**  
**Sue Baglin (2025)**  
**Dinah Roepers (2025)**  
**John Baglin (2025)**  
**Bobbie Miller (2025)**  
**Richard Goodman (2027)**

**Elders**

**Safe Church Contact Person** **Richard Goodman**