



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.*

29th September 2024 @ 10am

What Do You Want?

Leader Dinah

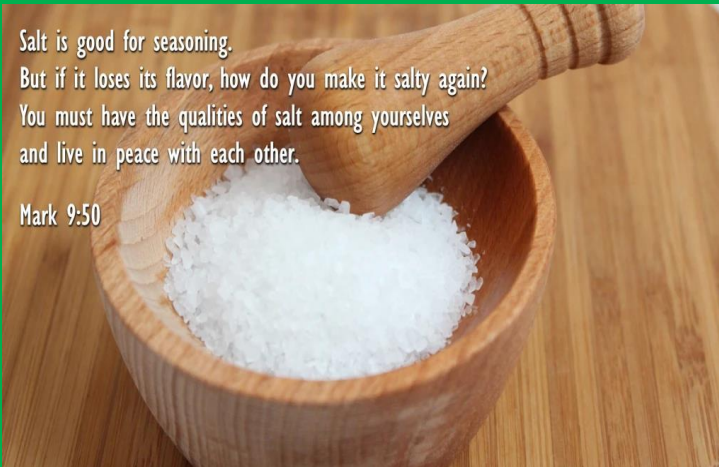
Reflection Dinah

Esther 7:1–6, 9–10; 9:20–22; Psalm 124; James 5:13–20

Mark 9:38–50

Salt is good for seasoning.
But if it loses its flavor, how do you make it salty again?
You must have the qualities of salt among yourselves
and live in peace with each other.

Mark 9:50



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/>

Deok Hee is on holiday today. For pastoral concerns, please contact Richard Goodman on 0434 127 340

Scriptures

Esther 7:1–6, 9–10; 9:20–22

With courage and resilience, Esther asks the king for freedom for her people and for the man responsible to face justice.

Psalm 124

This Psalm of Ascent, or pilgrim psalm, suggests that the Israelites were saved because God was on their side and protected them from the enemy.

James 5:13–20

The reader is encouraged to pray in suffering and sickness, believing that God will come to the aid of a righteous person.

Mark 9:38–50

Jesus tells his disciples that anyone doing good in God's name is acceptable, even if they are not a follower of Jesus. Conversely, anyone who hurts a vulnerable believer is in mortal danger.

Theme Focus

When offered anything she wants, courageous Queen Esther seeks the safety of her people, and we ponder what would be our response to such an offer.

Word for the Day

Haman sets up for Mordecai is instead used for Haman, Vashti is deposed for refusing to appear naked before the King, and Esther becomes Queen through winning a beauty contest.

If we take it at face value, we might take away lessons such as women should do anything to become Queen because it may be used for God's good, or bad men will get what's coming to them as long as there is an innocent witness to expose them.

What happens when we think of this as a comedy? Can satire teach us a lesson? Is it the same lesson that is learned when we take this story seriously?

Ideas for Reflection

In Esther 4:14, Mordecai tells Esther that if she stays silent, liberation for the Jews will come from elsewhere, but perhaps she has been chosen 'for such a time as this.' The idea that individuals have been chosen 'for such a time as this' is often used by Christian groups that use it as evidence and justification for fighting the 'culture wars.'

- Is this the moral of this verse? What else may we hear in this section of the book?

The book of Esther has two queens – Esther and Vashti. Vashti is rejected because she refuses to display herself for the King and his guests. Esther becomes Queen after becoming the King's concubine and taking her turn to please him. Each queen shows courage and fortitude in the face of mortal danger.

- What moral should we take from these two queens? To what extent might our own opinion of each woman depend on their connection to our community? (For example, Esther is us, Vashti is them)

Ahasuerus, Haman and Mordecai all present different 'types' of masculinity.

- What lessons might we take from their portrayal?
- What lessons might we learn about using power and authority wisely from the women and men in this story?

Still today, Jewish people tell the story of Esther at the feast of Purim. You may like to find out more about this celebration and think about the different meanings this story holds for different communities.

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.



The book of Esther is set in Susa, the capital of Persia. In June 2020, Ali and I (Graham King) were enthralled by the BBC Four series, [Art of Persia](#). This three-part study of the history and culture of Iran was presented by [Samira Ahmed](#), the BBC journalist of Indian heritage. It is still available on iPlayer and worth watching.

Let's turn now to the painting (above) and poem, which are printed on your service leaflet. What do you see?

**Questions Raised by the
Painting**

Who is this woman,

Framed by arches,
Beautiful, bountiful,
Centred, subtle, shrewd,
Carrying scented lilies?

Who is this man,

Pictured with pillars,
Royal, imperial,
Majestic, magnetic,
Extending his sceptre?

Who is this man,

Holding a scroll, eyes alert,
Beckoning, suggesting,
Suppliant, petitioning?

Who is this man,

Head down, eyes closed,
Gallowed, glowering,
Schemer, scowling?

Who are these girls,

Gazing at us,
And the woman,
With posy and scroll?

Esther, Jewish Queen of Persia, Orphaned, adopted, awesome, Raised to the heights, Reticent, persuasive, risk-taker, 'If I perish, I perish', Bravely delivers her race, From depths of death.

Xerxes, King of Persian Empire, Reigns in citadel of Susa, From India to Ethiopia, Opulent, hospitable, terrifying, Saved by Esther from murder, Hears her pleas for her people.

Mordecai, cousin of Esther, Foster-father, chronicler, Honourably perceptive: 'Perhaps you have come To royal dignity For such a time as this?'

Haman, vizier of Xerxes, Machiavellian murderer, Plans destruction of Jews: Snarler ensnared, Worsted, reversed, hoisted, Despised for ever.

Jewish children and families, Throughout the ages, Celebrate Purim, Reading the scroll, Feasting and sharing, Remembering friendship and revenge.

Earth Wisdom - Hope in Action

4 to 6 October 2024, Santa Sabina College

90 The Boulevard, Strathfield, NSW 2135

The Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC) warmly invites you to participate in our second national Conference.

We have lined up brilliant, inspiring and informative speakers, like Professor Anne Poelina, Nyikina Warrwa woman, human & earth rights advocate; Dr James Whelan, a climate action strategist who was much-valued at the 2019 Conference; and Tim Buckley, Director of Climate Energy Finance.

There will be plenty of opportunities to ask questions and contribute, with breaks in which people can network with each other. When you leave, you will have had a chance to think about where you might best contribute in your own local context.

We are pleased to have the benefit of catering by the House of Welcome, a social enterprise creating employment pathways through fusion-inspired global cuisine. All meals and morning and afternoon teas will be provided, except breakfasts. Food will be vegetarian or vegan. Strictly kosher or halal food can be arranged.

Come along and meet like-minded people of faith who have been taking action on the climate crisis.

The Conference will be an opportunity to hone our skills and capacity to do this more effectively.

To register for the Conference, please do so at: <https://www.arrcc.org.au/conference>

Or CONTACT Thea Ormerod chair@arrcc.org.au

0405293466

Support

The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty

NON-PROLIFERATION

Stop building the problem by ending the expansion of coal, oil and gas production.

A FAIR PHASE OUT

An equitable plan for the wind down of existing fossil fuel production, where nations with the capacity and historical responsibility for emissions transition fastest provide support to others around the world.

A JUST TRANSITION

Fast track the adoption of renewable energy and promote economic diversification away from fossil fuels so that no worker, community or country is left behind.

All signatures will be used to influence decision-makers at the next UN Conference on Climate Change, COP29

You can sign up now: <https://fossilfueltreaty.org/home>



**TO HOPE AND ACT
WITH CREATION**

SEASON OF CREATION 2024

The firstfruits of hope

(Rom 8:19-25)

Call to Prayer

Georges River Presbytery joins the President of the Uniting Church in calling all congregations and members to pray for the Middle East over the coming week. With large numbers of people from the region living within our geographical bounds, the recent unrest is close to home for many of our neighbours.

We appeal to our Church members to pray for Lebanon, Israel, and Palestine as the violence increases and the fragile peace crumbles. We are encouraged to pray for a ceasefire that will promote a vision of life and peace throughout the war-torn region, recalling Christ's words: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Matthew 5:9).

Thousands of refugees have been displaced and their number grows daily, their homes inaccessible, destroyed, or beyond repair.

Hundreds of innocents are weekly killed or severely wounded by indiscriminate attacks.

During this time of extreme crisis, let us all recommit ourselves towards working and praying together in the hope that, by the grace of the Almighty, we might begin to realize this sacred vision of peace among all God's children.

As a Presbytery, we are particularly mindful of our Presbytery Secretary, Rev Dr Gaby Kobrossi, who has family in Lebanon, close to areas targeted. They have recently relocated to safer grounds.

Week of Prayer for Peace – Prayer Schedule from ...

Rev Charissa Suli, President of the Uniting Church in Australia

• **Day 1 29 September**

Pray for the families who have lost loved ones

Prayer Starter: Loving God, we lift up those who mourn the sudden loss of family members and friends. May they feel Your comforting embrace in their grief.

• **Day 2 30 September**

Pray for the injured and the medical staff tending to them *Prayer Starter: Gracious Healer, be with those in pain and those caring for them. May Your strength and love flow through the hands of doctors and nurses.*

• **Day 3 1 October**

Pray for displaced families seeking refuge and safety

Prayer Starter: Shelter of the Vulnerable, protect those who have been forced from their homes. Provide them with refuge and peace.

• **Day 4 2 October**

Pray for the leaders of Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, and the international community

Prayer Starter: God of Wisdom, guide those in power to work towards peace and justice. Give them the courage and conviction to choose non-violence.

• **Day 5 3 October**

Pray for children and young people affected by the violence

Prayer Starter: God of the Innocent, protect the hearts, minds and lives of precious children and young people. Bring them safety in the midst of chaos.

• **Day 6 4 October**

Pray for peace and reconciliation in Lebanon, Israel, and Palestine

Prayer Starter: Prince of Peace, soften hearts hardened by conflict. May Your peace reign over the land and bring reconciliation between all communities.

• Day 7 5 October

Pray for other nations and regions affected by this violence

Prayer Starter: Compassionate Lord, as we lift up Lebanon, Israel, and Palestine, we also remember other regions affected by violence. Bring reconciliation and understanding. May violence cease and peace prevail.



Planning Ahead

- 25.09 – Bangladeshi Group -Aboriginal History and Culture
- 9.10 – Thai Group - Aboriginal History and Culture
- 21.10 – Cantonese Group – Aboriginal History and Culture
- 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, 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; 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, Lebanon. The USA. Sudan

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Next Sunday

6th October 2024 @ 10am

(Daylight Savings begins today)

Job's Wife Replies

Leader Robert

Reflection Robert

Job 1:1, 2:1–10; Psalm 26; Hebrews 1:1–4, 2:5–12; Mark 10:2–16



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**