



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.*

**Next Sunday**

**13<sup>th</sup> October 2024 @ 10am**

## **Complaining, Lamenting, Arguing with God**

Leader      Richard

Reflection      Richard

Holy Communion      Richard

Job 23:1–9, 16–17; Psalm 22:1–15; Hebrews 4:12–16; Mark 10:17–31



Job 23:1-9; 16-17

**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/>**

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

## **Scriptures**

### **Job 23:1–9, 16–17**

Job complains that his strength is spent with sadness and suggests that if he just knew where to find God, he could make an argument to make God understand.

Mr Job is bitter, and his strength is low because of his groaning. However, those who have read through to the end of Job will know that while his fortunes are restored the answers for why Mr Job has been so severely tested are not forthcoming.

In the reading from the letter to the Hebrews, we read that ‘God’s word is living and active and sharper than a two-edged sword.’ (4:12a). Perhaps if Mr Job had been answered, it might have been from a two-edge sword that wounded more than it comforted.

### **Psalm 22:1–15**

This penitential psalm reads as a litany of complaints about the miserable quality of the psalmist’s life. It is also a psalm, which, we are told, Jesus quotes from the cross.

### **Hebrews 4:12–16**

The writer of this letter describes God’s word as living, active and sharper than a two-edged sword. It is able to discern the different parts of our being and understand every part of us.

### **Mark 10:17–31**

Often called the parable of the rich, young ruler, these verses show Jesus explaining that keeping the commandments means nothing if you don't share your treasures with those less fortunate.

## Theme Focus

This week's readings reassure us that complaining, lamenting, and arguing with God are valid responses to difficult life circumstances.

## Word for the Day

Mr Job is probably feeling a range of emotions: abandoned, lonely, overwhelmed, vulnerable, frustrated, hopelessness, despair, and self-righteous. There is often pressure to remain positive in difficult situations, particularly in Christian spaces. Still, the witness of Mr Job and many of the psalms reassure us that complaint is a valid response to difficult life circumstances.

For those accompanying people in pain, there are different burdens. Some people are both experiencing difficulties and are expected to shepherd others through it.

Some people need space to vent, cry or express their feelings. Some people need to withdraw inside. Knowing what someone needs is difficult, especially if they have not been taught how to express their feelings. A good question for communities is, how might we get better at loving one another in community when someone is going through a difficult time?

## Ideas for Reflection

Psalms 22 expresses emotions similar to those in the reading from Job. It also contains some words Mark's gospel tells us Jesus spoke from the cross. Lament is quite a biblical process, but we are not always comfortable with it in contemporary society.

- How might we encourage lament?
- How might the words of these two texts help us express how we are feeling?
- What might it look like if we were to give permission for ourselves and each other to cry out to God from our lower points?

In her book *Atlas of the Heart*, renowned social worker Brené Brown defines a wide range of emotions and helps the reader tease apart the differences between closely related emotions.

- How might being able to name different emotions help us to process them?
- How might we help each other name big emotions?
- How do we normalise speaking about emotions so that we have the vocabulary to explain them when big feelings emerge?

When conflict or difficult circumstances continue over a long period of time, supporters may develop compassion fatigue. That is, they wear out their stock of compassion and may become indifferent to the suffering of others.

- How might we support those suffering compassion fatigue?
- How much suffering should we be alert to?
- What can we do to refill our compassion bucket when it is running low?

Often, when people look back at difficult times, they notice that it is in those times that the greatest personal growth occurs. This does not diminish the pain of the difficult period. However, it may build resilience to assist with dealing with difficult times in future.

- What stories from our lives might help others build resilience?
- How can we encourage people who are struggling without diminishing their current pain?
- What elements of our liturgy might help us carry on through the bleakest hours and be practised in community and on our own?

## 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 following is a song we sing from time to time)

## Sorrowing Song (Robin Mann)

Lord, hear my praying, listen to me;  
you know there's evil in what I see.  
I know I'm part of all that is wrong:  
still, won't you hear my sorrowing song?

Children are crying, hungry for food,  
sick from diseases — God, are you good?  
People are homeless, lost and alone:  
God, are you hiding? Where have you gone?

Why do the rich ones steal from the poor?  
Why do they build their weapons of war?  
How can you stand the torture and pain,  
hope disappearing, freedom in chains?

Jesus, remind us that you are found  
with those who cry, with those who are bound;  
where there is suffering, you will be there -  
help us to follow: Lord, hear my prayer.

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## Monday Morning Reflection from Jamberoo Abbey

On this first anniversary of the terrorist attack on Israeli citizens, we remember and pray for all those who perished on that day and for those taken hostage still awaiting their freedom. We pray for the many families who mourn their loved ones and for those still waiting and living in hope for the return of family members. Today, we also remember the many thousands of innocent civilians, including far too many children, who have died, been injured or lost everything in the continued violence. All is tragedy. All seems without hope. But, still we pray that our God will intervene, change hearts and bring light to this very dark time in the history of our world.

God of one and God of all:

from our many  
may a unity appear.

Help us find a way to hold  
our differences together.

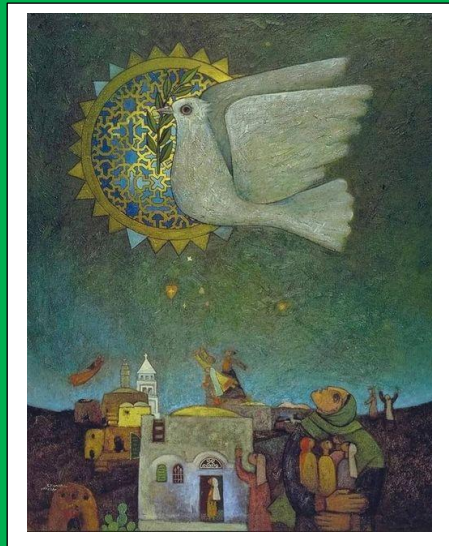
Bring us to the recognition that  
to be most fully human  
is to champion the  
full humanity of others.

Your earthly image  
cannot be found in the mirror,  
but in the eyes of varied faces that  
reflect the incarnated divinity  
in our own.

Amen.

~ Prayer from the Corrymeela Community in Northern Ireland

Image: "Hope" by Sliman Mansou



## Planning Ahead

- 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; Sylvia. 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 and Lebanon. The USA. Sudan

Lord we lift before you all those who mourn today. For those held captive, for those without shelter and safety, for those enduring violence, mourning and despair – **Lord have mercy.** We pray for our Jewish neighbours, and our Muslim neighbours, in the Holy Land, in the UK and around the world. We pray too for our Christian sisters and brothers in the Holy Land and Lebanon, asking God to strengthen and protect them. In the shadow of war, Lord bring your comfort, healing and light to all who dwell in darkness.

“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.” (Numbers 6:24-26) Prayer from the Archbishop of Canterbury

**Next Sunday**

**20<sup>th</sup> October 2024 @ 10am**

**Living with Majesty**

**Leader      Dinah**

**Reflection    Deok Hee**

**Job 38:1–7, (34–41); Psalm 104:1–9, 24, 35c; Hebrews 5:1–10  
Mark 10:35–45**



**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**