



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.*

17th November 2024 @ 10am

God's Surprising Presence

Leader Richard

Reflection Deok Hee

**1 Samuel 1:4–20; 1 Samuel 2:1–10 instead of a Psalm;
Hebrews 10:11–14, (15–18), 19–25; Mark 13:1–8**



Western Wall of the Temple in Jersuaem

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 Deok Hee on
0401 975 745.

Scriptures

1 Samuel 1:4–20 tells the story of Samuel's mother, Hannah, who experienced difficulty conceiving a child. From her place of sorrow, Hannah prays to God in the temple. When she bears the child, Hannah names him Samuel, which means 'God has heard.'

1 Samuel 2:1–10

Instead of a psalm today, we read Hannah's song of prayer and praise. The words resonate with those Mary sings in the Magnificat: 'My heart rejoices in the LORD.'

Hebrews 10:11–14, (15–18), 19–25

This text again continues the reflection from previous weeks, likening the work of Jesus to the work of both the priests *and* the sacrifice in the sacrificial system. The writer uses images from a sacrificial offering to encourage the community that through this work of Christ, his followers have no barrier between themselves and God.

Mark 13:1–8

This passage begins as the disciples comment on the grandeur of the temple. Jesus states that the temple will not last forever. The disciples want to understand all the details: the when and the how. Jesus does not answer the question but instead cautions them to watch out and to pay attention as they follow after him.

Theme Focus

As we move toward the end of the Church year and Reign of Christ Sunday, we hear Hannah sing of a justice-seeking God who turns things upside down, listen as Jesus speaks of the vastness of God's actions and the surprising presence of God, and look to what lasts.

Word for the Day

Don't you think it would have been infuriating at times to be one of the disciples?

They ask questions, but Jesus doesn't really answer. In Mark 13:1–8, we have Jesus twice responding but not responding to the comments or questions from his disciples.

Firstly, we have a strange comment from one disciple about the temple. The preceding passage (which some may have read last week) focused on God noticing the poor, the widow. Then, in this passage, the disciple notes the greatness of the temple. There is a disjunction here. When Jesus responds, it is to say that the great stones would not last forever. (And some see in this comment a writing context for Mark, around the time of the temple's destruction by the Roman army in 70 C.E.)

Then, we have some disciples wanting to understand what Jesus is saying, to get into the nuts and bolts of when the stones would be thrown down, and to understand how they could get their heads around understanding everything. Again, Jesus doesn't really answer them. He speaks instead about keeping watch and being aware in all times and contexts so that they might keep walking in God's ways (These verses begin a longer passage known as the little apocalypse, which we usually read at the beginning of Advent.)

Jesus won't box God in. In his responses to the disciples, Jesus points to the vastness of God's action. What is needed from the disciples is not anxiety or exact understanding about times and places, but rather a posture of attention toward the world and toward the surprising presence of God who just might show up within it.

Ideas for Reflection

- Imagine you are one of the disciples in this reading. How would you respond to Jesus? What questions would you have?
- What does it mean to pay attention? How do we pay attention to the world? And to God?
- How do you respond to the idea that we cannot box God in? Do you find this comforting? challenging? dangerous?

THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA Synod of NSW & ACT Bankstown District

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Bankstown 30th October 2024 LEBANON EMERGENCY APPEAL Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

We are now more than one month into the devastating Israel-Hezbollah war ravaging Lebanon and the Holy Lands. More than 2,930 Lebanese killed since September 2024 and 1.7 Million displaced. Many tens of thousands have been injured across the whole country. Beirut City is a humanitarian catastrophe and south of Lebanon is besieged.

We feel further from a ceasefire than ever, and like the psalmist, “*Our hearts cry out to God from the depths for justice and peace.*”

During this season of Advent, we encourage you to remember the Middle East in your prayers.

Our partner churches in Lebanon opened their doors to welcome and support as much as they can handle. Today they gave families food to eat, but they have many more needs.

We ask for your prayers and support.

To respond to current needs and future ones as they arise, please use our church account

Ref: Emergency Fund.

Bankstown District UCA BSB: 634634 Acc#: 100017777

Please join us in prayer for the Middle East,
Almighty God, we bring our voices together to pray for peace, unsure of what to say or do.

We see conflict, war, bombings, people fleeing to find shelter. As we witness an escalation in conflict, we pray for your peace, A peace which offers justice for the oppressed and downtrodden, a real peace in which every individual may live free from the horrors currently being experienced.

Caring God, be with those suffering in Lebanon and across the Middle East.

Bring healing to those physically and emotionally wounded. and healing between individuals, groups and nations. Comforting God, be with those who mourn the loss of loved ones and be with them in their grief and trauma, offering your grace and inner peace.

Loving God, you loved us so much you came into our world in Jesus, the Prince of Peace. We have heard the Good News; enable us to share your love ... for love will overcome. In the Name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Amen

Thank you & May God bless you



The Death of our friend Jim Vickery

It is with a heavy heart that we share the sad news of Jim's passing early on Thursday morning, at 2:30 AM.

After several days of struggling, Jim has peacefully gone home to be with the Lord. On Wednesday, Deok Hee had the privilege of visiting Jim and Bobbie, and together they prayed the Prayer of Farewell and Commendation. They asked the Lord to bless Jim, to surround him with peace, and to guide him into God's eternal care. Jim is now at rest in the arms of God.

Jim's funeral service will be held at the church on Saturday, November 23rd, at 11:00 AM. Please keep Bobbie and their family in your prayers during this difficult time. May they experience God's comfort and peace in the days ahead.



Planning Ahead

- 17th November Table Tennis/Church Lunch after church – 11-1pm
- 30th November Health Talk *Head to shoulder* 10am – 12noon
- Starting Friday 29th November for 4 weeks – Advent Bible Study
- 5th December 2024 Kogarah Church Council via Zoom @ 7pm

Christmas Services 2024

December 19 Thursday @ 7:30pm Blue Christmas

December 24 Tuesday @ 7.30pm Christmas Eve (A service of Readings and Carols)

December 25 Wednesday @ 10.00am Christmas Day (with Holy Communion)

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, Bobbie and the extended family in their time of loss, 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. Spain

Next Sunday

24th November 2024 @ 10am

Realm of Christ

Celebrating God Who Bears Many Names

Leader Deok Hee

Reflection Deok Hee

Holy Communion Deok Hee

**2 Samuel 23:1–7; Psalm 132:1–12, (13–18); Revelation 1:4b–8;
John 18:33–37**



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**