

**KOGARAH UNITING CHURCH**  
9 February 2025  
Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

The Gathering of the People of God

**WELCOME & GREETING**

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ  
and the love of God  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit  
be with you all.

***And also with you.***

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY:**

We acknowledge that this land is God's land, and God's Spirit dwells here. We pay our respects to the elders past, present and emerging of the Bidjegal people of the Eora nation, who have cared for this land in time beyond our dreaming. This land on which we live and move was and always will be Aboriginal Land.

**KUC VISION STATEMENTS**

***We are a congregation  
who welcome people of all cultures and lifestyles,  
who create a safe place for the community  
and who share the journey of life and faith.***

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

There is a figure approaching and the crowds follow after him.

***He is coming to us now and he is asking something of us –  
push out to the deep; go over there.***

We look at each other; it makes so little sense.

***But there is something about him, this Jesus.***

***It's like he knows where the fullness is –  
where to find life, where to find love.***

And so we catch ourselves opening our hearts  
and out comes trust and out comes hope  
and out come the surprising words,  
'if you say so...'

Come, let us worship the life-bringing God.

## LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

God is here

***God is always here***

God is with us

***God is always with us***

## OPENING PRAYER

Great and holy God, ruler of all time and space,  
we worship you with awe and adoration –  
your holiness and your glory are beyond our imagining.  
The whole created universe proclaims your glory  
and majesty. Yet you have reached out to us in Jesus  
and have revealed in him your abundant love for all people.  
We adore you, O God, and we praise your holy name.  
Let this time of worship bring honour and glory to you, holy and merciful God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

**HYMN:** Immortal, invisible TiS 143 (Verses 1, 2, 3 & 5)

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,  
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,  
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
almighty, victorious, your great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,  
nor wanting, nor wasting, but ruling in might;  
your justice like mountains high soaring above,  
your clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

You give life to all, Lord, to both great and small,  
in all life now living, the true life of all;  
we blossom and flourish as leaves on a tree,  
then wither: but ever unchanged you will be.

All praise we would render: reveal to our sight  
what hides you is only the splendour of light;  
and so let your glory, Almighty, impart,  
through Christ in the story, your Christ to the heart.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

*Oh Lord, go away from us,  
for we are a sinful people!  
But stay, if you can, if you will.  
Forgive us, if you can, if you will.  
Re-make us, if you can, if you will. Amen.*

## DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Jesus can and will stay with us. God can and will forgive us.  
The Holy Spirit can and will re-make us.  
Hear then Christ's word of grace to us:  
Our sins are forgiven.  
***Thanks be to God.***

## PEACE

The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
***And also with you.***

**HYMN:** Give thanks TIS 717

Give thanks with a grateful heart,  
give thanks to the Holy One,  
give thanks because he's given  
Jesus Christ, his Son. (Repeat)

And now, let the weak say "I am strong!",  
let the poor say "I am rich!",  
because of what the Lord has done for us. (Repeat)

Give thanks.

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The Service of the Word

## BIBLE READINGS

### Isaiah 6:1–8

1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty, and the hem of his robe filled the temple. 2 Seraphs were in attendance above him;

each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. 3 And one called to another and said, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." 4 The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. 5 And I said, "Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" 6 Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. 7 The seraph touched my mouth with it and said, "Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out." 8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!"

### **Luke 5:1–11**

1 Once while Jesus was standing beside the Lake of Gennesaret and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, 2 he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. 3 He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. 4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." 5 Simon answered, "Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets." 6 When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to burst. 7 So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. 8 But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus's knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" 9 For he and all who were with him were astounded at the catch of fish that they had taken, 10 and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people." 11 When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

### **REFLECTION**

Life is often a journey of faith, a journey where we encounter both triumphs and failures. Some days, everything falls into place, and we feel on top of the world. We achieve our goals, overcome obstacles, and life moves swiftly. But there are also those seasons when the world feels stuck, when we've done our best and it seems like the results just don't come. We've all been there, haven't we? The hard work, the sleepless nights, and the nagging thought that perhaps, despite all our effort, it's all for nothing. I'm sure the fishermen in today's Gospel reading felt that way. Peter, Andrew, James, and John had fished all night, hoping for a good catch, but they came up empty-handed. They were discouraged, exhausted, and ready to call it a day. But then, something happened.

A large crowd had gathered by the shore, listening to Jesus as he taught. As the crowd pressed in on him, Jesus saw an opportunity. He asked Simon Peter if he could use his boat, just to push out a little from the shore. Peter agreed, likely just wanting a bit of rest while the crowd gathered. And Jesus taught the crowd from the boat. After the teaching, when the crowd had dispersed, Jesus turned to Peter and said, "Put out into the deep water, and let down your nets for a catch." We need to understand that Jesus was not a fisherman. He was someone who came from the hills up in Nazareth. He might have known something about fishing; but Peter lived on the sea of Galilee. When a wandering rabbi from the sticks suggested a new fishing strategy to him, it must have seemed a bit like me giving tips to the living legend Tiger Woods. Tiger is the master of the game, the one who has broken records, won major championships, and perfected his craft. And then along comes someone who's not even a golfer, offering advice. Peter had fished these waters all his life. He knew the best times to fish, the right spots, and what conditions were necessary for a good haul. He had worked all night, and he had nothing to show for it. It was, as we say, a "no catch" kind of night. Can you relate? You've been putting in the effort. You've followed the rules, done everything you're supposed to do, and yet... nothing. What's the point of trying again? Peter certainly felt that way. His response to Jesus was honest: "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. There's no point in trying again." How many of us have said something like that? We've worked hard, we've tried our best, and yet, the results are the same: empty nets. But here's where things take a turn. Peter says, "Yet, if you say so, I will let down the nets." Now, that's trust. That's obedience. Even though Peter's experience told him otherwise, even though he had his doubts, he chose to listen to Jesus. And you know what happened next? They caught so many fish that their nets began to break, and the boats began to sink. A miraculous, overwhelming catch! A catch that happened not in the familiar, comfortable places they knew, but in the deep water, in the unknown. A catch that was only possible because Peter was willing to step out of his doubt, out of his experience, and into obedience.

So, let me ask you today: Are you willing to step into the deep water? Are you willing to try again and again, even when your nets are empty? Are you willing to listen to God's voice and trust that His wisdom might just lead you to places you've never thought to go? Maybe it's trying a new approach in your career, in your relationships, or in your faith. Maybe it's stepping out and risking something you've never dared to try before. In Korean, there's a proverb that says "7 8"—"fall seven times, get up eight." It speaks to the importance of perseverance, of pushing through even when we fail again and again. Just like Peter had to trust Jesus and try again, even when his experience told him otherwise, this proverb reminds us that failure is not the end. It's part of the journey toward something greater. And this brings me to another powerful example of perseverance and faith, from the Old Testament: the story of Naaman, the Syrian general. Naaman, a powerful warrior,

was struck with leprosy and sought healing. He expected a grand miracle from the prophet Elisha, but instead, Elisha sent a messenger telling him to wash seven times in the Jordan River. Naaman was initially furious, feeling insulted by such a simple task. However, after some persuasion from his servants, he obeyed. As he washed, his skin was miraculously healed.

Peter and Naaman, both men had to step out in faith, even when the instructions didn't make sense to them. Both had to overcome their pride and their own understanding in order to receive what God had for them. Naaman could have turned away, frustrated and disappointed, just as Peter could have resisted going into the deep water again. But instead, they chose to trust, to humble themselves, and to act in faith. And through their obedience, they encountered the miraculous. So, I ask you today—where is God calling you to step out in faith? Where are you facing "empty nets" or "dirty rivers," where you feel discouraged or frustrated? Maybe it's in your career, in your relationships, or even in your spiritual journey. Maybe you feel like you've tried everything, and there's nothing left. But what if God is calling you to trust Him one more time, to go deeper, to try again?

Sisters and brothers in Christ! Let us be willing, just like Peter, to put aside our doubts, to step into the deep waters, and to trust that God has a purpose beyond our understanding. The nets may seem empty now, but when we follow His lead, we'll see that the catch—His blessings—are far greater than we could have ever imagined. Amen.

**HYMN:** God gives us a future TiS 687

God gives us a future, daring us to go  
into dreams and dangers on a path unknown.  
We will face tomorrow in the Spirit's power,  
we will let God change us, for new life starts now.

We must leave behind us sins of yesterday,  
for God's new beginning is a better way.  
Fear and doubt and habit must not hold us back:  
God gives hope, and insight, and the strength we lack.

Holy Spirit, teach us how to read the signs,  
how to meet the challenge of our troubled times.  
Love us into action, stir us into prayer,  
till we choose God's life, and find our future there.

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## **OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER**

*Loving God, we are grateful for what we have.  
We give as an expression of our gratitude  
and trust that what we offer can be meaningful elsewhere. Amen.*

## **ANNOUNCEMENT**

### **PRAYERS FOR OTHERS**

Loving God,  
We thank you that you are our shepherd  
and we are your sheep.  
We thank you for your promises  
that you care and understand us and your care never ends.  
Help us to remember your promises always  
when we face unexpected difficult situations and problems and fears.  
Help us to know that you are our shepherd  
and you love us and you care us and you are nearby.

Lord we continue to pray for the world we live.  
Listen to the cries of those who pray to you,  
and grant that all people will know the power of your love at work in the world.

We pray for all who are in trouble, need or distress;  
for the lonely, the friendless, the sad and all who mourn;  
for the elderly, the infirm and those who cannot care for themselves;  
for the sick and the suffering.  
We pray for the sick in this congregation and those who are in our prayer lists.  
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;  
Richard and family on the death of his father, Peter and Sue; Dinah; Ern Edwards;  
Godfrey; Jim Bird, and for others whom we name in our hearts.  
Give them your healing and comfort.

We pray for this Kogarah congregation.  
We ask you that you give them your wisdom  
to understand your will and plan for this congregation,  
and give them your heart that they may serve this community,  
and help them to love each other and their neighbors  
as you commanded all of us to do.

We ask your huge blessings for all the people in this congregation that they may continue their journey together for the bright future of this congregation and for the wider community.

Fill us with hope in the shadow of your wings,  
protect and sustain us.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,*

*your kingdom come,*

*your will be done on earth as in heaven.*

*Give us today our daily bread.*

*Forgive us our sins*

*as we forgive those who sin against us.*

*Save us in the time of trial and deliver us from evil.*

*For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.*

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
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## **INVITATION**

Come, all you who thirst,  
all you who hunger for the bread of life,  
all you whose souls cry out for healing;  
Come, come to the feast of life.

The Table of Jesus is our place of gathering;  
here we are welcomed, wanted, loved,  
here there is a place set for us;  
Let us come to the feast of life.

**COMMUNION HYMN:** Let us talents and tongues employ TiS 537

Let us talents and tongues employ,  
reaching out with a shout of joy;  
bread is broken, the wine is poured,  
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

*(Refrain)*

*Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,*



*pass the Word around: loaves abound!*  
*Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,*  
*pass the Word around: loaves abound!*

Christ is able to make us one,  
at the table he sets the tone,  
teaching people to live to bless,  
love in word and in deed express.  
(Refrain)

Jesus calls us in, sends us out  
bearing fruit in a world of doubt,  
gives us love to tell, bread to share;  
God-Immanuel everywhere.  
(Refrain)

### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.  
***And also be with you.***  
Lift up your hearts.  
***We lift them to the Lord.***  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
***It is right to give our thanks and praise.***

We bless you for your continual love and care for every creature.  
We praise you for forming us in your image and calling us to be your people.  
We thank you that you did not abandon us in our rebellion against your love,  
but sent prophets and teachers to lead us into the way of salvation.  
Above all we thank you for sending Jesus, your Son,  
to deliver us from the way of sin and death  
by the obedience of his life,  
by his suffering upon the cross,  
and by his resurrection from the dead.  
We praise you that he now reigns with you in glory and ever lives to pray for us.  
We thank you for the Holy Spirit,  
who leads us into truth, defends us in adversity,  
and out of every people unites us into one holy church.

Therefore, with the whole company of saints in heaven and on earth  
we worship and glorify you, God most holy, and we sing with joy.

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,***

***heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.***

We give thanks to God that our Saviour, Jesus Christ, before he suffered, gave us this memorial of his sacrifice until he comes again. The Lord Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed, took bread, giving thanks, and broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take, eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

In the same way, after supper, he also took the cup and said: Drink from this all of you. This is my blood shed for you and for the whole world for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me.”

With this bread and this cup we do as our Saviour commands: we celebrate the redemption he has won for us.

***Christ has died.  
Christ is risen.  
Christ will come again.***

Eternal God,  
let your Holy Spirit move in power over us  
and over these earthly gifts of bread and wine,  
that our sharing of them may be for us  
the communion of the body and blood of Christ,  
and that we may become one in him.

May his coming in glory find us  
ever watchful in prayer,  
strong in truth and love,  
and faithful in the breaking of the bread.

Then, at last, all peoples will be free,  
all divisions healed,  
and with your whole creation  
we will sing your praise,  
through your Son, Jesus Christ.

*Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all glory and honour are yours,  
almighty Father, forever. Amen.*

## **BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

### **LAMB OF GOD**

Jesus, Lamb of God,  
*Have mercy on us.*

Jesus, bearer of our sins,  
*Have mercy on us.*

Jesus, redeemer of the world,  
*Grant us peace.*

### **DISTRIBUTION**

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Most gracious God,  
we praise you for what you have given  
and for what you have promised us here.  
You have made us one with all your people  
in heaven and on earth.  
You have fed us with the bread of life,  
and renewed us for your service.

Now we give ourselves to you;  
and we ask that our daily living  
may be part of your kingdom,  
and that our love may be your love  
reaching out into the life of the world;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Sending Forth of the People of God
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**HYMN:** Jesus Christ is waiting TiS 665

Jesus Christ is waiting, waiting in the streets;  
no-one is his neighbour, all alone he eats.  
Listen, Lord Jesus, I am lonely too.  
Make me, friend or stranger, fit to wait on you.

Jesus Christ is raging, raging in the streets;  
where injustice spirals and real hope retreats.  
Listen, Lord Jesus, I am angry too.  
In the Kingdom's causes let me rage with you.

Jesus Christ is healing, healing in the streets;  
curing those who suffer, touching those he greets.  
Listen, Lord Jesus, I have pity too.  
Let my care be active, healing just like you.

Jesus Christ is dancing, dancing in the streets;  
where each sign of hatred he, with love, defeats.  
Listen, Lord Jesus, I should triumph too.  
Where good conquers evil let me dance with you.

Jesus Christ is calling, calling in the streets;  
"Who will join my journey? I will guide their feet."  
Listen, Lord Jesus, let my fears be few.  
Walk one step before me; I will follow you.

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## **BLESSING**

Go fishing.  
Don't be afraid of storms or rough seas.  
Enjoy the moments of calm.  
Feel the wind. Work hard. Catch lots.  
Know that God is with you.  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

## **SENDING SONG:** Behold, behold      Season 6-10

Behold (behold), behold (behold),  
I make all things new,  
beginning with you and starting from today.  
Behold (behold), behold (behold),  
I make all things new,  
my promise is true, for I am Christ the way.

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