



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.*

16th February 2025 @ 10am

Epiphany + 6

Gathered at the Level Place

Leader Richard

Reflection Richard

Jeremiah 17:5–10; Psalm 1; 1 Corinthians 15:12-20; Luke 6:17–26

Deok Hee is on annual leave



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 for Epiphany + 6

Jeremiah 17:5–10

Those who turn away from God will be like shrubs living in parched wastelands.

Psalm 1

Those who turn towards God are like flourishing trees replanted in the garden of Eden.

1 Corinthians 15:12–20

If there's no resurrection, there's no living Christ; we're left instead with handfuls of futility, doom, and pity.

Luke 6:17–26

Blessed are those who embrace God's dream of jubilee.

Theme Focus

As Jesus comes down to be with the people at a level place, we are invited to meet him there, creating communities of jubilee – communities shaped by equality, justice, and belonging.

Word for the Day

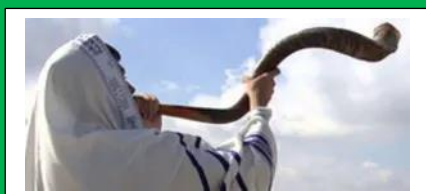
In Luke 4:14–21 Jesus unrolls the scroll of Isaiah and proclaims the 'Year of the Lord's favour.' Jesus here is evoking the rich biblical traditions of jubilee. Jubilee involves great themes of forgiveness, liberation, and

restoration - the types of things that can bring freedom to human lives and communities.

Jesus' words in Luke 6:17–26 leave us with no illusions about the way that jubilee means transformation. Jubilee is the acting out of an alternative story whereby the usual order of things will be upended – blessings and woes are not as we would imagine. Blessed are they who dream of a different world – a world without hunger and violence, hurting and division – God intends the same thing! Blessed are they who ache because the world isn't the way it's supposed to be. Jesus reveals that God is with people in these places and that divine attention is focused on these matters. He ensures his followers know that jubilee has something to say here. Jubilee brings about a beautiful upheaval. When jubilee happens, the whole centre shifts.

And then there's the other side of things. Good news for those on the outer looks different for those living close to the centre. What does it mean for those who benefit from the present state of affairs, for those content with things just as they are? Alongside Jesus' invitation comes the challenge: can you embrace the plight of the downtrodden outsider as your own? Along the way, some couldn't. The challenge for the rich young ruler was too great. He had too much to lose and became a picture of *jubilee refused* (Luke 18:18–30). But there were also others, such as Zacchaeus, the prominent tax collector, who embraced jubilee, who heard Jesus' call to come down from high places (Luke 19:1–11).

Jubilee happens when outsiders embrace the invitation to come up and insiders embrace the challenge to come down. Both the invitation and challenge inherent in these movements of jubilee are grace. Each allows us to discover one another in the level place. Here we may touch our own poverty, our own needs and humanity through our shared life in community with others. It is here that we have the opportunity to become a jubilee people, bit by bit, mostly over a lifetime, all of it helped along by Jesus who leads the jubilee parade.



Ideas for Reflection

- How might Jesus' teaching here both comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable?
- What does it mean for those who are wealthy, well-fed, satisfied, and spoken well of? What might this challenge mean for our lives?
- What does it mean to those living in poverty, are hungry, weeping, and those who are spoken poorly of? What does this invitation truly mean?
- You are invited to consider jubilee stories from your own lives or others that come to mind – stories of transformation that may have involved invitations for people to come up or challenges to go down.
- How does jubilee unfold in our lives? What does it look like? What does Jubilee mean for our churches?
- Consider jubilee themes of restoration, release, repair, enemy-love, and forgiveness.
- Consider images of jubilee communities as in Acts 4:32–35.

Poetry as a Contemplative Practice

Instructions

1. As you quietly read the poem, try to let your mind drop into your heart as you quietly read the poem. You might like to start by centering on your breath.
2. Read the poem through more than one time.
3. Notice what arises in you as you read each time.

(This is intended to be a way of entering into the scriptural themes in a contemplative way – not unlike how one might engage in a *lectio divina* process.)

Turf wars - our grandchildren's legacy?

The warning clouds sit above the plateau
denuded of trees and planted in grass.

Grass grubs feast under the roots,
until cut and sliced by discs of the plough
digging the earth and turning the soil
to seed the furrow and grow the turf.

The mineral deficit weakens the turf

(the volcanic ash legacy on the plateau)
for the health of the land is in the soil.
It's one thing to milk the cows and the grass,
but will the next age sideline the plough
as each generation puts down its own roots?

The drought deepens. The grass holds its roots.
Let battle begin for control of the turf.
Green turns brown, it's time to plough
the reserves from the harvest when the plateau
was moist and fertile and plush in grass
and the sky was kinder to the soil.

The desert dry sun now bakes the soil.
The aquifer drains away from the roots.
Day upon day wilts the spine of the grass,
caking then peeling the skin of the turf.
The rivers and streams shrink from the plateau
without tears, lament the loss of the plough.

The land turns to dust. The hand at the plough
waits for moisture to wet the soil.
Gentle rain is needed on the plateau,
or the plant will tear away at its roots
and lose its hand holding the turf,
eroding the land before next season's grass.

The climate changes. We lose the grass.
Floods scour the land, and the plough
lying fallow in the fields, waits for the turf
which begs for food in the hungry soil.
Where are the trees with deeper roots
than grass and cows on the plateau?

When grass and turf lose their roots
and the plough cannot turn any soil,
what can our grandchildren do with the plateau?

At the Synod Meeting in 2023, a Proposal was brought for the Uniting Church to support the Raise the Age Campaign in NSW.

As a result of this proposal The Uniting Church Synod of NSW and ACT is now one of more than 150 organisations and groups in the NSW Raise the Age Partner Network.

Many people in NSW don't know that very young kids are being arrested, put in handcuffs, sent to court and locked up.

When people find out we are locking up children as young as 10, most think it's too young. Raise the Age NSW have launched a massive public education campaign so it's time to raise awareness in our communities.

With the support of partners in the media and advertising industries The Raise the Age NSW campaign is being heard on radio, seen in cinemas, on TV, across digital and outdoor advertising reaching millions of people.

Watch the TV Ad [here](#).

There are resources on the Raise the Age NSW website to help educate people about the issue.

A number of organisations active in the campaign to Raise the Age in NSW have been invited to give evidence at a hearing for the Parliamentary Inquiry into community safety in regional and rural communities in Sydney in February.



Planning Ahead

- 16th & 23rd February 2025 Deok Hee on annual leave
- 19th February Kogarah Storehouse MC Meeting 4pm @ Kogarah
- 13th March Church Council Meeting
- 27th March Worship Task Group meeting @7pm via Zoom

Please pray for ...

The mission and ministry of our congregation and for our Minister, Deok Hee and Wynne Cheng as they make links to the Chinese community.

Worship leaders; helpers, leaders, followers The Kogarah Storehouse and its many clients; Lala and staff of the Storehouse as they begin the new year.

Dorothy and Godfrey and the work of LACLA. Godfrey especially as he travels back to Uganda.

The team, parents and children in the Early Learning Centre. Those who are sick, sad or lonely:

We pray especially today for Richard and family, Henry as he recovers from appendicitis, Dennis and Robyn Lyons, Brian and Rhonda, Prema and Priya, Bobbie and the extended family in their time of loss, Denis and Dolly, Naghuia, Peter and Sue; Dinah; Ern Edwards; Godfrey; Jim Bird. 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.

Act
For
Peace



Next Sunday

A Cosmos Defined by Mercy

Leader Rev Matt Wilson

Reflection Rev Matt Wilson

Holy Communion Rev Matt Wilson

We welcome Matt to our service today. Matt is the new GR Presbytery Mission and Leadership Minister

Genesis 45:3–11, 15; Psalm 37:1–11, 39–40;
1 Corinthians 15:35–38, 42–50; Luke 6:27–38



Church Council 2024-2025

Chair
Secretary
Treasurer
Councillors

Richard Goodman
Sue Baglin
John Baglin
Robert McAlpine (2026)
Sue Baglin (2025)
Dinah Roepers (2025)
John Baglin (2025)
Bobbie Miller (2025)
Richard Goodman (2027)

Elders

Safe Church Contact Person Richard Goodman