

Kogarah Uniting Church

WELCOME

LIGHT THE CANDLE / AFFIRMATIONS

God is here.....**God is always here**

God is with us.....**God is always with us**

MISSION STATEMENT:

Our vision is to be a loving and caring community, sharing God's love with the world. We are a congregation who welcome people of all cultures and lifestyles. We are creating a safe place for the community and sharing the journey of life and faith.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We listen to the breath of the earth.

May we hear the groaning of creation.

We listen to the sighing of the wind.

May we hear the songs from the skies.

We listen to the movement of the oceans and waters.

May we hear the shared waters of life in our being.

We open our ears to the wisdom
of the Land and her peoples.

May we listen, both to the silence and the speaking.

We honour and pay our respects
to those on whose Land we meet,
especially the Bidjegal people of the Eora nation.
We pause and we listen.

A silence is kept.

....

Those who have ears – Hear!

May we hear the voice of the Spirit in Creation,

Now and to the end of time. *(adapted from a prayer by Rev Dr Amelia Koh-Butler)*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Be still before God and wait patiently
for our hearts are offered safe space to wonder.

Be still before God, our harbour secure
as God's love calls us to worship.

SING - Sing to God with joy and gladness – TiS 92

*Sing to God, with joy and gladness,
hymns and psalms of gratitude;
with the voice of praise discover
that to worship God is good.*

God unites his scattered people,

gathers those who wandered far,
heals the hurt and broken spirits,
tending every wound and scar.

*Sing to God, with joy and gladness,
hymns and psalms of gratitude;
with the voice of praise discover
that to worship God is good.*

Such is God's great power and wisdom
none can calculate or tell;
keen is God to ground the wicked
and with humble folk to dwell.

*Sing to God, with joy and gladness,
hymns and psalms of gratitude;
with the voice of praise discover
that to worship God is good.*

God with clouds, the sky has curtained
thus ensuring rain shall fall;
earth, responding, grows to order
food for creatures great and small.

*Sing to God, with joy and gladness,
hymns and psalms of gratitude;
with the voice of praise discover
that to worship God is good.*

God's discernment never favours
strength or speed to lift or move;
God delights in those who fear him,
trusting in his steadfast love.

*Sing to God, with joy and gladness,
hymns and psalms of gratitude;
with the voice of praise discover
that to worship God is good.*

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OPENING PRAYER

Maker of heaven and earth,
Creator of relationships,
we praise You for the land
where we place our feet
and build our homes and communities.
We praise You for the seeds You plant,
that root us in Your grace,
and encourage us to create relationships
that encourage growth and support.
As we create and develop thriving networks,
may we find our faith sustained,
and the inspiration
to be creative in the ways we share our faith in Jesus Christ,
and respond to world around.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Reconciling God,
hear us as we recall the fraught words and resentments
that we harbour in our minds.
Forgive us for the harshness of our responses
and the unkindness of inaction.
Draw us close to the fire of the Holy Spirit,
where the light transforms the hidden darkness of our lives,
and sparks our activities with renewed energy
for serving Christ.

Amen

(adapted from prayers by Rev Dr M Rennie)

WORDS OF AFFIRMATION AND PEACE

READING FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES Psalm 37 1-11, 39-40

¹Do not fret because of the wicked; do not be envious of wrongdoers,

²for they will soon fade like the grass, and wither like the green herb.

³Trust in the Lord, and do good; so you will live in the land, and enjoy security.

⁴Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

⁵Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act.

⁶He will make your vindication shine like the light, and the justice of your cause like the noonday.

⁷Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for him; do not fret over those who prosper in their way, over those who carry out evil devices.

⁸Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath. Do not fret—it leads only to evil.

⁹For the wicked shall be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land.

¹⁰Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look diligently for their place, they will not be there.

¹¹But the meek shall inherit the land, and delight themselves in abundant prosperity.

³⁹The salvation of the righteous is from the Lord; he is their refuge in the time of trouble.

⁴⁰The Lord helps them and rescues them; he rescues them from the wicked, and saves them, because they take refuge in him.

SING – Come and find the quiet centre – tune TiS 493

Come and find the quiet centre
in the crowded life we lead,
find the room for hope to enter,
find the frame where we are freed:
clear the chaos and the clutter,
clear our eyes, that we can see
all the things that really matter,
be at peace, and simply be.

Silence is a friend who claims us,
cools the heat and slows the pace,
God it is who speaks and names us,
knows our being, touches base,
making space within our thinking,
lifting shades to show the sun,
raising courage when we're shrinking,

finding scope for faith begun.

In the Spirit let us travel,
open to each other's pain,
let our loves and fears unravel,
celebrate the space we gain:
there's a place for deepest dreaming,
there's a time for heart to care,
in the Spirit's lively scheming
there is always room to spare!

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READING FROM THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES: Luke 6:27-38

²⁷“But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. ³⁰Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. ³¹Do to others as you would have them do to you. ³²“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. ³⁵But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. ³⁶Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

³⁷“Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; ³⁸give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

REFLECTION -

SING – Help us accept each other – TiS 648, tune TiS 202

Help us accept each other
as Christ accepted us;
teach us as sister, brother,
each person to embrace.
Be present, Lord, among us
and bring us to believe
we are *ourselves* accepted
and meant to love and live.

Teach us, O Lord, your lessons,
as in our daily life
we struggle to be human
and search for hope and faith.
Teach us to care for people,
for all – not just for some,
to love them as we find them

or as they may become.

Let your acceptance change us,
so that we may be moved
in living situations
to do the truth in love;
to practise your acceptance
until we know by heart
the table* of forgiveness
and laughter's healing art.

Lord, for today's encounters
with all who are in need,
who hunger for acceptance,
for righteousness and bread,
we need new eyes for seeing,
new hands for holding on:
renew us with your Spirit;
Lord, free us, make us one!

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OFFERING PRAYER:

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of relationship,
we cannot ignore the brokenness
of our lives,
of our world,
of our Church.
We declare ourselves "fine"
with how things are
and long for the encouragement of Your presence
as we long to see the transformation
of new creation taking place
in the communities of our world.

We pray for human relationships,
for spouses, partners, parents and children,
working encounters and friendships.
We give thanks where sharing life with others is supportive,
and allows the other to thrive.
We remember those whose lives are fraught, frantic, and abusive.
Where those of any gender feel their worth questioned
by cruel words and threatening hands,
may they be led to the support
that keeps them safe.
We pray for the relationships of our world.
In testing times of war and conflict,
communities are tested

as those who have been displaced seek new homes
and places to shelter.
We give thanks for those many communities across the world
who have offered refuge to the outsider,
offering hospitality that allows stories to blend
and develop new ways to live in harmony with another.
We long for the discordant voices of our world to pause
and listen to the songs of others.
In what they hear,
may politicians and tyrants be offered wisdom
that seeks the best for all people and not power for themselves.
We pray for Christ's Church, in all its vibrant colour,
and celebrate the many ways in which the story of Jesus is revealed.
Help us to value one another, and to cherish our diversity.
In these days when churches unite and close,
may the Spirit's comfort be a balm to the pain of life,
and the Spirit's inventiveness inspire us
in sharing and shaping stories within our new communities.
God of relationship,
still our hearts,
as we patiently wait
for the Holy Spirit to lead us
in our sharing of Christ's story.
Amen

COMMUNION HYMN: God has a table – TiS 544

Since the world was young
there's a song that's been sung of a promise coming true:
hungry folk will eat and long-lost friends will meet
and the Lord will make all things new.
*God has a table
where he calls his friends to a feast that never ends;
God has a table and one day we'll meet him there.*

Jesus saw a crowd who were hungry, and vowed
that they didn't have much food.
So he fed that bunch with a little boy's lunch
as a sign that God is good.
*God has a table
where he calls his friends to a feast that never ends;
God has a table and one day we'll meet him there.*

Jesus told a tale of how rich people fail
to accept God's summons to dine.
Then before their eyes those without earthly ties
share heaven's finest food and wine.
*God has a table
where he calls his friends to a feast that never ends;*

God has a table and one day we'll meet him there.

Till we hear that word from the mouth of the Lord
saying, "Join me at my table",
for the world we'll care
and its good things we will share as long as we are able.

God has a table

where he calls his friends to a feast that never ends;

God has a table and one day we'll meet him there.

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SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Lets hear how the story of this sacrament began:

On the night on which Jesus was betrayed, he sat at supper with his followers. While they were eating, he took a piece of bread, said a blessing, broke it and gave it to them with the words, "This is my body. It is broken for you. Do this to remember me."

Later, he took a cup of wine saying, "This cup is God's new covenant, sealed with my blood. Drink from it all of you, to remember me."

So now, following Jesus' example and command we take this bread and this wine, the ordinary things of life, which God will make special.

Loving God, when we were nothing, you made us something. When we had no name, no faith and no future, you called us your children. When we lost our way, or turned away, you did not abandon us. When we came back to you, your arms opened wide in welcome. You call us to follow you, to share our faith, to share our experience of your love. You are our strength and our refuge, you help us to keep going.

You prepare a table for us – offering not just bread, not just wine, but your very self – so that we may be filled, forgiven, healed, blessed and made new again. So now, in gratitude, we join our voices to those of the Church on earth and in heaven saying:

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 remember at this time that you were not too proud to come and be one with us. Wise ones and shepherds recognized your coming. For us you were born, for us you healed, preached, taught, and showed the way to your kingdom; for us you were crucified, for us, after death, you rose again.

Our hands are empty, our hearts are sometimes full of wrong things. But with you is mercy and the power to change us.

So we do in this place what you did in an upstairs room. Send down your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine, that they may become for us your body, healing, forgiving, and making us whole; and that we may become for you your body, loving and caring in the world until your kingdom is realized.

Amen

**Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be your name
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done on earth as in heaven.
Give us today your daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us
Save us from the time of trial
And deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours, now and forever. Amen**

Among Friends gathered around a table, Jesus took bread, broke it and said, "This is my body, broken for you."

Jesus took the cup, and said " This is the new relationship with God made possible for all people."

These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

Distribution:

Concluding Prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, you have put your life into our hands; now we put our lives into your hands.

**TAKE US, RENEW US AND REMAKE US
WHAT WE HAVE BEEN IS PAST
WHAT WE SHALL BE STILL AWAITS US
LEAD US ON
TAKE US WITH YOU**

Amen.

(adapted from a liturgy of the Iona Community)

Sing – Sent forth by God's blessing – TiS 531
Sent forth by God's blessing, our true faith confessing,
the people of God from his table take leave.
The supper is ended: may now be extended
the fruits of his service in all who believe.
The seed of his teaching, our hungry souls reaching,
shall blossom in action for all humankind.
His grace shall incite us, his love shall unite us
to work for his kingdom, his purpose to find.

With praise and thanksgiving to God ever-living
the task of our everyday life we will face,
our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring,
embracing as neighbours all those of each race.
One feast that has fed us, one light that has led us,
unite us as one in his life that we share.
Then may all the living, with praise and thanksgiving,
give honour to Christ and his name that we bear.

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BLESSING

God sows the seed of love, hope, peace mercy and justice.
May they be found growing
in our words and actions,
this day and always.
Amen

Sing – May our lives speak of your love – photocopy
May our lives speak of your love,
may our feet walk in your grace,
may we share your friendship with all your children,
bring hope, peace and joy.

Send us out into your world,
free to be, to live and to love,
and may all we do and say for you
bring freedom for all.

May our lives speak of your love,
may our feet walk in your grace,
may we share your friendship with all your children,
bring hope, peace and joy.
And may all we do and say for you bring freedom for all.

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