



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.**

13th July 2025 @ 10am

Pentecost 5 - Proper 10

Love Overcomes Divisions

Amos 7:7–17; Psalm 82; Colossians 1:1–14; Luke 10:25–37

**Leader: Deok Hee
Reflection: Deok Hee
Holy Communion: Deok Hee**



THIS WEEK'S GOSPEL LESSON

**LUKE
10:25-37**

**The Good Samaritan
by Rembrandt (1606-1669)**

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

Amos 7:7–17

Amos, a shepherd and prophet, speaks of a vision in which God sets a plumb line in Israel—a tool for measuring alignment and integrity—exposing the people’s failure to live justly. When the priest of Bethel, backed by the king, tries to silence him, Amos refuses, insisting his authority comes from God alone.

Psalms 82

Human beings long for God’s wise rule on earth, yet Psalm 82 challenges those entrusted with justice who fail to defend the weak. God, the true and ultimate judge, stands against injustice and calls for the defence of the vulnerable.

The gospel is bearing fruit in human lives

Colossians 1:1–14

Paul opens his letter with thanksgiving for the Colossians’ faith and prays that they may grow in wisdom, endurance, and love as they live out the gospel.

Luke 10:25–37

When a lawyer seeks to define the limits of love, Jesus responds with a Samaritan’s unexpected kindness, challenging deep-seated prejudices—for both Samaritans and Jews—and revealing that to truly be a neighbour is to embody risky love and mercy.

Theme Focus

In a radical story of neighbourly love, Jesus brings us face to face with what discipleship requires—transcending divisions and embodying mercy in our daily liv

Word for the Day

Jesus helps a lawyer to engage with the gravity of eternal living by telling a loaded story. The lawyer comes up with the right answers—the key to life is indeed loving God with all of one’s vitality and passion, with all of one’s understanding and dispositions, and to love one’s neighbour as you would love yourself (v. 27). But Jesus knows that the lawyer holds firm to a different vision of what it means to be Israel. This vision maintains distinct boundaries between insiders and outsiders. The lawyer harboured a defining hostility that regarded some as non-neighbours and beyond the scope of his care—just as he would have been seen with equal distrust by those on the other side.

Jesus speaks into these known realities by painting a picture of unconditional love: a man falls into the hands of robbers. He is stripped, beaten and left for dead. While a priest and another religious man walk on by (as their socio-religious framework dictated), a Samaritan man—one whose people were much hated by the Jews and who themselves viewed Jews with suspicion—binds up the man’s wounds. He takes him to an inn where he can be taken care of—all at great risk and expense to himself. Imagine a member of any armed forces carrying a wounded opponent into a hospital in hostile territory.

The point is clear: neighbour-love knows no boundaries. Agape chooses mercy and human solidarity no matter what, no matter whom. Agape values people over tense histories, religious rules and social conventions. Agape comes at a cost (convenience, money, time, social status) and can even involve physical danger. Agape means choosing to walk alongside victims, which can only happen if we get off ‘the donkeys which carry us to places of comfortable security.’ (Donald Kraybill, in *The Upside-Down Kingdom*, p.175).

As Jesus tells a story that reveals what *agape* looks like on the ground he is also playing with certain elements that reveal the hidden tensions and hostilities found among his contemporaries. In his story, it’s not the best of the Jewish crowd who reveal the key to eternal living—even the least among Jews. Instead, he allows the hero of the story to be a despised Samaritan, a genuine outsider in Jewish thinking. Jesus is sharing a vision of agape while holding it alongside the man’s bitterness and hatred. As Jesus concludes his story by asking which of the three characters was a neighbour, the lawyer can only mutter, ‘the one who had mercy on him’.

While he once again answers correctly, the lawyer can't bring himself to say the words, '*the Samaritan*'. He is seemingly stuck in his un-love.

And yet here is Jesus seeking to draw him out, inviting him to participate in the newness he is carrying out, calling him to 'go and do likewise' (v. 37). Jesus is urging the lawyer to come face to face with what neighbourliness truly means and move beyond social norms, bitter histories, struggles, and differences to bridge the gap between the life he is living and the eternal way of living that stands before him.

Jesus is reading the lawyer's heart. Jesus is offering him the opportunity to grab hold of life if only the lawyer is willing to let himself be transformed. The only way forward, the great hope and the key to transformation is love, courageous love: *agape*. Life and love always go together.

Ideas for Reflection

Reflect on the lawyer's question.

- What is meant by the question about what must be done in order to inherit eternal life? Is this a question about an afterlife? Something else?
- Consider who we might include in a contemporary rewrite of this story.
- Consider exploring more deeply the word *agape*. How is this kind of love different from other kinds of love?
- Consider the nature of *agape* love: reflect on times this kind of love might have come with some sort of cost in your own lives (convenience, money, time, social status, safety etc.).
- What 'donkey' might we need to climb off of at this time in the name of love?

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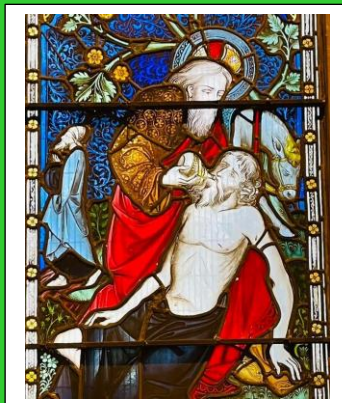
Storehouse staff and volunteers celebrate NAIDOC Week at Bare Island, La Perouse last Tuesday.



A poem by Malcolm Guite:

**'How do we hear again the force of this
Since 'Good Samaritan' slips off the tongue
As comfortable a phrase as any is,
Worn smooth because we've heard it for so long?
Who is my neighbour? We don't need to ask,
We know that we already know the answer,
We know the duty but we shun the task.
Fear of the other grips us like a pincer:
What if they crossed our path, these refugees?
Who'd meet the cost when needs just multiply?
We fear these questions and our spirits freeze,
It's easier to turn and walk on by.
Cross over to us, whose dark paths are crossed
Samaritan, whose cross defrays all cost.'**

**Malcolm Guite, 'Parable and Paradox, Malcolm Guite'
(Canterbury Press 2016)**



Stained glass window
in St Andrew's
Cathedral, Inverness

Planning Ahead

Sue Baglin Councillor 2 years
Joshua Chang Councillor 1 year

Bobbie Miller	Elder	3 years
John Baglin	Elder	1 year
Dorothy Makasa	Elder	1 year

- **July 13 2025 – Service with Dennis and Robyn**
- **July 17 2025 - Worship Task Group @ 7pm via Zoom**
- **July 20 2025 - AGM and Elections – the nominations are above.**
- **July 27 2025 - Possible commissioning of Elders/ Councillors**
- **August 7 2025 Kogarah Church Council @ 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 and volunteers at the Storehouse. Dorothy and Godfrey and the work of LACLA. 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, Rhonda Chamberlain and family; Prema and Priya, Denis and Dolly, Naghuia, Peter and Sue; Dinah; Ern Edwards; Jim Bird, Cindy, Dorothy, Sue B. 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 and the countries of Europe. Suda

From Rev. Jon Owen CEO & Pastor Wayside Chapel

(This is a longer letter submitted by Jim)



Dear Inner Circle,

This week we celebrate NAIDOC Week which began on Monday with a smoking ceremony led by Uncle Ronald Schultz, welcoming mob and community. Such is the importance of this day, I unusually wrote my speech before hand which my fellow Waysiders have encouraged me to share with you, the Inner Circle, in honour of our mob and community.

Content warning: the following mentions the names and stories of Aboriginal People who have passed.

“Thank you for welcoming me into this sacred circle, for sharing the breath of Country with me through this ancient ceremony of smoke and story.

As we gather here on Country, I want to first acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land - the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation - and pay my respects to Elders past and those present with us.

This place we now call Kings Cross was known as Derawun to the Gadigal people, part of the broader Country they called Curageen and Yarrandabbi. The Gadigal territory stretched along the southern shores of Port Jackson from South Head to what we now know as Petersham. This was hunting ground, ceremonial space, and home for thousands upon thousands of years before European settlement - time so deep it defies our imagining, yet lives still in every grain of sandstone, every turn of the tide.

The Gadigal were one of about twenty-nine clan groups that made up the Eora Nation - the coastal peoples of Sydney. When the British first arrived and asked the Aboriginal people where they came from, they replied simply, powerfully: "Eora" - meaning "here" or "from this place". In that single word lies a universe of belonging, of being rooted in Country in ways that go deeper than ownership, deeper than possession - into the realm of the sacred, the eternal. It also marked the first encounter between a people who spoke of custodianship with a people who believed in ownership, so many worlds apart.

This land has been shaped by remarkable souls - people like Bennelong, who became the first Aboriginal Australian to travel to Europe and return, carrying the weight of two worlds on his shoulders, serving as a bridge between peoples while never losing the essence of who he was as a Wangal man. Like Pemulwuy, the Bidjigal warrior whose name means "earth" - how fitting - who led a fearless resistance against colonisation for fourteen years, showing us, that strength sometimes means standing firm against impossible odds, that love of Country can fuel the most extraordinary courage.

Like Nanbaree, the Gadigal man who survived the smallpox epidemic as a child and became a skilled interpreter and sailor, embodying that peculiar Aboriginal genius for adaptation without assimilation, for finding ways to navigate new worlds whilst keeping the old world alive within. Like Barangaroo, the Cammeraygal woman who maintained traditional ways and cultural authority, teaching us that honouring the past is not nostalgia but necessity, not sentiment but survival.

These were your ancestors - diplomats, warriors, survivors, teachers - who faced the unimaginable and responded not with bitterness alone, but with a courage that carved meaning from catastrophe, who looked into the abyss of cultural destruction and somehow found ways to keep the flame burning.

This year's NAIDOC theme, "The Next Generation: Strength, Vision & Legacy," calls us to a place of depth - not reflection, but transformation. As we mark fifty years of NAIDOC Week, we acknowledge both the long shadow of our shared history and the bright possibility of our shared future.

I stand before you carrying the weight of my own history, our own history. At Wayside, we've learnt that truth-telling is not the enemy of

healing - it is its precondition. We acknowledge that our churches, including our own, have been part of systems that caused immeasurable harm to First Nations peoples. We carry that truth not as a burden that crushes, but as a responsibility that compels us forward into deeper relationship and greater understanding.

But history is not just what was done to you - it is what you have done despite it all. Your strength has been nothing short of miraculous. In the face of policies designed to erase you, you persisted. In the face of laws designed to silence you, your voices spoke truth. In the face of systems designed to break you, you not only survived - you flourished, you created, you led and you loved.

At Wayside, we've been honoured to work alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our community for sixty years, right here on Gadigal Country. When Ted Noffs first started Wayside in 1964, he was building on this land where Bennelong once lived, where Pemulwuy once fought, where countless generations of the Gadigal people called home. In learning to walk with you, you've taught us many lessons, one of which is that true service isn't about helping 'others' - it's about recognising that we're all part of the same human family, sharing the same struggles, the same longings, the same unquenchable hunger for dignity, for justice, for love.

The next generation you're nurturing - your young leaders, your storytellers, your cultural keepers - they carry something extraordinary. They carry your strength, yes, but they also carry something new: the possibility of a future where First Nations wisdom isn't just preserved but celebrated, where your voices don't just survive but lead, where your knowledge systems aren't just tolerated but treasured as essential for the healing of this wounded world.

As we breathe in this sacred smoke together, we're not just cleansing this space - we're preparing our hearts for the conversations and connections that will shape tomorrow. We're acknowledging that reconciliation isn't a destination we arrive at - it's a journey we walk together, step by step, breath by breath, generation by generation.

Your strength has sustained you through the longest night. Your vision has lit the way forward when the path seemed impossible to find. Your legacy is being written every day - in the lives you touch, the young people you mentor, the communities you heal, the Country

you protect, the stories you tell, the songs you sing, the dances you dance.

Thank you for letting us walk alongside you in this sacred work. Thank you for your patience with our stumbling, your wisdom in our learning, your hope in our shared becoming. Together, we move forward - not just as allies, but as family, bound by love for this ancient land and all who call it home.

The smoke rises, carrying our hopes skyward. The circle continues, as it has for countless years, and in this moment, in this place, in this gathering of hearts, we are all Eora - we are all from this place, we are all here."

Thank you for being part of the Inner Circle.

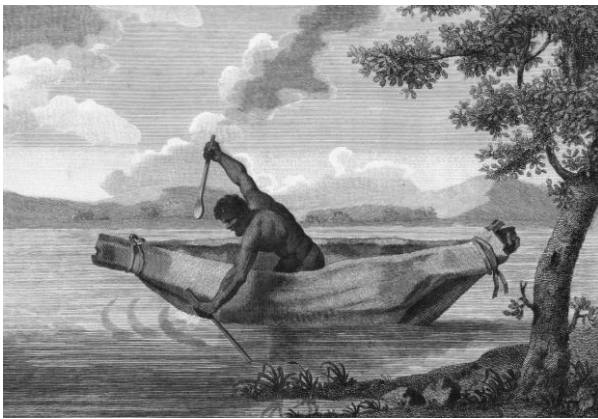
(Smoking ceremony at the Wayside Chapel)



Pemulwuy, a Bidjigal/Biddigal Man



Image from the National Museum of Australia



(The oldest and only engraving of Pemulwuy by Samuel John Neele – 1758-1824)

Next Sunday

20th July 2025 @ 10am

Pentecost 6 - Proper 11

Joining in God's Dream for the World

Amos 8:1–12; Psalm 52; Colossians 1:15–28; Luke 10:38–42

Leader: Richard

Reflection: Deok Hee



Church Council 2024-2025

Chair
Secretary
Treasurer
Councillors

Elders

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)

Safe Church Contact Person

Richard Goodman