



**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.**

**18<sup>th</sup> May 2025 @ 10am**

**Easter Five -**

**All Creation Praise**

**Leader Robert**

**Reflection Deok Hee**

**Acts 11:1–18; Psalm 148; Revelation 21:1–6; John 13:31–35**



For details and information about our church activities and The Kogarah Storehouse, check out the websites: [kogarah.uca.org.au](http://kogarah.uca.org.au) and <https://www.kogarahstorehouse.org.au/>

For pastoral concerns, please contact Deok Hee on  
0401 975 745.

## Scriptures

### **Acts 11:1–18**

Peter explains to the Jerusalem believers his vision of clean and unclean animals, which convinces him that the good news of Christ and the Holy Spirit are for both Jews and Gentiles alike.

**Psalms 148** is a song of inclusive praise, calling all creation – heavenly beings, earthly creatures, and people – to join in praising God.

**Revelation 21:1–6** describes a new heaven and earth where all things are made new, symbolising the renewal and unity of all creation.

### **John 13:31–35**

Jesus calls his disciples to love one another without restriction, emphasising that this love will be the defining mark by which all people will recognise them as his followers.

## Theme Focus

All creation is called to a symphony of praise, as we are invited to see a new heaven and new earth as a future hope and a present call to live in harmony with God's renewing work in the world.

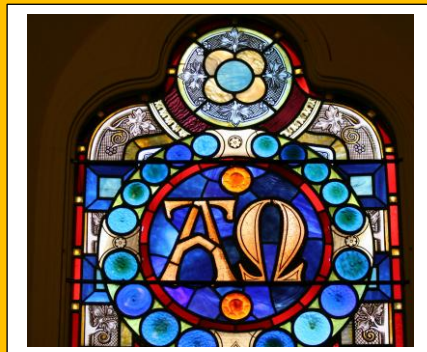
## Word for the Day

Interestingly, the new earth is centred on a New Jerusalem. We could choose to take this text literally and prioritise having control of the current city of Jerusalem. Alternatively, we can understand that the writer of Revelation is connecting the vision to things that he and his audience were familiar with. Similarly, the language of Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. If we had a vision of the new heaven and earth, I wonder what our cultural touchstones would be.

### Ideas for Reflection

This vision is the first of the texts from Revelation in this series that doesn't present an explicit picture of worship. Note the reiteration of the idea of life-giving springs that was in last week's reading. There is also the image of wiping away tears. While the visions are all slightly different, it might be interesting to look over them as a group and think about the similarities and differences between them.

- In what ways does Revelation 21:1–6 relate to the psalm for today? Are there any connections we can make between the two readings? Are there things in these two texts that contradict each other?
- What does Revelation 21:1–6 inspire in you?
- Considering Psalm 148 and Revelation 21:1–6, who today might have the greatest cause to sing Psalm 148.
- Christians have often defended Jerusalem and Israel because they believe that this Holy Land is where God will rescue the earth. Jerusalem can be understood as a 'city of peace'; however, throughout its long history, it has rarely been peaceful for long. You may wish to pray for peace across the Middle East.





***Statement from the Uniting Church in Australia Assembly on the Election of a New Pope by Uniting Church President Rev Charissa Suli***

***(A longer version can be found in Insights posted 9.05.2025)***

The Uniting Church in Australia joins with Christians around the world in prayerful thanksgiving and deep reverence as the Roman Catholic Church welcomes a new spiritual leader, Pope Leo XIV.

This is a sacred and historic moment, not only for the Roman Catholic Church but for the whole body of Christ. We honour the movement of the Holy Spirit in this time of discernment and give thanks for the faithful leadership that has brought the global Catholic community to this point.

We celebrate the historic election of Pope Leo XIV, born Robert Francis Prevost in Chicago in 1955, the first pontiff born in the United States of America. A member of the Order of Saint Augustine and dual US-Peruvian citizen, Pope Leo XIV served in Peru as an Augustinian missionary, parish priest and teacher, and was later appointed by the late former Pope Francis as the Bishop of Chiclayo. He has held significant roles within the Vatican. His choice of the

papal name 'Leo' pays homage to Pope Leo XIII, renowned as the Pope of Catholic social teaching and the rights of workers.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Pope Leo XIV, whose first greeting in Italian and Spanish began with the simple yet profound words of the risen Christ: “Peace be with you all.” We affirm our shared hope in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and our call to be bridge builders, bearing witness to justice, peace and reconciliation in a fractured world.

We pray that God will grant Pope Leo XIV the wisdom to lead with humility, the courage to walk with truth and love and the grace to listen deeply to the cries of the earth and the hopes of all people. May this new season of leadership be marked by compassion, faithfulness and unity in Christ.

On behalf of the Uniting Church in Australia, I offer our prayers and our ongoing commitment to nurturing the ecumenical relationship we share with the Roman Catholic Church. Together, as one people of faith, we walk in step with the Spirit who unites us.

### **A Prayer for the New Pope**

Loving and faithful God,

We give thanks at the election of a new Pope,

for the witness of the global Church,

and for the guiding presence of your Spirit in every corner of creation.

Bless your servant whom you have called to this sacred ministry.

Grant wisdom rooted in humility,

courage shaped by compassion,

and a heart formed by the boundless love of Christ.

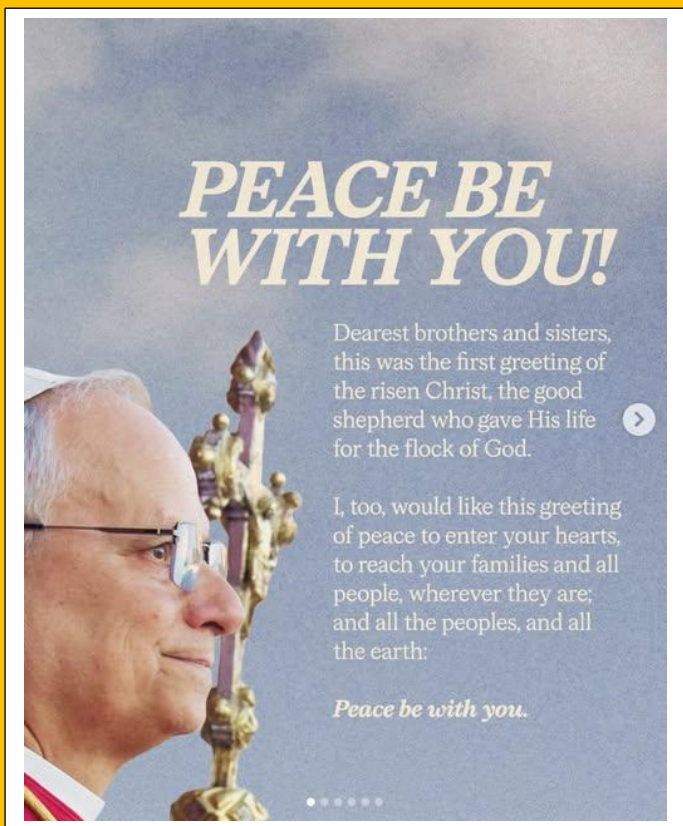
May Christ’s love shine through every word spoken,

every hand extended,

every life touched.

May their leadership reflect the mercy and justice of your reign —  
reaching toward the margins,  
breaking down walls that divide,  
and building bridges of hope, healing and unity.  
Unite your people in love and purpose.  
Strengthen the bonds between churches,  
and let our common witness radiate the transforming power of  
Christ's love in the world.  
In the name of Christ,  
Amen.

**La pace sia con tutti voi!**



## **From Insights ...**

**More than 20 leaders from faith and religious groups across Sydney met today to discuss how to respond to a terrorist attack on their communities of worship.**

**The Shepherd Project led by the Uniting Church Synod of NSW and ACT and the Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy Network (DRCN) was developed in recognition of a growing threat of violent attacks in religious institutions.**

**The Project builds on research undertaken by Rev. Dr. Stephen Robinson in his Churchill Fellowship study “Faith Leaders’ Responses to Violent Attacks on Houses of Worship”.**

**The Project is believed to be the first of its kind in the world.**

## **Welcome to Country .... Rev Charissa Suli, President of the Uniting Church in Australia**

**As a Pacific daughter, born here in Australia, and as President of the Uniting Church in Australia, my heart is heavy with sadness at the disrespect we have witnessed in our nation over this past long weekend.**

**I invite you to hear these words not as a political statement, but as a faithful call to honour the sacred stories and connections between land, people, and Spirit which have been carried by First Nations peoples for millennia.**

**On Friday last week, we witnessed two deeply painful events: the disrespectful interruption of Bunurong Elder Uncle Mark Brown’s Welcome to Country at the Melbourne ANZAC Day Dawn Service, and the abrupt cancellation of Wurundjeri Elder Aunty Joy Murphy’s Welcome to Country at an NRL match.**

**The Uniting Church in Australia stands in complete solidarity with First Nations peoples and honours the Elders who continue to offer Welcome**

to their ancestral Country with extraordinary generosity, even when their grace is met with disrespect and racism.

Welcome to Country is not a courtesy or a formality. It is a sacred act that affirms the sovereignty, cultures, and dignity of First Peoples. With roots in the ancient customs of First Peoples who welcomed visitors onto their lands to ensure safe passage and peaceful relationship, today it remains a gift that invites all who gather to walk humbly and respectfully.

Aunty Alison Overeem, proud Palawa woman and First Nations elder in the Uniting Church, describes the Welcome to Country with these words of grace:

*Welcoming people into and on country is about welcoming all into a woven shared story. It's a welcome to all the stories that connect us. It's empowering for all to be welcomed into the stories of the land which centre us in our call to creation, to relationship, to solidarity. It's not for division. It's a call to a shared vision.*

As a Pacific daughter, I know that land is not merely land — it is family, life itself. This sacred connection has been cherished by First Peoples since time beyond memory.

*Whenever the profound meaning of these ancient cultural and spiritual customs is diminished, whether through ignorance, fear or public debate, a wound is reopened in the heart of this land.*

We lose something vital within our own spirit. As an ancient call to relationship and shared responsibility, to dismiss it is to turn away from the truth that could heal us.

As a Church that has formally recognised the sovereignty of First Peoples and entered covenant with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, we are clear: these sacred and ancient practices must be upheld and honoured. Every act of interruption, silencing and disrespect

**deepens the daily experience of spiritual and cultural unsafety for First Peoples on their own lands.**

**We give thanks for the steadfast courage of First Nations Elders, who continue to lead with wisdom, grace, and generosity. We call on the Australian community, including our national leaders, to honour and uphold Welcome to Country with the seriousness and respect it deserves. May we be a people who receive the hand of welcome with humility and gratitude.**

**The Uniting Church will continue to listen deeply, walk faithfully, and stand in covenant with First Peoples in the ongoing work of justice, healing and hope.**

### **Canticle of Daniel**

**And you sun and moon and stars,**

**O bless the Lord.**

**And all you showers of rain,**

**O bless the Lord.**

**And all you breezes and winds,**

**O bless the Lord.**

**And you fire and rain,**

**O bless the Lord.**

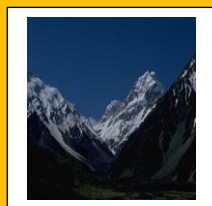
**To God be highest glory**

**And praise forever more.**

**And you dew and frosts and snow,**

**O bless the Lord.**

**And you night time and day,**



O bless the Lord.

And you darkness and light,

O bless the Lord.

And you lightning and clouds,

O bless the Lord.

And you mountains and hills,

O bless the Lord.

And all you plants of the earth,

O bless the Lord.

And you fountains and springs,

O bless the Lord.

And you rivers and seas,

O bless the Lord.

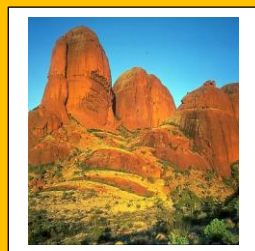
To God be highest glory

And praise forever more.

Let all the earth bless the Lord. (4x)

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## **Planning Ahead**

- **15<sup>th</sup> May Kogarah UC Church Council @ 7pm via Zoom**
- **22<sup>nd</sup> May Worship Task Group @ 7pm via Zoom**
- **1<sup>st</sup> June Korean lunch after church with Table Tennis group**
- **6<sup>th</sup> June Study of Stan Grant's book *Murriyang – Song of Time* at Bobbie's over lunch.**

**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. 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, 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. Sudan**

**Next Sunday**

**25<sup>th</sup> May 2025 @ 10am**

**Easter Six - Streams of Blessings**

**Leader Deok Hee**

**Reflection Deok Hee**

**Holy Communion Deok Hee**

**Acts 16:9–15; Psalm 67; Revelation 21:10, 22—22:5;**

**John 14:23–29**



**La pace sia con tutti voi!**

**Church Council 2024-2025**

**Chair**  
**Secretary**  
**Treasurer**  
**Councillors**

**Elders**

Richard Goodman  
Sue Baglin  
John Baglin  
Robert M<sup>c</sup>Alpine (2026)  
Sue Baglin (2025)  
Dinah Roepers (2025)  
John Baglin (2025)  
Bobbie Miller (2025)  
Richard Goodman (2027)

**Safe Church Contact Person**

**Richard Goodman**