



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.**

25th 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



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

Acts 16:9–15

A vision prompts Paul to change direction, leading him to Philippi, where he and his companions meet Lydia, a woman of faith and hospitality. They gather by the river, a place of prayer, where Lydia welcomes their gospel message and opens her home to them.

Psalm 67 is a psalm in three parts and a prayer for God's grace and blessing. It emphasises gratitude, joy, and the fairness of God's judgment alongside, a call for the entire world to honour God, and connects God's blessings with the earth's abundance.

Revelation 21:10, 22—22:5

An angel shows the writer a vision of a future where God restores all things, bringing eternal peace, light, and life.

John 14:23–29

Jesus reassures the disciples of his ongoing presence through the Holy Spirit, his peace, and the ultimate purpose of his departure.

Theme Focus

A psalmist's gratitude and a vision of a life-giving stream in Revelation invite us to reflect on the blessings flowing through our lives and consider how we can become sources of blessing and healing in our world.

Word for the Day

Revelation 21:10, 22—22:5

This passage again has reference to life-giving water and gives the impression that the life-giving stream waters the tree of life, which is on *each* side of the river. The tree of life is connected to food and to the healing nature of its leaves. Here is an image of flourishing where all things are interconnected.

Ideas for Reflection

- How often do we stop to consider the interconnections in our life, in our community and in our world? How does it change how we see things when we consider these connections? What can we do to facilitate connections, including between people and the earth? What are the things that break connections, and how can we repair them?
- What happens if we read the life-giving stream as a metaphor for blessing? How might this stream of blessing flow through our thoughts, our actions, our relationships, our faith community, our neighbourhood, our state, our country, and our world? How can we be active participants in the blessing and the receiving of blessings?
- Imagine a world where there is no night or day, no moon or sun. How does our reading of verse 5 influence our sense of what heaven might look like? What do we imagine the face looks like in verse 4, and how does this reflect our image of God?
- What type of healing is needed in our lives right now? What kind of blessings are we praying for?

From the Wayside Chapel (forwarded by Jim Bird)

Dear Inner Circle,

Winter is sneaking in under the cover these warm and mild days but the cold and wet nights are on the way, and they are tough on our people. I'm reminded of [the testimony of that from Wayside friend and visitor Andrew](#). Some walk all night long or huddle up with a few trusted friends to wait out the night sleeplessly, only to make their way in for a shower and then some 'deep prayer session' on our chapel pews. Who would begrudge them a moment's rest?

I was ushered into the chapel for an important matter, and I must admit I found myself a little bemused at having to step over someone, until I caught sight of his face, contently snoring. I was struck that this was someone's son, and if this was my last day on earth, then I wouldn't be concerned that I could not find a convenient place for a meeting but would care very much that I had shown kindness to someone's boy.

Truth always whispers to us from the edges of things. Those at the centre yell loudly and provoke us to react, especially now as we have a neurotic news cycle to assault us, in a world where leaders seem intent on building an economy that protects the powerful at the expense of those who huddle in the gaps that society creates. So it is a discipline to get down into the gutter to simply listen. Sometimes it is listening to a contented snore, or someone who, after eating the gourmet lunch that they'd just been served, leaned over to me with half of the dish strewn all over his top, *"F*\$K Rev, that was dee-licious."*

Someone recently reminded me that Wayside for some is a lighthouse, a place of hope in the storms of life, and for others, well, it should be a spotlight. One that asks the questions that others fear, like, as one guy who had lived on the streets all his life so eloquently put it, *"I've learnt to live on minimum chips, but surely there should be a limit for others, what amount is maximum chips then ey?"*

His truth unnerves me, and if there is anything to be learnt from sitting in the gutter it's that there are no easy answers here. That it is perhaps more important to live the questions in a way that honours the brave and the courageous who live in some of the direst of circumstances having faced some of the worst that life has to offer, yet somehow do so with wit and humour that humbles us every day. All a gentle reminder of the world we want to co-create and live in, a place for all to flourish.

Thank you for being part of the Inner Circle,

Jon

Rev. Jon Owen CEO & Pastor Wayside Chapel

An Affirmation of Faith used by Drysdale Uniting Church in 2021

In the desert and forest, mountain and water,
we see the signs that God is with us.

In grass that grows through cities of concrete,
we see the signs that God is with us.

In the faces of people whom God so loved,
we see the signs that God is with us.

In our brokenness, there is the hope of wholeness.

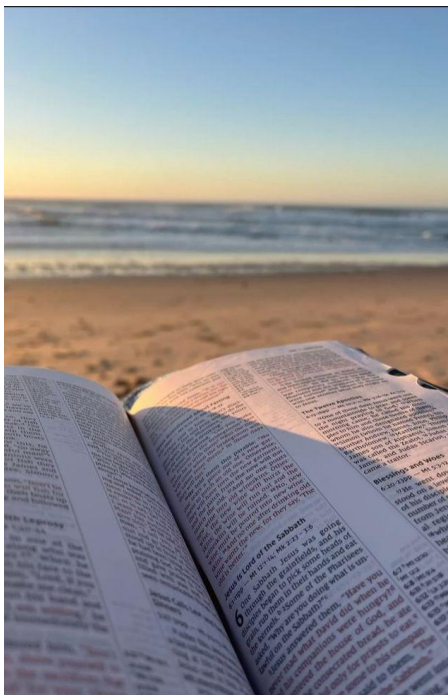
In our emptiness, there is the hope of fullness.
In our deaths, lies the hope of resurrection life.
This is the Word in Christ to us.
The flame of the Holy Spirit lives in this place and travels with us. Amen.

From the GRP Newsletter

Inclusivity is at the heart of the Christian message, and Acts 11: 1-18 from this week's lectionary, is one of inclusivity's greatest stories.

Despite clear scriptural commands about how Jews were to treat gentiles, this biblical distinction was in the midst of being broken down. Laws around what you can eat, who you can associate with, what makes something clean or unclean - all these were shattered in a moment of God's inclusive gifting as the Spirit fell upon the gentiles, of all people. "Even the gentiles can come to God!", the church authorities from Jerusalem finally conceded.

Yet the inclusion of the gentiles



would continue to be a controversial issue in the early church, as Paul's writings and Acts itself later make clear.

The early church, and the church today, probably feel more comfortable in making distinctions - about who is in and who is out, about who is holy and who is not, and about why God is with 'us' and not with 'them'. Making such distinctions is like our default setting, which means being inclusive takes more deliberate effort and choice.

What are the groups that we have been taught to exclude? Who are the ones from whom we automatically turn? Who are the people that might like to quietly slip into the back of church without the silent judgement (that usually isn't so silent)? Confronting our own prejudices is a good place to start in creating the welcoming, inclusive church that we proclaim we want to be.

Steve Aynsley

Planning Ahead

- **1st June Korean lunch after church with Table Tennis group**



- **6th 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

1st June 2025 @ 10am

Easter Seven – A World Transformed

Leader Deok Hee

Reflection Deok Hee

Holy Communion Deok Hee

Acts 16:16–34; Psalm 97; Revelation 22:12–14, 16–17, 20–21;

John 17:20–26



Church Council 2024-2025

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Safe Church Contact Person

Richard Goodman