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.

7th September 2025 @ 10am

Pentecost 13 - Proper 18

Season of Creation 1 - Ocean

Job 38:1–18; Psalm 104:1–9, 24–26; Ephesians 1:3–10; Luke 5:1–11

Leader Richard

Reflection Deok Hee

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

Job 38:1–18
God answers from the whirlwind—not with answers, but with awe. The sea is imagined as a newborn cradled in divine arms: mysterious, wild, and older than human understanding. We are reminded that creation has depths we cannot master—and a wisdom we must not ignore.

Psalm 104:1–9, 24–26
Creation teems with abundance beyond counting. The sea, vast and alive, plays host to Leviathan and countless creatures—all rejoicing in their place within God's sustaining rhythm. This is not a human stage, but a sanctuary of divine delight.

Ephesians 1:3–10
Before the world's foundations, we were included in God's wide-reaching purpose: to gather all things—heaven and earth—into unity in Christ. This cosmic vision affirms that creation is not fragmented but held in grace, from ocean depths to human hearts.

Luke 5:1–11
The lake becomes a pulpit, and its depths a parable. Jesus teaches from the water, then releases its hidden abundance—but the miracle awakens fear and wonder. This is a call to humility before the wild grace of God, and an invitation to let our old nets go.

Theme Focus

This week, as we listen with the ocean, we are reminded of creation's ancient memory, fluid strength, and its role as both witness and teacher in the story of God.

Word for the Day

Listening to the Ocean's Wisdom
This week's readings draw us deep into the ocean and ourselves. From the storm in Job, we hear God ask questions not to belittle, but to reframe the situation. 'Were you there when the sea was born?' It's a divine reminder that creation holds a wisdom far older than us, and that reverence, not control, is perhaps the most appropriate posture.

The ocean is more than water—it is depth, life, grief, renewal, song, silence, danger, and delight. Psalm 104 celebrates the sea's teeming, wild abundance, a playground for Leviathan, a home for creatures unseen. The psalmist sings not of dominion, but of delight.

In Luke's gospel, the Sea of Galilee is more than a setting; it's a teacher. Its depths conceal provision but also provoke fear. When Peter encounters the abundance Jesus brings forth from the water, he is overwhelmed. It's not just about fish, it's about the mystery, power, and generosity of life itself. He sees the depths and is humbled.

We need that same humility now. The sea is groaning. Warming. Choking. Rising. And yet, still singing. Singing of God's beauty, wisdom, grief, and hope. Ocean Sunday asks not only, 'How do we use the sea?' but also, 'How can we learn from it?' How can we live like kin with kelp and krill, rather than masters over mystery?

This week, may we listen for the voice of God in the ocean's depths. May we grieve with her, praise with her, and, like Peter, leave behind our nets of fear to follow Christ's call into deeper living.

Ideas for Reflection
This week's readings invite us not just to look *at* the sea, but to listen *with* it—to hear what creation might be saying in its beauty, its limits, and its pain.

- What might the sea be teaching us about God—through its power, mystery, or generosity?
- Where do we notice the ocean crying out today (coral bleaching, plastic pollution, warming waters…)?
- What does it mean to listen with compassion?
- What does it look like to live in rhythm with creation, not in control of it?
- How might 'boundaries' (like those given to the sea as mentioned in Job) shape a more just and sustainable way of life?
- What parts of the ocean's wonder are often overlooked—and what does that say about whose voices or beauty we may overlook in our own lives?

SEASON OF CREATION - 2025 THEME

Each year, the Season of Creation Ecumenical Steering Committee proposes a theme for the Season of Creation.
This year's theme is "Peace with Creation", inspired by Isaiah 32:14-18:
"For the palace will be forsaken, the populous city deserted; the hill and the watchtower will become dens forever, the joy of wild asses, a pasture for flocks. Until a spirit from on high is poured out on us, and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is deemed a forest. Then justice will dwell in the wilderness and righteousness abide in the fruitful field.
The effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness, and trust forever. My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." (NRVUE)

War on Creation
"The palace will be forsaken, the populous city deserted; the hill and watchtower will become dens forever, the joy of wild asses, a pasture for flocks" (Isaiah 32:14).
The prophet Isaiah portrays a desolate Creation, devoid of peace due to injustice and the broken relationship between God and humankind. Devastated cities and wastelands reflect the destructive impact that human activities can have on Earth. Animals readily move in and claim parts of what was once an exclusively human habitat, as if human settlement had deprived them of sufficient space. While the joy of a pasture for animals (Isaiah 32:14) is undoubtedly a good thing in itself, it comes at the cost of human displacement due to conflict.
Though God's plan for Creation is rooted in justice and peace, human sin disrupts this, leaving Creation in ruin—from wealthy palaces to poor farmlands, forests, and oceans. Isaiah vividly describes the results of human estrangement from Creation. Moreover, the abandoned and ruined watchtower and palace (or citadel, in some translations) suggest that warfare is ultimately frustrated by God.
Peace is more than just the absence of war. In the Hebrew Bible, shalom represents a far deeper concept—one that extends beyond the absence of

conflict to the full restoration of broken relationships, as illustrated in Isaiah's vision. This restoration encompasses our relationship with God, ourselves, the human family, and the rest of Creation.

SEASON OF CREATION 2025

PEACE WITH CREATION

Throughout history, many human activities have contributed to the destruction of Creation. Yet today, more than ever, some human activities take the form of a war against Creation. Our impact has expanded from local to global, manifesting in unsustainable lifestyles, excessive consumption, lasting pollution, and a throwaway culture.

Some hold greater responsibility for this crisis—elite consumption, exploitative business models, and economic theories prioritizing profit over sustainability. Pollution, health crises, deforestation, and mining in conflict zones worsen the situation.

Last year's UN Biodiversity Conference (COP16) in Cali, Colombia, aptly themed "Peace with Nature," highlighted the urgency of these issues.

Saint Francis of Assisi's Canticle of the Creatures calls the Earth our sister and mother. How can Mother Earth nurture us if we fail to contemplate, learn from, and love her? Ignoring our interconnectedness undermines this vital relationship.

Our Hope: Creation Will Find Peace When Justice Is Restored

"Then justice will dwell in the wilderness and righteousness abide in the fruitful field" (Isaiah 32:16).

There is hope for a peaceful Earth. Biblically, hope is active—it involves prayer, action, and reconciling with Creation and the Creator through repentance (metanoia) and solidarity. Isaiah 32:14-18 envisions a peaceful Creation where God's people live only when justice is achieved.

Righteousness leads to peace and restores the land's fertility: "The effect of righteousness will be peace; and the result of righteousness, quietness, and trust forever. My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places" (Isaiah 32:14-18).

Creation is God's sacred gift, entrusted to our care. Christians are called to protect and nurture Creation in peace, working in partnership with

others and passing this responsibility on to future generations. Its deep interconnectedness makes peace both essential and fragile.
Pope Francis challenges us: “What is the goal of our work? What need does the Earth have of us? Leaving an inhabitable planet to future generations is up to us” (Laudato Si’, 160).
Churches engage globally in climate, agriculture, and biodiversity efforts, grounded in theology and a prophetic call for repentance and justice. Only through reconciliation with and genuine justice for all living beings will Creation find peace, fulfilling Isaiah’s vision (32:14-18).

SEASON OF CREATION
2025 PRAYER

PEACE WITH CREATION

Creator of all,
we praise you for the gift of life
and for the faith that unites us in care for our common home.
We confess how estranged we have become—
from one another, from your Creation, and from our truest selves.
We acknowledge that our greed and destructive impulses
have fractured our relationships with you, with others, and with the Earth.
Fertile fields have become barren,
forests lie desolate,
oceans and rivers are polluted.
Thriving communities have become places of suffering,
and the earth cries out.

Beloved Christ,
who spoke “Shalom” to frightened hearts,
stir us to compassionate action.
Inspire us to work for the end of conflict,
and for the full restoration of broken relationships—
with you, with the ecumenical community,
with the human family,
and with all Creation.

Prince of Peace,
through your wounds, teach us to stand in solidarity
with the woundedness of others,
of creation, and of the world.
Through your resurrection,
make us people of hope—
with a vision of swords turned into ploughshares
and tears transformed into joy.
May we come together as one family,
to labor for your peace—
a shalom where all your people
may dwell in safety,
and rest in quiet places.
Amen.

1st September

SPRING!

Wattle Day

Fathers’ Day

Prayer for Father’s Day (for fathers around the world)
Our Father in heaven,
we pray today for the many fathers around the world
who are struggling to provide for their families:
those who despair about finding safe shelter,
who watch in anguish as their children starve,
who desperately search for adequate medical care,
or safety from violence that surrounds them.
Be with these fathers this day.
Strengthen and encourage them as they seek to care for their families.
Grant them grace and courage in the midst of impossible circumstances,
and bless them with hope as they look toward the future. Amen.

Prayer for a Complicated Father's Day

Holidays are complicated, especially the ones named after roles. Human relationships are messy, including relationships with people who are honoured by holidays.

For a lot of people, Father's Day brings up feelings of grief for fathers who were lost, or who couldn't be there, or who chose not to be there. Father's Day might bring up feelings of sorrow or regret for people who want(ed) to be fathers and haven't been able to, or who haven't been able to be the fathers they wanted to be for their kids.

Today might be a day of divided loyalties for people who may have called more than one person "Father" or "Dad" in the course of their lives.

Then there are the people (of a variety of genders) who are father figures, step-parents, and mentors for young people, but who don't get the recognition they deserve, today or any day.

On the other hand, Father's Day can be joyful and sweet, remembering the times when dads or granddads or role models were there for us. For people who have a positive relationship with a living father figure, today may very well include happy phone calls, funny greeting cards, and tacky ties. For contented new fathers, today might be full of wonder and hope as they get used to their new title.

And, for a lot of people, there will be a mix. Even the best dads fall short sometimes. Some fathers who struggle still have their shining moments. Nothing is simple.

So, here's my prayer:

May we be grateful for the nurturing we have received in our lives, from sources both hidden and obvious. May we heal from the losses highlighted by Father's Day. May we nurture each other and the generations to come. May the friendship and love we have in our lives today ease the pain and amplify the positive memories of our past. May this be a day of reconciliation and peace.

By Lyn Cox from the Unitarian Universalist Association

“it’s 3:23 in the morning

and I’m awake

because my great great grandchildren

won’t let me sleep

my great great grandchildren

ask me in dreams

what did you do while the planet was plundered?

what did you do when the earth was unraveling?

surely you did something

when the seasons started failing?

as the mammals, reptiles, birds were all dying?

did you fill the streets with protest

when democracy was stolen?

what did you do

once

you

knew?…”

~ Drew Dellinger from: Hieroglyphic Stairway in *Love Letters to the Milky Way*

Wherever we are today...at home, at work, out and about, may we be mindful of living in communion with the whole of creation (including people!).

Posted by Jamberoo Abbey in this Season of Creation

Planning Ahead

- **September 7 till September 28 – Season of Creation**
- **September 14 Face-to-face meeting of the Church Council to discuss the Healthy Church Questionnaire, and the Life and Witness Report.**
- **September 19 at Bobbies @ 11:30 am – bring your own lunch -to discuss "Orbital" Copies available from Bobbie.**
- **October 16, 2025 Worship Task Group on ZOOM 7pm**

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, Ngahuia, Peter and Sue; Dinah; Ern Edwards; Jim Bird, Cindy, Dorothy and Godfrey, Sue B, Robert & Robyn. 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, Thailand, Cambodia

Next Sunday

14th September 2025 @ 10am

Pentecost 14 - Proper 19

Season of Creation 2 – Flora & Fauna

Alive to God

Job 39:1–8, 26–30; Psalm 104:14–23; 1 Corinthians 1:10–23; Luke 12:22–31

Leader Deok Hee
Reflection Deok Hee
Holy Communion Deok Hee

Church Council 2025-2026

Chair	Richard Goodman
Secretary	Sue Baglin
Treasurer	John Baglin (2027)
Councillors	Robert McAlpine (2026)
	Sue Baglin (2026)
	Joshua Chang (2026)
Elders	John Baglin (2026)
	Bobbie Miller (2028)
	Richard Goodman (2027)
	Dorothy Makasa (2026)
Safe Church Contact Person	Richard Goodman