

**KOGARAH UNITING CHURCH
SEPTEMBER 7th 2025
SEASON OF CREATION
OCEAN SUNDAY**

The Gathering of the People of God

WELCOME & GREETING

Happy Fathers Day

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

And also with you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY:

We acknowledge that this land is God's land, and God's Spirit dwells here. We pay our respects to the elders past, present and emerging of the Bidjegal people of the Eora nation, who have cared for this land in time beyond our dreaming. This land on which we live and move was and always will be Aboriginal Land.

KUC MISSION STATEMENT

We are a congregation
who welcome people of all cultures and lifestyles,
who create a safe place for the community
and who share the journey of life and faith.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Hey, you! Give praise to God!

God dreamed you and called you and here you are!

Seas and oceans, tranquil waves and turbulent currents, praise God.

God dreamed you and called you and here you are!

You fish and whales and squid, sing praise in the deep.

God dreamed you and called you and here you are!

So listen out for the Name that is above every Name,

sing out with all the love and joy you can find:

all you are is made by God,
all you have is gift from God.

Calling all creation – come and be found in praise!

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

God is here
God is always here
God is with us
God is always with us

SING: Let all creation dance TIS 187

**Let all creation dance
in energies sublime,
as order turns with chance,
unfolding space and time,
for nature's art
in glory grows,
and newly shows God's mind and heart.**

**God's breath each
force unfurls,
igniting from a spark
expanding starry swirls,
with whirlpools
dense and dark.
Though moon and sun
seem mindless things,
each orbit sings: "Your will be done."**

**Our own amazing earth,
with sunlight, cloud and storms
and life's abundant growth
in lovely shapes and forms,
is made for praise,
a fragile whole,
and from its soul
heaven's music plays.**

**Lift heart and soul and voice:
in Christ all praises meet
and nature shall rejoice
as all is made complete.
In hope be strong,**

**all life befriend
and kindly tend creation's song.**

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OPENING PRAYER

God of oceans and inland lakes, source of our life and keeper of earth's waterways, open our hearts within the vastness of creation.

With awe and respect, we ponder the precious gift of life shared across the waters.

Channel our empathy not from above, but from beside—

as kin among creatures,

as siblings to the sea,

as people who learn from the ocean how to praise. Amen.

SING: Let All Things Now Living TIS 107

**Let all things now living
a song of thanksgiving
to God the Creator triumphantly raise,
who fashioned and made us,
protected and stayed us,
who guides us and leads to the end of our days.**

**His banners are o'er us,
his light goes before us,
a pillar of fire shining forth in the night,
till shadows have vanished
and darkness is banished,
as forward we travel from light into light.**

**His law he enforces;
the stars in their courses
and sun in its orbit obediently shine;
the hills and the mountains,
the rivers and fountains,
the deeps of the ocean proclaim him divine.**

**We too should be voicing
our love and rejoicing;**

**with glad adoration a song let us raise,
till all things now living
unite in thanksgiving:
to God in the highest, hosanna and praise!**

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PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Great God of creation, thank you for the wonders of the natural world.

We praise you for the oceans that surround our lands, for the diverse life they contain— plankton and whales, coral and seaweed, sharks and dolphins.

The sea sings of your glory, O God. May we learn her song.

Thank you for the many ways we value the sea: enjoying days fishing, water sports, walking by the beach, sharing the harvest of the sea at meals with family and friends.

The ocean gives and gives.

We confess how little we have listened to her need.

We are humbled as we learn how much we depend on the health of the oceans for our own well-being.

We are not above the ocean; we are her kin.

When she suffers, so do we all.

We are shocked when we discover how small particles of waste discarded on land find their way to vast areas of ocean rubbish.

The sea is choking, O God.

Have mercy on what we have done.

We are dismayed as we hear how coral reefs are dying, and precious animal species are becoming extinct.

The coral grieves; the fish flee.

Creation cries out.

We are scared by news of warming oceans and rising sea levels. It makes us feel vulnerable and afraid.

Holy One, may our fear be turned to reverence.

May our sorrow deepen into love.

The sea laments. May we lament with her.

Restore our kinship, O God.

Teach us to walk gently along the shore, to speak blessings, not burdens, to let the oceans teach us again how to live in praise.

The sea still sings.

We listen, we will learn, we will love. Amen.

Short silence

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Don't be afraid!

Hear God's call to care for the earth and protect the oceans.

Know that God shows loving kindness for all life and offers us the ways and the will to bring greater wholeness to creation.

Thank you for your love. We hear your call to care. Amen.

PEACE:

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

The Service of the Word

BIBLE READING: JOB: 38:1-18

Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind: ²"Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? ³Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me.

⁴"Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. ⁵Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? ⁶On what were its bases sunk,

or who laid its cornerstone ⁷when the morning stars sang together and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy? ⁸“Or who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb?— ⁹when I made the clouds its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band, ¹⁰and prescribed bounds for it, and set bars and doors, ¹¹and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stopped’?

¹²“Have you commanded the morning since your days began, and caused the dawn to know its place, ¹³so that it might take hold of the skirts of the earth, and the wicked be shaken out of it? ¹⁴It is changed like clay under the seal, and it is dyed like a garment. ¹⁵Light is withheld from the wicked, and their uplifted arm is broken. ¹⁶“Have you entered into the springs of the sea, or walked in the recesses of the deep? ¹⁷Have the gates of death been revealed to you, or have you seen the gates of deep darkness? ¹⁸Have you comprehended the expanse of the earth? Declare, if you know all this.

BIBLE READING: PSALM 104:1-9 24-26

¹Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, you are very great. You are clothed with honor and majesty,

²wrapped in light as with a garment. You stretch out the heavens like a tent,

³you set the beams of your chambers on the waters, you make the clouds your chariot, you ride on the wings of the wind,

⁴you make the winds your messengers, fire and flame your ministers.

⁵You set the earth on its foundations, so that it shall never be shaken.

⁶You cover it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.

⁷At your rebuke they flee; at the sound of your thunder they take to flight.

⁸They rose up to the mountains, ran down to the valleys to the place that you appointed for them.

⁹You set a boundary that they may not pass, so that they might not again cover the earth.

²⁴O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

²⁵Yonder is the sea, great and wide, creeping things innumerable are there, living things both small and great.

²⁶There go the ships, and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it.

SING: Where wide sky rolls down and touches red sand TIS 188

**Where wide sky rolls down and touches red sand,
where sun turns to gold the grass of the land,
let spinifex, mulga and waterhole tell
their joy in the One who made everything well.**

**Where rain-forest calm meets reef, tide and storm,
where green things grow lush and oceans are warm,
let every sea-creature and tropical bird
exult in the light of the life-giving Word.**

**Where red gum and creek cross hillside and plain,
where cool tree-ferns rise to welcome the rain,
let bushland, farm, mountain-top, all of their days
delight in the Spirit who formed them for praise.**

**Now, people of faith, come gather around
with songs to be shared, for blessings abound!
Australians, whatever your culture or race,
come, lift up your hearts to the Giver of grace.**

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BIBLE READING: LUKE 5:1-11

⁵Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, ²he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. ³He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. ⁴When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." ⁵Simon answered, "Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the

nets.” ⁶When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. ⁷So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, “Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!” ⁹For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; ¹⁰and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.” ¹¹When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

REFLECTION –Deok Hee

Happy Father’s Day!

Before we begin today’s message, I want to take a moment to say thank you and congratulations to all the fathers among us—both physical fathers and spiritual fathers. To those who have raised children, mentored others, or simply shown love and care like a father does—we honour you today. We pray that this day will be full of joy, peace, and gratitude for the love you’ve given. May God bless you and strengthen you in your role, whether in your family, your church, or your community.

Today we begin a special journey called the Season of Creation, which will continue for the next few weeks. Over the next few weeks our worship will focus on a different part of God's wonderful world. Today, we begin with the Ocean. In the weeks to come, we'll turn our attention to the amazing creatures of the world, the Fauna; then to the powerful forces of nature in the Storm; we'll look up to the vastness of the Cosmos. I and Elin, we have a deep love for the ocean. When people ask us, “Do you like the mountains or the sea better?” we always say, “Both!” But if we're honest, we have a very special place in our hearts for the coast. It's where we go when life feels tough and we are completely burned out. It's where we go when the sun is shining and our hearts are full. We find ourselves drawn again and again to the beautiful coastlines south of Sydney, around Wollongong, Kiama, and Gerringong. There's a special feeling I get when I stand on a hill and look out at the huge, endless ocean. When I open my arms wide and take a few deep breaths, it feels like all the worries of the world just disappear. Recently, I and Elin had the chance to go on a holiday with a very close church minister friend and his wife from Korea who was visiting us. Together, we travelled to New Zealand for a short break. We spent about six days exploring the southern part of the country, mainly around Queenstown. During our trip, we visited beautiful places like Mount Cook, Wanaka, Te Anau, Lake Tekapo, and the stunning Milford Sound. It was a time

to rest and to experience again just how beautiful God's creation truly is. Even though it was winter and the weather was a bit cold, the skies were clear and the sun was shining most days. The mountains were all covered with snow, and the views were absolutely beautiful. The lakes were a bright blue colour—so clear and peaceful. And one of the most powerful moments for me was when we visited Milford Sound. We went on a cruise there, and as we came face to face with the ocean once again—surrounded by steep cliffs, waterfalls, and deep waters—I felt overwhelmed by the wonder of God's creation. Seeing the ocean's amazing power and beauty makes us think about God's greatness and gives us a deep sense of respect for everything he has made. It reminded me that nature isn't just beautiful. It's holy. It's one of the ways God speaks to us.

The ocean truly is an amazing part of God's creation. It covers more than 70% of our planet, and it holds about 97% of all the water on Earth. This huge area of water is home to an incredible amount of life—between 50% and 80% of all life on the planet. Oceans are a vital part of our world's system, producing more than half of the oxygen we breathe. They also help control our climate and provide food for millions of people. For us, it is a place of deep mystery and great beauty. This reality is reflected in our Old Testament readings today. In Job 38, God finally responds to Job's long cries of suffering. But instead of giving Job answers, God gives him questions—questions about creation. "Who shut up the sea behind doors when it burst forth from the womb? ...Have you journeyed to the springs of the sea? Or walked in the depths of the ocean?" The message is clear: You are not God. You don't know the depths. But I do. The ocean in this passage becomes a symbol of how much we do not know—and how much we must trust. When we stand by the ocean, we feel small. We are reminded of mystery. Of limits. Of wonder. And maybe that is good for us. In a world where we often act like we're in control, creation humbles us. But our reading today, from Luke's Gospel, takes us even deeper. It's a story many of us know, but let's try to imagine ourselves in Peter's shoes. He was a professional fisherman, a hard-working man. He and his friends had worked all night. It was a long, tiring, and completely unsuccessful night. They had caught nothing. Imagine how frustrated and defeated they must have felt. They were cleaning their nets, packing up, ready to give up and go home. This was a moment of true burnout. And then Jesus appears, gets into Peter's boat, and after teaching the crowd, he tells Peter to "go out into deep water and let your nets down for a catch." Peter, feeling tired and doubtful, says, "Master, we have worked hard all night but caught nothing. But if you say so, I will let down the nets." And what happens? They catch so many fish that their nets begin to tear, and their boats start to sink from the weight. The same ocean that had seemed empty and useless in their own strength became a place of amazing abundance when Jesus gave the command. This story isn't just about a big catch; it's about a big change. It's about Jesus calling us to find new purpose and abundance in the very places where we have felt failure and burnout. For

Peter, that call was to leave his old life behind and become a "fisher of people."

And so we come to a critical moment in our own story, in the story of our planet, and in our faith. The same beautiful ocean that was the place where this miracle happened is now facing some of its biggest problems. Today, the ocean is hurting. The ocean is crying. We see plastic everywhere. 8 million tons of plastic enter the ocean each year. Oil spills poison the water. The ocean is becoming more acidic. Some sea animals are disappearing. Sea levels are rising because of climate change. And who is affected the most? The poor. People who live near the ocean — especially in small island nations — are losing their homes, their food, their way of life. The very creation we are called to praise is suffering because of our carelessness. And creation is groaning. Groaning—for healing. Groaning—for justice. Groaning—for people to care. The question is: Are we listening? In Genesis 2, God told Adam to "take care of the garden." God gave humans the job of protecting and caring for his creation — not destroying it. To "rule over the earth" does not mean to abuse it — it means to love it, protect it, and serve it, just like Jesus rules with love and sacrifice. As God's people, we are called to stand up — not just for people, but for creation too. That means we care about the ocean. We reduce waste. We speak up when companies destroy the sea. We change how we live, so others — especially the poor — can live too. Because when we care for the ocean, we reflect the heart of our Creator. So today, on Ocean Sunday, let's ask:

Do I see the ocean as God's beautiful creation — or just a nice place to go on holidays?

Am I living in a way that heals the ocean — or hurts it?

What small step can I take to protect God's creation this week?

Brothers and sisters in Christ!

Let's listen to the cry of the ocean.

Let's respond with faith, with love, and with action.

Let us use this time to think, to learn, and to promise to care for our oceans so that they can continue to be a source of wonder, life, and grace for all who come after us.

Amen.

SING: Take, Take Off Your Shoes - TIS 651

Take, take off your shoes,
you're standing on holy ground;
take, take off your shoes,
you're standing on holy ground.
Well, the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof
from the waters beneath to the heavens above,
so take, take, take off your shoes,
you're standing on my holy ground,
you're standing on my holy ground.

On the eighth day of creation, well, the Lord looked around
at the power stations, freeways and the junk on the ground,
the factories with their waste-dumps and their chimneys so high,
you couldn't see the sun for all the smog in the sky.
Well, kids, you really filled the earth and then you subdued it,
but there's nothing in my book that says you've got to pollute it. So ...

Take, take off your shoes,
you're standing on holy ground;
take, take off your shoes,
you're standing on holy ground.
Well, the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof
from the waters beneath to the heavens above,
so take, take, take off your shoes,
you're standing on my holy ground,
you're standing on my holy ground.

You've heated up my rivers with industrial mills,
you're killing off my oceans with your wastes and your spills,
you're fishing like there'll always be an endless supply,
and fighting one another for what's left to divide.
You didn't want advice when I first gave you dominion,
but maybe now it's time to get a second opinion.
So,

Take, take off your shoes,
you're standing on holy ground;
take, take off your shoes,
you're standing on holy ground.
Well, the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof
from the waters beneath to the heavens above,
so take, take, take off your shoes,
you're standing on my holy ground,
you're standing on my holy ground.

Your scientific minds — make sure you use them with care:
you're breaking down my ozone layer up in the air,
your fertilizer's turning mighty rivers bright green,
some folks are getting fatter while so many grow lean.
I told you to be fruitful and you sure multiplied,
but the rich took all the land and never learned to divide.
So,

Take, take off your shoes,
you're standing on holy ground;
take, take off your shoes,
you're standing on holy ground.
Well, the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof
from the waters beneath to the heavens above,
so take, take, take off your shoes,
you're standing on my holy ground,
you're standing on my holy ground.

James K. Manley (a version for Australia)
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OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

We give thanks for the harvests of land and oceans—Not only for what they provide, but for the wisdom they offer:

We bring these offerings of money (and food, and all we have given of ourselves in the past week).

May these gifts move with the current of your love,

to bring your life and love to those most in need,

In the name of Christ, who calms the storm and walks the shore.

Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

Loving God of Creation, we give thanks for those who dwell close to the ocean and work in service of her flourishing: conservationists, marine biologists, coast guards.

May their work be honoured, their voices heard, and their love for the sea become wisdom for us all.

Short silence

God of the oceans, **hear our prayer.**

We hold in prayer those whose lives are tied to the sea: island communities, fishing companies, shipping lines, seafarers, those whose ancestors lived in rhythm with the tides and currents.

May their knowledge and labour be received with justice, and may industries that rely on the sea learn to honour the life she holds.

Short silence

God of the oceans, **hear our prayer.**

For those whose inner lives feel like turbulent waters— tossed and turned by grief, anxiety, or conflict— we pray for calm, for grounding, for companionship.

May we be like the deep currents: steady, unseen, faithful in love.

Short silence

God of the oceans, **hear our prayer.**

Whether we live close to the coast or far inland, teach us to live with the sea in mind.

Shape our choices around what brings health and harmony to all life: our diets, our waste, our travel, our pace.

Let the ocean not bear our burdens alone.

Short silence

God of the oceans, **hear our prayer.**

We sometimes compare your divine love with the vastness of the oceans, deep and limitless.

In our generation, we fear that we may be close to the limits of the seas to absorb our trash and toxic waste.

Grant us grace to continue to trust in your free and generous love and to choose to offer the same to all life around us.

Short silence

God of the oceans, **hear our prayer, amen.**

LORDS PRAYER

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

The Sending Forth of the People of God

SING: We will love / We will walk with you at the edges NCYC 93

**We will walk with you at the edges,
we will die with you at the cross roads,
we will live in your dangerous places,
We will love.**

**We will risk with you taking chances,
we will stand with you facing evil,
we will live in your dangerous places,
we will love.**

**Come Lord Jesus Christ, hear our prayer,
come now living friend, please draw near,
alone we feel unsure and so afraid.
Calling us to live by your grace,
calling us to leave all that's safe,
our lives we choose to lose so you may save.**

**We will walk with you at the edges,
we will die with you at the cross roads,**

**we will live in your dangerous places,
We will love.**

**We will risk with you taking chances,
we will stand with you facing evil,
we will live in your dangerous places,
we will love.**

**Stepping out, we call on your name,
knowing you have healed all our shame.
Our God, your precious love has made us whole.
Gifting us with power to set free,
Holy Spirit use even me.
Renew all that I am so I may see.**

**We will walk with you at the edges,
we will die with you at the cross roads,
we will live in your dangerous places,
We will love.**

**We will risk with you taking chances,
we will stand with you facing evil,
we will live in your dangerous places,
we will love.**

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BLESSING:

The God of thunderous waves and rippling seas, of ocean depths and sandy beaches, of fragile plants and mighty sea creatures, lift your vessel into the week ahead.

Go with the blessing of God, Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer; **we go in faith, hope, and love. Amen.**

SENDING SONG: Sent by the Lord am I - All together 412

**Sent by the Lord am I; my hands are ready now
to make the earth the place in which the kingdom comes.
Sent by the Lord am I; my hands are ready now
to make the earth the place in which the kingdom comes.
The angels cannot change a world of hurt and pain
into a world of love, of justice and of peace.
The task is mine to do, to set it really free.
O help me to obey, help me to do your will.**

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