

KOGARAH UNITING CHURCH
28 September 2025
Creation 4
Cosmos Sunday

The Gathering of the People of God

WELCOME & GREETING

May 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 the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Bidjegal people of the Eora nation, the first inhabitants of this place. We honour their deep care for Creation, and pay our respects to Elders past and present—and to all who continue to uphold culture and care for Country today.

KUC VISION STATEMENTS

Let us say together who we are.

***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

Come, all who wonder at the stars above,
Come, all who marvel at the earth below.

Come, all who delight in the waves of the ocean,
Come, all who rejoice in the forests and fields.

God's creation sings a song of praise,
And we are invited to join in that song.

From the smallest seed to the shining stars,
All things were made through Christ and for Christ.

Let us worship the God who holds all creation together,
Let us give thanks for the beauty, wisdom, and love of God.

Open your eyes and hearts to the wonders of the universe,

We join the song of creation and lift our voices to God!

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

God is here

God is always here

God is with us

God is always with us

OPENING PRAYER

Loving God,
we come before you with hearts full of wonder.
We thank you for the stars above, the oceans below,
the forests, the animals, and all that you have made.
Open our eyes to see your beauty,
open our ears to hear your song in creation,
and open our hearts to join in praise and thanksgiving.
As we worship today,
help us to remember that we are part of your great universe,
held and loved by you in every moment.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

HYMN: Praise, my soul, the king of heaven TiS 134 (Vss 1, 2, 4, 5)

Praise, my soul, the king of heaven;
to his feet your tribute bring;
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
who like me his praise should sing?
Praise, him, praise him, hallelujah,
praise the everlasting king!

Praise him for his grace and favour
to his people in distress;
praise him still the same for ever,
slow to chide, and swift to bless:
praise him, praise him, hallelujah,
glorious in his faithfulness.

Frail as summer's flowers we flourish,
blows the wind and it is gone;
but while mortals rise and perish
God endures unchanging on.

Praise him, praise him, hallelujah,
praise the high eternal one!

Angels, help us to adore him,
you behold him face to face;
sun and moon bow down before him,
dwellers all in time and space:
praise him, praise him, hallelujah,
praise with us the God of grace!

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PRAYER OF CONFESSION

***God of all creation,
we confess that we have not always cared for your world.
We have taken more than we need,
and sometimes we have ignored the cries of the land,
the animals, and our neighbours.
We have been quick to judge and slow to listen.
We have failed to see your presence in the stars above and the earth below.***

***Forgive us, God.
Teach us to live in harmony with all creation, to honour your gifts,
and to join in the song of praise you invite us to sing.
Help us, through Christ,
to be faithful stewards of your universe,
living with love, justice, and wonder. Amen.***

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

God, who holds the stars, the oceans, and all living things,
loves us still, even in our failings.
Through Christ, the Bread of Life,
all creation is brought together, renewed, and made whole.
Hear then the word of Christ for us:
Your sins are forgiven.
Thanks be to God.

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

HYMN: If I were a butterfly All Together 66

If I were a butterfly,
I'd thank you, Lord, for giving me wings.
And if I were a robin in a tree,
I'd thank you, Lord, that I could sing.
And if I were a fish in the sea,
I'd wiggle my tail and I'd giggle with glee,
but I just thank you, Father, for making me 'me'.

For you gave me a heart
and you gave me a smile
You gave me Jesus and you made me your child.
And I just thank you, Father, for making me 'me'.

If I were an elephant,
I'd thank you, Lord, by raising my trunk.
And if I were a kangaroo,
you know I'd hop right up to you.
And if I were an octopus,
I'd thank you, Lord, for my fine looks,
but I just thank you, Father, for making me 'me'.

For you gave me a heart
and you gave me a smile.
You gave me Jesus and you made me your child.
And I just thank you, Father, for making me 'me'.

If I were a wriggly worm,
I'd thank you, Lord, that I could squirm.
And if I were a billy goat,
I'd thank you, Lord, for my strong throat.
And if I were a fuzzy wuzzy bear,
I'd thank you, Lord, for my fuzzy wuzzy hair,
but I just thank you, Father, for making me 'me'.

For you gave me a heart
and you gave me a smile.
You gave me Jesus and you made me your child.
And I just thank you, Father, for making me 'me'.

BIBLE READINGS

Proverbs 8:22–31

22 “The Lord created me at the beginning[a] of his work, the first of his acts of long ago. 23 Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. 24 When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. 25 Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth, 26 when he had not yet made earth and fields or the world’s first bits of soil. 27 When he established the heavens, I was there; when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, 28 when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, 29 when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, 30 then I was beside him, like a master worker, and I was daily his delight, playing before him always, 31 playing in his inhabited world and delighting in the human race.

Psalms 148

1 Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights! 2 Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host! 3 Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars! 4 Praise him, you highest heavens and you waters above the heavens! 5 Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created. 6 He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed. 7 Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps, 8 fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command! 9 Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars! 10 Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds! 11 Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth! 12 Young men and women alike, old and young together! 13 Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven. 14 He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to him. Praise the Lord!

John 6:41–51

41 Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” 42 They were saying, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven’?” 43 Jesus answered them, “Do not complain among yourselves. 44 No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me, and I will raise that person up on the last day. 45 It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. 46 Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. 47 Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has

eternal life. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever, and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

REFLECTION

Today is the last Sunday in the Season of Creation. Over the past few weeks we have been thinking about God’s creation—asking who God is, where God is in creation, and what God is doing. We celebrated Ocean Sunday, Flora and Fauna Sunday, and Storm Sunday, and today we bring all of that together—and even more—as we celebrate Cosmos Sunday.

I grew up in Korea, in the northern hemisphere. When I first came to Australia and looked up at the night sky, I saw the Southern Cross and the Milky Way stretched across the dark sky like a white river. I thought, “Wow... this is huge. And I don’t know any of these stars!” I felt a little lost—but in a good way. It was as if God was whispering, “My creation is bigger and more amazing than you can imagine.” Have you ever looked up at a sky full of stars and felt that sense of wonder? What did it make you think about God?

First Nations people in this land have beautiful stories about creation. They talk about the “songlines”—how the land and the sky were sung into life. Songlines are more than just songs. They are like a living map of the land. Through the words and melodies of these ancient songs, First Nations people remember where rivers flow and where mountains rise. They know where to find water and food. But they are also spiritual stories: they tell how the Creator-beings travelled across the land at the very beginning, singing the world into existence. For thousands of years these songs have carried the memory of creation and have kept people connected to Country—to land, sky, and all living things. Can you imagine a song that tells you where rivers flow or where mountains rise? What would that song look or sound like?

Isn’t that a wonderful picture? The Bible tells a similar story. In Proverbs 8 we hear God’s wisdom say, “I was there when God made the earth. I danced and rejoiced as the world was formed.” Creation did not begin as a cold machine. It began with God’s joy—God’s dance. Psalm 148 invites the whole universe to sing: “Praise the Lord, sun and moon, shining stars, mountains and trees, old and young together!” When we worship today, we are not starting the song. We are joining a choir that began long before we arrived. The stars, the waves, the wind—they are already singing. When we say “Hallelujah,” the waves at the beach are saying it too. Maybe the sound of the surf—the great roar we hear—maybe that is their “Hallelujah!” When you hear the waves, the wind, or see the stars, do you feel them joining in

praise? How might creation be singing around you right now? I sometimes joke: “Those waves are always off key. But God never complains about their singing!” And it’s the same for us. God is not waiting for perfect pitch or fancy music. God loves it when we sing from the heart, even if the notes wobble. Because we are singing with the whole creation. One of today’s lectionary readings is from Colossians, but we didn’t read it this morning. Still, Paul says there that everything—stars, planets, oceans, forests, even galaxies we’ve never seen—was created through Christ and for Christ. And through the cross, Jesus brings all things back together and makes peace. That’s a big gospel! It’s not only about saving our souls; it’s about healing the whole universe. And if God’s plan is to bring all creation into peace, then that includes our relationships with one another. Here in Australia, that means we cannot speak about creation without also listening to the voices of First Nations peoples—the traditional custodians of this land. For tens of thousands of years they have sung the land and the sky into memory, caring for country as a sacred trust. But we also know the pain: land was taken, families were hurt, cultures were silenced. If we want to join God’s song of creation, we must also join God’s work of justice and reconciliation. That means listening, learning, and walking with First Nations communities in respect and humility. It means we confess that God’s creation is not truly healed until people and land are healed together. The good news of Christ is not only cosmic; it is also deeply local—right here, on this soil.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus calls himself the Bread of Life: “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever.” This bread is not only food for our stomach. It is the gift of God’s own life. Think about the bread and wine we will soon share in communion. They come from the earth—from wheat that grew in sunlight and rain, from grapes that soaked up soil and wind. The life of the universe—the energy of stars and seasons—is hidden in that bread and wine. God takes the life of creation and gives it back to us as a sign of eternal life. When you hold the bread in your hand today, you are holding more than flour and water. You are holding the mystery of the cosmos. Heaven and earth meet here. The eternal God gives himself to you in something as small as a piece of bread. And when Jesus says, “Take, eat—this is my body,” we are tasting God’s love and the life of the whole creation. When you hold the bread in your hand, what do you imagine it contains from the life of the universe? Some of us may not be able to eat ordinary bread for one reason or another—but that’s okay. Because the true Bread of Life is not made of wheat alone. It is Jesus himself. Nothing can keep us from his love. When we receive him, we receive his life, his presence, and his love—a love so big, it fills the whole universe. So when you come for communion today, remember: while you eat the bread, the waves on the Australian coast are still singing. The Southern Cross is shining high above. God’s creation is praising. And we are part of that great choir. And as we join that song, we also commit ourselves to the work of reconciliation and justice, so that the praise of creation is not only beautiful in the sky but also real and just here on earth. Tonight, when you go outside, look up at the stars again. Maybe a

little breeze will touch your face. It might be creation whispering: “We are praising God—come and sing with us.” What do you notice when you pause and listen to the world around you? What is God inviting you to join in today?

Sisters and brothers in Christ, that is our invitation. God calls us to join the dance of the cosmos. Through Jesus, the Bread of Life, we are fed with God’s own life, so we can live in harmony with all creation and with all people. Let’s join that song today. Amen.

HYMN: 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.

OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

God of all creation,
we thank you for the stars, the earth, and all living things.
We offer our gifts, our time, and our hearts to you.
Use them to care for your creation
and bring love and justice to the world.
Through Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENT

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

Gracious God, we lift up our prayers to you with humble hearts.
We pray for the earth you have made—
the forests, rivers, oceans, skies, and all living creatures.
Protect them from harm, heal the damage we have done,
and help us care for your creation with love and responsibility.

We pray for the leaders of nations, that they may make wise and just decisions,
caring for the climate, the oceans, and the land
so that all people and creatures may thrive.

We pray for communities affected by disaster, poverty, or conflict,
for those whose homes have been flooded, whose crops have failed,
and for all who struggle to find safety, food, and hope.

We pray for your Church,
that we may be instruments of your peace and justice,
working to restore your creation and to heal the wounds of the world.

We remember now in silence those among us who are sick,
those who are suffering, those who feel lonely in our community.
(Silence)

Loving God, hold them in your care, bring comfort to those in pain,
healing to those who are suffering, companionship to those who are alone,
and your peace to all who feel weary.
May we, as a church, be a source of your love,
and may our words and actions bring hope, care, and encouragement to them.

And we pray for ourselves,

that we may join your song of creation in our daily lives,
living with wonder, gratitude, and courage,
so that our actions reflect your love and care for all things.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE LORD'S 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 Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

INVITATION

Come, all you who thirst,
all you who hunger for the bread of life,
all you whose souls cry out for healing;
Come, come to the feast of life.

The Table of Jesus is our place of gathering;
here we are welcomed, wanted, loved,
here there is a place set for us;
Let us come to the feast of life.

COMMUNION HYMN: You are holy TiS 753

You are holy, you are whole.
You are always ever more than we ever understand.
You are always at hand.
Blessed are you coming near;
blessed are you coming here
to your church in wine and bread,
raised from soil, raised from dead.

You are holy, you are wholeness,
you are present, let the cosmos praise you, Lord!

Hallelujah, hallelujah,
hallelujah, hallelujah, our Lord!

You are holy, you are whole.
You are always ever more than we ever understand.
You are always at hand.
Blessed are you coming near;
blessed are you coming here
to your church in wine and bread,
raised from soil, raised from dead.

You are holy, you are wholeness,
you are present, let the cosmos praise you, Lord!
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
hallelujah, hallelujah, our Lord!

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Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.
And also be with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

God our Creator, source of everything in the universe,
we bring before you this day, bread and wine
and with it we bring before you the whole cosmos to say:
Thank you, Creator God, thank you!

Thank you for joining the web of creation
for living and dying among us to redeem us and all creation:
Thank you, Redeemer God, thank you!

Thank you for rising to life permeating the cosmos with your Spirit
to sustain and heal all things:
Thank you, Spirit God, thank you!

Therefore with voices of thanks echoing through the cosmos
from the first day of creation until this very moment in time,
we praise and thank you saying:

***Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.***

Holy and gracious God, we give you thanks and praise
that in the fullness of time you gave your only Son to share our human nature
and to be tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin;
to set his face resolutely towards Jerusalem
and to be lifted high upon the cross, that he might draw all creation to himself.

We remember, on the night of his betrayal, that Jesus took bread,
giving thanks, and broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
'Take, eat. This is my body given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me'.

In the same way, after supper, he also took the cup and said:
Drink from this all of you.
This is my blood shed for you and for the whole world
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this in remembrance of me."
With this bread and this cup we do as our Saviour commands:
we celebrate the redemption he has won for us.

***Dying, you destroyed our death.
Rising, you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory.***

In obedience to his command, we recall his suffering and death,
his resurrection and ascension, and we look for his coming in glory.
Send your Holy Spirit that these gifts of bread and wine
may be for us the body and blood of Christ.

In union with Christ's offering for us,
we offer ourselves as a holy and living sacrifice.
Unite us in love and peace with your people
until, with the whole company of heaven,
we are brought into the presence of your eternal glory,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, with him, and in him,

***in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours,
almighty Father, now and for ever. Amen.***

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

LAMB OF GOD

Jesus, Lamb of God,
Have mercy on us.
Jesus, bearer of our sins,
Have mercy on us.
Jesus, redeemer of the world,
Grant us peace.

The Communion

Come, for all things are now ready.
Come to the table and share with all in need:
the gift of healing for those in pain,
the gift of forgiveness for those in sin,
the gift of assurance for those in doubt,
and the gift of hope for those in tears.

***May we who share these gifts
share Christ with one another
and all our kin in the cosmos.***

Prayer after Communion

***We thank you, Christ,
for the meal we have celebrated with you,
and we pray that through your body and blood
we may be healed and become agents of healing for Earth. Amen.***

The Sending Forth of the People of God
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HYMN: We are marching TiS 666, P&W 734

We are marching in the light of God,
we are marching in the light of God.
We are marching in the light of God,
we are marching in the light of God.

We are marching, marching
We are marching, Oh---
We are marching in the light of God
We are marching, marching
We are marching, Oh---
We are marching in the light of God.

We are living in the light of God
We are living in the light of God
We are living in the light of God
We are living in the light of God

We are living, living
We are living, Oh---
We are living in the light of God
We are living, living
We are living, Oh---
We are living in the light of God.

We are living in the love of God
We are living in the love of God
We are living in the love of God
We are living in the love of God

We are living, living
We are living, Oh---
We are living in the love of God
We are living, living
We are living, Oh---
We are living in the love of God.

We are moving in the power of God
We are moving in the power of God
We are moving in the power of God
We are moving in the power of God

We are moving, moving
We are moving, Oh---
We are moving in the power of God
We are moving, moving
We are moving, Oh---
We are moving in the power of God.

BLESSING

As you leave this place,
look to the heavens and remember God's presence everywhere.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
who holds all things together in love,
be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

SENDING SONG: May God's blessing (Benediction)

May God's blessing surround you each day,
as you trust Him and walk in His way.
May His presence within
guard and keep you from sin,
go in peace, go in joy, go in love.