

**KOGARAH UNITING CHURCH
OCTOBER 5TH 2025**

The Gathering of the People of God

WELCOME & GREETING

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

Today, as we come to worship, we bring our memories—good and bad.

We bring our life experiences. We bring ourselves.

Let us be gracious, loving, and merciful with one another, as God is with us—especially as we consider some of life's more difficult moments.

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

God is here

God is always here

God is with us

God is always with us

SING: Morning Has Broken TIS 156

**Morning has broken like the first morning;
blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing,
praise for the morning,
praise for them, springing
fresh from the word.**

**Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven,
like the first dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness
of the wet garden,
sprung from completeness
where his feet pass.**

**Mine is the sunlight; mine is the morning
born of the one light Eden saw play.
Praise with elation,
praise every morning,
God's recreation of the new day.**

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OPENING PRAYER

We are not possible without you, God.

We are the products of those who came before.

We influence those who come after.

You bind the generations to one another.

We offer the treasures we find in you to one another.

Passing them down through the ages.

Hear us as we worship you. Amen.

SING: Now the green blade rises TIS 382

**Now the green blade rises
from the buried grain,
wheat that in the dark earth
many days has lain:
love lives again,
that with the dead has been:
Love has come again,
like wheat that springs up green.**

**In the grave they laid him,
Love whom hate had slain,
thinking that he never
would awake again,
laid in the earth,
like grain that sleeps unseen.
Love has come again,
like wheat that springs up green.**

**Up he sprang at Easter,
like the risen grain,
he who for the three days
in the grave had lain,
raised from the dead
my living Lord is seen:
Love has come again,
like wheat that springs up green.**

**When our hearts are wintry,
grieving, or in pain,
then your touch can call us
back to life again –
fields of our hearts
that dead and bare have been:
Love has come again,
like wheat that springs up green.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, we come before you as bearers of a faith for which we are not always known.

Sometimes we shrink from the gift entrusted to us, as if it is the least part of ourselves, as if passing trivialities matter more, as if faith has no real weight in the scheme of things.

Forgive us our unfaithfulness.

Forgive us for our turning from your gifts.

Call us back to life in you, today and every day. Amen.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

God is merciful and forgiving. Through the revelation of Jesus Christ, we are assured that God sees us from far and greets us with tender mercy when we return to God. Therefore, let us be at peace with ourselves, with God, and with each other.

Amen.

PEACE:

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

CHOIR: Standing on the Promises

The Service of the Word

BIBLE READING: Psalm 148

¹Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!

²Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!

³Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!

⁴Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created.

⁶He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

⁷Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps,

⁸fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!

⁹Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!

¹⁰Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!

¹¹Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!

¹²Young men and women alike, old and young together!

¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.

¹⁴He 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!

SING: The heavens are telling the glory of God / Canticle of the Sun AOV1-003

**The heavens are telling the glory of God,
and all creation is shouting for joy.
Come, dance in the forest,
come, play in the field,
and sing, sing to the glory of the Lord.
Sing to the sun, the bringer of day,
he carries the light of the Lord in his rays;
the moon and the stars who light up the way
unto your throne.**

**The heavens are telling the glory of God,
and all creation is shouting for joy.
Come, dance in the forest,**

come, play in the field,
and sing, sing to the glory of the Lord.
Praise to the wind that blows through the trees,
the seas mighty storms, the gentlest breeze;
they blow where they will, they blow where they please
to please the Lord.

The heavens are telling the glory of God,
and all creation is shouting for joy.
Come, dance in the forest,
come, play in the field,
and sing, sing to the glory of the Lord.
Praise to the rain that waters our fields,
and blesses our crops so all the earth yields;
from death unto life her myst'ry revealed
springs forth in joy.

The heavens are telling the glory of God,
and all creation is shouting for joy.
Come, dance in the forest,
come, play in the field,
and sing, sing to the glory of the Lord.
Praise to the fire who gives us his light,
the warmth of the sun to brighten our night;
he dances with joy, his spirit so bright,
he sings of you.

The heavens are telling the glory of God,
and all creation is shouting for joy.
Come, dance in the forest,
come, play in the field,
and sing, sing to the glory of the Lord.
Sing to the earth who makes life to grow,
the creatures you made to let your life show;
the flowers and trees that help us to know
the heart of love.

The heavens are telling the glory of God,
and all creation is shouting for joy.
Come, dance in the forest,
come, play in the field,
and sing, sing to the glory of the Lord.
Praise to our death that makes our life real,
the knowledge of loss that helps us to feel;
the gift of yourself, your presence revealed
to lead us home.

**The heavens are telling the glory of God,
and all creation is shouting for joy.
Come, dance in the forest,
come, play in the field,
and sing, sing to the glory of the Lord.
Sing, sing to the glory of the Lord.**

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BIBLE READINGS:

Matthew 11:25-30

²⁵At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; ²⁶yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. ²⁸"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Luke 17:5-10

⁵The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" ⁶The Lord replied, "If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you. ⁷"Who among you would say to your slave who has just come in from plowing or tending sheep in the field, 'Come here at once and take your place at the table'? ⁸Would you not rather say to him, 'Prepare supper for me, put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink; later you may eat and drink'? ⁹Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded? ¹⁰So you also, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, say, 'We are worthless slaves; we have done only what we ought to have done!'"

REFLECTION –Deok Hee

Today is the last Sunday of the Season of Creation, and also the Feast of St Francis of Assisi. During this season we have celebrated Ocean, Flora and Fauna, Storm, and Cosmos. Each week reminded us that all creation belongs to God, that every part of this world is connected and filled with God's presence. St Francis lived about 800 years ago in Italy. He was not a priest or bishop — he was just an ordinary man who gave up wealth and comfort to follow Jesus in a very simple way. He loved the poor, he cared for the sick, and he believed that all creation — the sun, the moon, the animals, the earth — were his brothers and sisters because they all came from God. For Francis, creation was not just beautiful — it was a reminder of God's love and care. Even though he was often poor and sick, he lived with deep joy and trust in God. That is why people around the world remember him as a saint who showed that even a simple life of faith can bring great hope. But of course, our human life is not without fear. We know what fear feels like — fear of the future, fear of failure, fear of being alone. I read an article about the strongest human fears. The list included: losing freedom, the unknown, pain, disappointment, misery, loneliness, ridicule, rejection, death, and failure. Many of these are connected: death and the unknown, rejection and ridicule, failure and loneliness. These are not fears of snakes or spiders. They are fears deep inside the heart. Another list showed what Australians fear most. It included: snakes, public speaking, heights, small spaces, spiders, magpies, mice, cockroaches, dogs, thunder, going to the doctor, the cost of living, and the dark. Some of these are funny. Some are serious. I was surprised to see "dogs" on the list! But I understood about magpies. When I first came to Australia, people warned me about magpies before anything else. The truth is: we all have fears, don't we?

In life we fear failure, rejection, war, disasters, pollution, and more. In the church we fear the painful past, the unknown future, and the risk of walking a new path. This idea of fear in the church reminded me of my own experience last week at the retreat in Galong. Ministers and pastors from four Presbyteries gathered, and we talked about our future together. There were many fears and worries — but also surprising signs of faith and hope. At this retreat, around 50–60 ministers and pastors from Georges River, Illawarra, Canberra, and Riverina Presbyteries came together. Our Uniting Church President Reverend Charissa Suli was the main speaker. We reflected on our past, our present, and our future, especially after the Synod's decision that these four Presbyteries will join together as one: the Southern Presbytery. There were many fears and worries — about declining numbers, about finances, about our ageing congregations, about the uncertainty of what lies ahead. But there were also surprising signs of faith and hope. Some ministers and pastors shared about church planting projects they are working on as a team. They are already meeting people in their local communities, planting gospel seeds, praying, and

reaching out with care and compassion. As I listened to their stories over meals and tea times, I felt my heart beating with new excitement and joy. While many of us worry and ask, “Can we really do this?” or “What will happen to our churches?”, somewhere out there God is already at work — through small seeds of faith being planted in people’s lives. And that made me think about our own church here at Kogarah Uniting Church. For the past 35 years, through the ministry of the Kogarah Storehouse, we have been planting seeds of love and care — sharing food with those in need, helping people settle and find their place in Australia, and walking alongside them with compassion and hope. Through these simple acts of service, seeds of God’s kingdom have been quietly growing in our community. And more recently, over the past two years, our Sunday Table Tennis gatherings have become another way of planting gospel seeds. We started simply by opening our doors, welcoming people — many from Chinese backgrounds — to play, laugh, and build friendships. Over time, trust began to grow. And now, some of those same friends who once came only to play are meeting every Tuesday for Bible study, many of them hearing the story of Jesus for the very first time in their lives. I can never forget one of the moments from those gatherings. During a study, one of them looked at me and said, “Deok Hee, teach me how to pray.” Those simple words touched me deeply — the very same words that Jesus’ own disciples once said to him. And in that moment, I felt again that God is already at work among us, growing faith where there was once no faith, bringing light where there was once only uncertainty. It reminded me that God does not ask us to be fearless or to have a big faith. God asks us only to bring what we have — even if it is as small as a mustard seed. And God can grow that seed into something larger than we could ever imagine. That is exactly how faith works. Fear tells us, “You are too small.” But faith says, “God can use even your smallness.” Fear says, “You don’t have enough.” But faith says, “Bring the little you have — and God will multiply it.” Fear says, “The future is uncertain.” But faith says, “The future belongs to God.”

The disciples also felt fear. They also felt weak. In today’s gospel reading they cried out: “Lord, increase our faith!” They wanted enough faith to follow Jesus, to obey him, to overcome fear. They wanted Jesus to remove their doubts. But Jesus gave a surprising answer. He said: “If you had faith as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this tree, ‘Be planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.” What does Jesus mean? Jesus did not give them “more” faith like magic. Instead, he showed them that faith does not need to be big. Even a tiny seed of faith is enough — if we use it. The real question is not “How much faith do I have?” but “Do I have faith at all?” When we look only at ourselves, we think: “I can’t do it. I’m not strong enough. I don’t have enough money, wisdom, or love.” And that is true. On our own, we are not able. But faith is not about trusting ourselves. Faith is trusting God. Faith says, “I am not alone. God is with me.” And when we trust him, even a little, God’s power works through us. So, what do we do? Jesus does not say, “Have more faith.” He

says, "Use the faith you already have." Faith is not only about feelings. It is about action, commitment, and persistence. Even a small step in faith matters. As the old proverb says: "The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step." Take the step. Pray. Believe his promises. Even if your faith feels small, God is big.

As we come to the end of today's message, I want to conclude with St Francis. He knew poverty and weakness. He had no power, no wealth, no security. But he had mustard-seed faith. He trusted God with simplicity, and that faith grew into a movement that touched the whole world. Like Francis, we are called to live with trust, to see creation as God's gift, and to remember that small acts of faith — small seeds — can bring forth life, beauty, and hope. So today, at the end of the Season of Creation, and on the Feast of St Francis, let us remember: We are part of God's beautiful creation. We are small, but not insignificant. Our faith may feel tiny, but God can use it to transform fear into hope. May we leave this place not controlled by fear, but walking with the trust of Francis, with mustard-seed faith, and with hope in God's future. Amen.

SING: Make me a channel of your peace TIS 607

**Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred let me bring your love;
where there is injury, your pardon, Lord;
and where there's doubt, true faith in you.**

**O Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.**

**Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;
where there is darkness, let me bring your light;
and where there's sadness, ever joy.**

**O Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.**

**Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving of ourselves that we receive,
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.**

OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

God has given us good gifts: the gift of life, the gift of love, the gift of mercy, the gift of this good Earth, our home.

The gift of teachers, the gift of presence, the gift of people to love, the gift of a call to serve and the gift of hope for the future of God's world.

God has given us good gifts. Let us return for God's use a portion of what God has given us, to further God's purposes in this world.

Dedication of Offering

Holy One, may our hearts be attentive to your voice.

Open our eyes to the needs of the world.

Strengthen in us the mission and spirit of this faith community.

Accept and use this offering towards furthering the reality of your realm on Earth through Jesus the Christ. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Including 2 song presentation from singing group.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

God of steadfast love, our faith was born in ancient prisons, kindled from ashes, sustained amidst mourning and passed to us to light our paths.

We recall with tears and joy the ones in whom our faith first lived.

We name them now in our hearts.

Pause for silent remembrance, or invite the congregation to offer names out loud.

This is their testimony: that your love is unceasing, your mercies are new every morning, and you are the portion for those who wait for you.

We recall their testimony with tears and joy.

Pause for silent remembrance.

God of steadfast love, write our lives as living love letters to those who will come after us, just as our mothers and fathers in the faith passed love letters of their lives to us.

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: Everyday Loving Seasons 5-16

**This welcome here is simply free.
It's for the world, for you and me.
We bring our smiles and cares,
our heart's own prayers
and the stories of our days,
to worship God in many ways.
And together we're...**

**Ev'ryday loving!
Ev'ryday loving!
We're just ev'ryday loving!
The way that God loves us!**

**God's love is deep. God's love is wide.
It's all around, and here inside.
So when we lend a hand or take a stand,
it's love we're sending round.
In ev'ry day, that's where it's found.
And together we're...**

**Ev'ryday loving!
Ev'ryday loving!
We're just ev'ryday loving!**

The way that God loves us!

**Then can we dare to use our eyes,
and tune our ears to others' cries?
To hear the silent words of those unheard,
and sing with them their song.
We know that God will lead us on.
And together we're...**

**Ev'ryday loving!
Ev'ryday loving!
We're just ev'ryday loving!
The way that God loves us!**

**O God of Earth, you hear us call.
Shower your love upon us all.
And like a mustard seed, the faith we need
will blossom as we grow.
Give us your faith, to live and show,
that what you're giving is...**

**Ev'ryday loving!
Ev'ryday loving!
We're just ev'ryday loving!
The way that God loves us!**

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BLESSING:

Go forth in the promise of God's steadfast love.

We go forth in the promise of God's new mercies.

Go forth as bearers of faith, ancient and new.

We go forth with the kindled faith of our forebears.

May your paths shine with light and love.

Amen.

SENDING SONG: Faith, hope and love ATO 376

Faith, hope and love –
this is what we long for.
Faith, hope and love –
this is what we need.
Faith, hope and love –
this is what we cry for.
Oh, teach us how to live.

Trust in the Truth –
this is what we long for.
Trust in the Truth –
this is what we need.
Trust in the Truth –
this is what we cry for.
Oh, teach us how to live.

Patience within –
this is what we long for.
Patience within –
this is what we need.
Patience within –
this is what we cry for.
Oh, teach us how to live.

Freedom for all –
this is what we long for.
Freedom for all –
this is what we need.
Freedom for all –
this is what we cry for.
Oh, teach us how to live.

Faith, hope and love –
this is what we long for.
Faith, hope and love –
this is what we need.
Faith, hope and love –
this is what we cry for.
Oh, teach us how to live.