

**KOGARAH UNITING CHURCH**  
**23 November 2025**  
**Christ the King/Reign of Christ**

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:**

As we gather, we acknowledge that we meet on the lands of the Bidjegal people of the Eora nation, the traditional owners who have tended and cared for this land since time immemorial. We pay our respects to elders past and present and commit to walking together seeking truth, justice, treaty and reconciliation.

**KUC VISION STATEMENTS**

***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**

God has called all of us here beloved.

***We are given new names of hope and promise.***

Even though storms and trials have assailed us,

***God has drawn us through to the time of salvation.***

Thanks be to God for God's victory in Jesus Christ!

***May Jesus reign in our hearts all of our days. AMEN.***

**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 this morning with grateful hearts.  
On this Christ the King Sunday, we remember that Jesus is our true King—  
the One who leads us with love, who rules with mercy,  
and who brings peace into our troubled world.  
As we gather to worship, calm our minds,  
open our hearts, and fill us with your Spirit so that we may see your truth,  
hear your voice, and follow your ways.  
Reign in our lives today, O Christ.  
Guide us, renew us,  
and make us instruments of your hope and justice in this world.  
We offer this time of worship to you.  
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

**HYMN:** All hail the power of Jesus' name TiS 224 (ii)

All hail the power of Jesus' name;  
let angels prostrate fall;  
bring forth the royal diadem  
to crown him Lord of all.

Crown him, you martyrs of our God,  
who from his altar call;  
praise him whose way of pain you trod,  
to crown him Lord of all.

As heirs of Israel's chosen race  
and ransomed from the fall,  
hail him who saves you by his grace,  
to crown him Lord of all.

Sinners, whose love cannot forget  
the wormwood and the gall,  
go spread your treasures at his feet  
to crown him Lord of all.

Let every tribe and every tongue  
responsive to his call,  
now shout in universal song  
to crown him Lord of all.

PD; Edward Perronet

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## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Compassionate God,  
we confess that we do not always live in the ways of your kin-dom.  
When we strive for power rather than lifting the weak,  
Lord have mercy  
***Lord have mercy***

When we long for wealth and security rather than sharing what we have with the  
poor,  
Christ have mercy  
***Christ have mercy***

When we put our concerns and opinions before the needs of our community  
rather than listening, attending, and noticing,  
Lord have mercy  
***Lord have mercy***

## **DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world,  
but that the world might be saved through him.  
Those who believe in him are not condemned.  
Hear then Christ's word of grace to us:  
'Your sins are forgiven.'  
***Thanks be to God.***

## **PEACE**

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

**HYMN:** Shine, Jesus, shine TiS 675

Lord, the light of your love is shining,  
in the midst of the darkness, shining;  
Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us,  
set us free by the truth you now bring us –  
shine on me, shine on me.

*(Refrain)*  
***Shine, Jesus, shine,***

*fill this land with the Father's glory;  
blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.  
Flow, river, flow,  
flood the nations with grace and mercy;  
send forth your word, Lord,  
and let there be light.*

Lord, I come to your awesome presence,  
from the shadows into your radiance;  
by your blood I may enter your brightness:  
search me, try me, consume all my darkness –  
shine on me, shine on me.  
(Refrain)

As we gaze on your kingly brightness  
so our faces display your likeness,  
ever changing from glory to glory:  
mirrored here may our lives tell your story –  
shine on me, shine on me.  
(Refrain)

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## The Service of the Word

**BIBLE READINGS**     Jeremiah 23:1–6, Luke 23:33–43

### **Jeremiah 23:1–6**

1 Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the Lord. 2 Therefore thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the Lord. 3 Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. 4 I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall no longer fear or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the Lord. 5 The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 6 In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: “The Lord is our righteousness.”

### **Luke 23:33–43**

33 When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. 34 Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots to divide his clothing. 35 And the people stood by watching, but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!" 36 The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine 37 and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" 38 There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews." 39 One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" 40 But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? 41 And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." 42 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom." 43 He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

## REFLECTION

Today is a very special day in the church calendar. It's called Reign of Christ Sunday. Next Sunday we begin Advent, and today is actually the last Sunday of the church year. I can't believe it—time really flies! We began last year's Advent waiting for the birth of Christ. Then we celebrated his birth at Christmas. At Easter we celebrated his resurrection. At Pentecost we celebrated the coming of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the church. And now we're standing at the end of that journey, ready to begin the whole cycle again. And today, we celebrate Reign of Christ Sunday. It's the day we remember and proclaim that Jesus Christ is our King. But before we talk about Jesus as our King, I want us to think for a moment about what comes to mind when we hear the word "king" in our world today. You know, living in Australia, we still technically have a king—King Charles. And when Queen Elizabeth died and King Charles officially became king, I watched some of it on TV. And wow... everything was shiny. The golden carriage, the uniforms, the choirs, the huge crowns full of diamonds. Even the chair he sat on probably costs more than my car! The whole thing looked so big, so powerful, so royal. And as I watched that ceremony, I found myself thinking, "So this is what a king looks like in our world." But immediately after that, I thought, "And our King—Jesus—had none of this." He had no golden carriage, no palace, no soldiers guarding him, no crown filled with diamonds. He didn't even have a comfortable chair to sit on—he had a wooden cross to hang on. Our King came to us in the most surprising and humble way.

In our gospel reading today, Jesus is not sitting on a throne. He is hanging on a cross between two criminals. No crowds cheering for him. No royal robe. Instead, people are laughing at him, insulting him, saying, "If you are the King, save yourself!" One of the criminals next to him joins in and mocks him. But the other man sees something

different. This man sees a King. And he says, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” It is such a strange moment—one dying man talking to another dying man about a kingdom. But somehow, he knew. He knew that Jesus’ kingdom is not like the kingdoms of this world. And Jesus looks at him and says, “Today you will be with me in paradise.” What a King—one who doesn’t save himself, but saves others. And our Old Testament reading from Jeremiah gives us another picture of a King. You know, in Jeremiah’s time, leadership had completely fallen apart. There were corrupt kings, leaders who didn’t care about the weak, shepherds who scattered the flock. These are the people who caused the nation to fall apart. But even in the middle of all this, Jeremiah speaks of hope. He talks about a future King who will be righteous and just, who will protect the weak, who will care for the people instead of using them. A King who brings peace, not fear. Healing, not harm. Christians have always believed that Jeremiah is describing Jesus—a completely different kind of King compared to the leaders of his time. So today, as we celebrate the reign of Christ, I want to explore what the kingship of Jesus really means, especially for the world we are living in right now. Not just in a spiritual sense, not just in a religious sense, but in a real, practical way—in the world you see on the news and the world you experience every day.

So what does Christ’s reign mean for us today? I think first, Christ’s reign gives us a completely different way of living in a world that is obsessed with competition. Everywhere we go, there is pressure to succeed, pressure to win, pressure to be first. Schools are competitive, jobs are competitive, visas are competitive, housing is competitive. Even nations are competing—AI technology, military power, economic influence—everyone is trying to be number one. And the message we hear from the world is, “Be strong, be successful, get ahead, be the best.” But Jesus shows us a very different way. In his kingdom, greatness is measured not by how many people serve you, but by how many people you serve. In his kingdom, the last shall be first, the humble are lifted up, and the peacemakers are called blessed. When we choose kindness instead of competition, forgiveness instead of revenge, humility instead of pride, we are living under the reign of Christ. His kingdom is upside down compared to the world around us. Second, Christ’s reign gives us hope in a world that often feels hopeless. You don’t have to look far to feel that heaviness. Wars continue in the Middle East, in Ukraine, and in many other places. Millions of refugees have lost their homes. Families are broken by violence. Here in Australia, we see a growing cost-of-living crisis. People sleeping on the streets. And since COVID, we’ve seen even more people losing their homes and ending up with nowhere to go, with many more sleeping outside than before. Young people and international students struggling with loneliness and mental health. Elderly neighbours who haven’t had a real conversation with someone for weeks. Sometimes when we look at the news, it feels like darkness is winning. But Reign of Christ Sunday reminds us that the darkness does not win. Christ is King, even when the world feels chaotic. Jesus is the King who brings hope to the hopeless, healing to the broken, and justice to those

who are pushed aside. His kingdom is breaking into our world—not always loudly, not always dramatically—but quietly, faithfully, and powerfully. Every act of compassion, every moment of peace, every decision to forgive becomes a sign that Christ’s reign is alive in the world. And finally, Christ’s reign means that we are called to live differently in the middle of this world’s pain. Jesus doesn’t just rule from afar; he sends us into the world to reflect his kingdom. And he sends us to very real people—people who need hope, neighbours who feel alone, newcomers who are lost in a new culture, families facing financial stress, teenagers wondering if anyone cares, older people whose days feel long and empty, friends who have made mistakes and don’t know where to turn. Christ calls us to carry his love into all these places. Whenever we choose love instead of anger, generosity instead of fear, justice instead of silence, we become the living evidence of Christ’s reign in this world. We show the world what kind of King Jesus is.

So today, on Reign of Christ Sunday, we remember that Jesus is King—but not a king like the kings of this world. He is the King who wears a crown of thorns, the King who reigns from a cross, the King who refuses to save himself so that he can save us. And his kingdom is not far away. It is here, right now, in this world, and in our lives. And my prayer today is that when people look at us, they will wonder, “Whose kingdom does this person belong to?” Just like people who belong to Korea are called Koreans, people who belong to Russia are called Russians, people who belong to Indonesia are called Indonesians, and people who belong to Australia are called Australians, those who belong to Christ are called Christians. That’s our identity. And may we be able to answer with joy and confidence, not just with words but with our lives: “I belong to the kingdom of Christ. I follow the King on the cross.” May this be more than a statement we say in church. May it be how we live in our homes, in our workplaces, in our schools, and in our neighbourhoods. When people see the way we love, forgive, serve, and hope, may they see Christ’s kingdom shining through us. And may we always remember that being a Christian means we belong to a King whose reign changes everything—even the small choices we make every day. Amen.

**HYMN:** The servant king TiS 256

From heaven you came helpless babe,  
entered our world your glory veiled;  
not to be served but to serve,  
and give your life that we might live.

*(Refrain)*

*This is our God, the Servant King,  
he calls us now to follow him,  
to bring our lives as a daily offering*

*of worship to the Servant King.*

There in the garden of tears,  
my heavy load he chose to bear;  
his heart with sorrow was torn,  
“Yet not my will, but yours,” he said.  
*(Refrain)*

Come see his hands and his feet,  
the scars that speak of sacrifice,  
hands that flung stars into space  
to cruel nails surrendered.  
*(Refrain)*

So let us learn how to serve  
and in our lives enthrone him;  
each other’s needs to prefer,  
for it is Christ we’re serving.  
*(Refrain)*

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## **DEDICATION OF THE CHRISTMAS BOWL**

*Before the dedication: An empty bowl is brought  
from the body of the congregation and placed in a position visible to all.*

Australian churches through the Christmas Bowl, have acted together to bring peace and hope into the world for 76 years.

***Help us continue to act for peace.***

As children of God, we will share this year’s bowl with people around the world who are uprooted by conflicts and disasters, searching for a safe place to belong.

***May their lives be filled with hope and peace.***

Gracious and ever-loving God,

Open our hearts so we may courageously act for peace in the world. Open our hands to share what we have with those who have little.

***As we dedicate this bowl, may it be filled with the fruits of hope, peace, joy and love, so that all people may know Your goodness and receive Your grace. Amen***

**VIDEO (Christmas Bowl: Zimbabwe)**

## OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

Eternal God, we offer to you these gifts and our lives.  
May Christ the King rule in our hearts and lives  
so that we are powerful witnesses  
to the truth of your kingdom of love, justice, mercy and peace.  
This we pray in Jesus' name. **Amen**

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

Let us come before God with our prayers for the world,  
for those we love and ourselves.

Let us remember the peoples of this world.  
those in positions of responsibility;  
those who suffer poverty, hunger and illness;  
Those who endure oppression, imprisonment or fear for their lives.  
Jesus, for the peace of the world, rule our hearts and wills.  
***Jesus, remember us when we come into your kingdom.***  
***Jesus, remember us when we come into your kingdom.***

Let us remember our community.  
those on the fringes, the forgotten and the marginalised;  
those without work and those whose work is not valued;  
those whom we love, our families, our friends and ourselves.  
Jesus, for the reconciliation of your people, rule our hearts and wills.  
***Jesus, remember us when we come into your kingdom.***  
***Jesus, remember us when we come into your kingdom.***

Let us remember all who are in need.  
those who are lonely, in grief or despair;  
those in sickness or pain;  
those who bring comfort, hope and care to others.  
Jesus, for the healing of your people, rule our hearts and wills.  
***Jesus, remember us when we come into your kingdom.***  
***Jesus, remember us when we come into your kingdom.***  
***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
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## **INVITATION**

Let us draw near to the holy table.  
This is the table our Lord has prepared for those who love him.  
Jesus said,  
"Come to me,  
all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens,  
and I will give you rest.  
Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me;  
for I am gentle and humble in heart,  
and you will find rest for your souls.

**COMMUNION HYMN:** Be known to us in breaking bread      TIS 514

Be known to us in breaking bread,  
but do not then depart;  
Saviour, abide with us, and spread  
your table in our heart.

There share with us in love divine;  
your body and your blood,  
that living bread, that heavenly wine,  
be our immortal food.

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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.***

It is indeed right, always and everywhere,  
to give thanks to you, the true and living God.  
Endless is your mercy and eternal is your reign.  
All creation rejoices in your radiant splendour.  
You made a covenant with your people  
and declared your purpose of justice and love.

When all things were ready, you sent your Son to be our Saviour.  
In words and deeds he proclaimed your kingdom,  
and obeyed your will even to death on the cross.

Through his mighty resurrection he overcame sin and death  
to set the whole creation free.

Therefore with saints and angels and with all the choirs of heaven,  
we join in the song of eternal praise:

***Holy, holy, holy Lord,***

***God of power and might.***

***Heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

***Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.***

***Hosanna in the highest.***

We praise you, God, that on the night in which he was betrayed  
our Lord Jesus took bread and gave thanks, 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.”

***As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup  
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.***

Therefore, gracious God,

with this bread and this cup we remember that our Lord offered his life for us.

Believing the witness of his resurrection and ascension,

we look for his coming in glory,

and our sharing in his great and promised feast.

***Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.***

Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit,  
that these gifts of bread and wine may be for us the body and blood of Christ  
and that we may live to your praise and glory with all your saints in light.

***Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.***

Join our prayers and the prayers of all your people on earth and in heaven  
with the intercessions of Christ, our great high priest,

***through whom, with whom, and in whom,***

***in the unity of the Holy Spirit,***

***all worship and honour are yours,***

***almighty God and Father and Mother,***

***for ever and 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**

#### **Prayer after Communion**

Lord Jesus Christ, our King,  
we thank you for feeding us at your table of grace.

Strengthen us now to walk in your way—  
in justice, mercy, and love.

Send us out as people who belong to your kingdom  
and who trust in your reign above all things.

In your holy name we pray. Amen.

The Sending Forth of the People of God
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**HYMN:** At the name of Jesus TiS 231

At the name of Jesus  
every knee shall bow,  
every tongue confess him  
King of Glory now:  
this the Father's pleasure  
that we call him Lord,  
who from the beginning  
was the mighty Word.

Humbled for a season  
to receive a name  
from the lips of sinners  
unto whom he came,  
faithfully he bore it  
spotless to the last,  
brought it back victorious  
when from death he passed.

In your hearts enthrone him,  
there let him make new  
all that is not holy,  
all that is not true.  
He is God the Saviour,  
he is Christ the Lord,  
ever to be worshipped,  
trusted and adored.

When this same Lord Jesus  
shall appear again  
in his Father's glory,  
there with him to reign,  
then may we adore him,  
all before him bow,  
as our hearts confess him  
King of Glory now.

PD; words: Caroline Maria Noel

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## **BLESSING**

Go in peace,  
love and care for one another in the name of Christ.

May God go with you by day,  
go with you by night,  
be with you in light,  
be with you in shadow,  
strengthen you in work,  
strengthen you in sleep,  
the great God encircle your thought and your prayer.  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

**SENDING SONG:** May God's blessing surround you each day (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.

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