



The Uniting Church in Australia

KOGARAH UNITING CHURCH

We welcome people of all cultures and lifestyles,

We create a safe place for the community

We share the journey of life and faith.

25th January 2026 @ 10am

Aboriginal Sunday - Day of Mourning

Isaiah 9:1–4; Psalm 27:1, 4–9, 1 Corinthians 1:10–18, Matthew 4:12–23

Leader Sue

Reflection Sue/John

Holy Communion Richard

(Deok Hee is on annual leave with his family in South Korea)



For details and information about our church activities and The Kogarah Storehouse, check out the websites: kogarah.uca.org.au and <https://www.kogarahstorehouse.org.au/>

For pastoral concerns, please contact Richard Goodman on 0434 127 340.

Scriptures from the Revised Common Lectionary

Third Sunday after Epiphany

Real People, Real Life Challenges

Isaiah 9:1–4; Psalm 27:1, 4–9, 1 Corinthians 1:10–18, Matthew 4:12–23



Isaiah 9:1–4

The prophet Isaiah ben Amoz encourages his audience that the day will come when their burdens are lifted, and the nation will know joy again.

Psalm 27:1, 4–9

The psalmist expresses delight in the idea of living in God's house, day in and day out, trusting in the promise of protection. In faith, they cry out for God to reassure them.

1 Corinthians 1:10–18

Paul expresses concerns that there is division in the community at Corinth, with different factions aligning with different teachers. He reminds them that they were all baptised in Jesus' name.

Matthew 4:12–23

The writer of this gospel connects Jesus' ministry with the words recorded in the passage from Isaiah 9:1–4. Jesus bases his ministry at this time in Galilee.

Theme Focus

Trusting with the psalmist in God's light, and following with the disciples who leave their nets, we are emboldened to shine with hope in our daily lives.

Word for the Day

Each day we face choices and challenges. Each choice we make brings with it consequences for us, and often for those around us. The writers of the biblical texts faced choices and challenges, too. Their words, preserved in the text, can help us to navigate life.

'One thing I ask, to live in the house of God all the days of my life' declares the psalmist. This request might suggest that in doing so, the psalmist avoids all earthly trouble. However, the following verses tell us that they are still surrounded by enemies (v. 6). Verse 9 also tells us that the psalmist doesn't feel like God is listening or protecting him at this time.

The psalmist speaks of God as a source of courage when fear presses close. In Matthew's gospel, Jesus calls fishers—real people with real responsibilities—who drop their nets and step out into a new life. Their story is not about leaving behind challenges but discovering God's presence and purpose in the midst of them.

Life as a follower of Jesus isn't all beer and skittles, as the saying goes, but the words of scripture remind us that we are not the only ones to face life's challenges.

Ideas for Reflection

- What part of Psalm 27 do you connect with today—God as light, God as shelter, or the longing to see God's face?
- What was the challenge in Jesus' call to the fishers?
- The fishers left their nets to follow Jesus. What are the 'nets' in our lives—the things we cling to—that might hold us back from following?
- Where do you see God's light shining in bleak or difficult places?
- How do we shine with God's light in our families, schools, workplaces, and community?
- We hear the call to the fishers to follow Jesus. We don't hear how their families feel (including whether losing two sons impacted the family business). We also don't hear much about how the disciples thought about the changes—only that they were obedient to the call. How do the words of the psalm help us to think about the consequences of following Jesus?

The Galilee Song

Deep within my heart, I feel
voices whispering to me.
Words that I can't understand;
meanings I must clearly hear.
Calling me to follow close,
lest I leave myself behind,
calling me to go into

evening shadows one more time.

Refrain

*So I leave my boats behind,
leave them on familiar shores.*

*Set my heart upon the deep,
follow you again, my Lord.*

In my memories, I know
how you send familiar rains
falling gently on my days;
dancing patterns on my pain.

And I need to learn once more,
in the fortress of my mind
to believe in falling rain
as I travel deserts dry.

Refrain ...

As I gaze into the night,
down the future of my years,
I'm not sure I want to go
past horizons that I know.

And I need to learn once more,
like a stirring deep within,
restless 'til I live again
beyond the fears that close me in.

Refrain ...

*So I leave my boats behind,
leave them on familiar shores.
Set my heart upon the deep,
follow you again, my Lord.*

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Why Aboriginal Sunday Matters – The experience of Warren and Jessie, members of South Croydon Anglican's reconciliation group

For Warren and Jessie, Aboriginal Sunday matters because it draws the Church into a way of learning that is spiritual, honest, and impactful. What began as a challenge from their minister has become, for Jessie, a gentle and spiritually rich rhythm. “It started as a challenge from our minister,” she says, “but I see it as a way of helping to educate our congregation in a way that is tender, kind, and spiritually deep. It is not dogmatic. It is an invitation to enter into the reality of our current situation.” Warren emphasises that truth matters - both stories and statistics. “Without the data that Common Grace provides for us to use on Aboriginal Sunday,” he says, “people wouldn’t know about some of the issues.”

Aboriginal Sunday has also taught them about the importance of deep listening.

Warren admits, “We have failed in that,” acknowledging the humility required in the work of reconciliation. Yet grace continues to lead them forward. Jessie reflects on how this journey has opened her eyes to more than historical harm: “Not only the pain, but the ongoing effects of colonisation and generational damage. Most people just see brokenness but don’t see the original image of beauty. I’m learning to appreciate the language and culture that God has given First Nations Peoples.”

This growing awareness has shaped the church's broader identity, seen each week in a simple vision printed in their bulletin: *a Christian community that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will recognise as a place where they are respected and welcome and will experience God's love.*

For Warren and Jessie, truth-telling is an act of faithfulness. "The pain of our history - that's what I've learned," Warren says, lamenting how fear following the Voice referendum has slowed momentum but remaining convinced that truth-telling is necessary for healing. Jessie adds, "Learning the ongoing impacts of colonisation has helped me appreciate the cultural treasures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples." For them, Aboriginal Sunday invites the Church to hold beauty and brokenness together and to keep walking with courage.



Explanation of the Art Work on Page 1. The artist is Zoe Korbe, a Guwa Koa, Kuku Yalanji woman with historical ties to the Wakk Wakka peoples of Cherbourg community. This artwork is inspired by Isaiah 9:2–3 NIV:

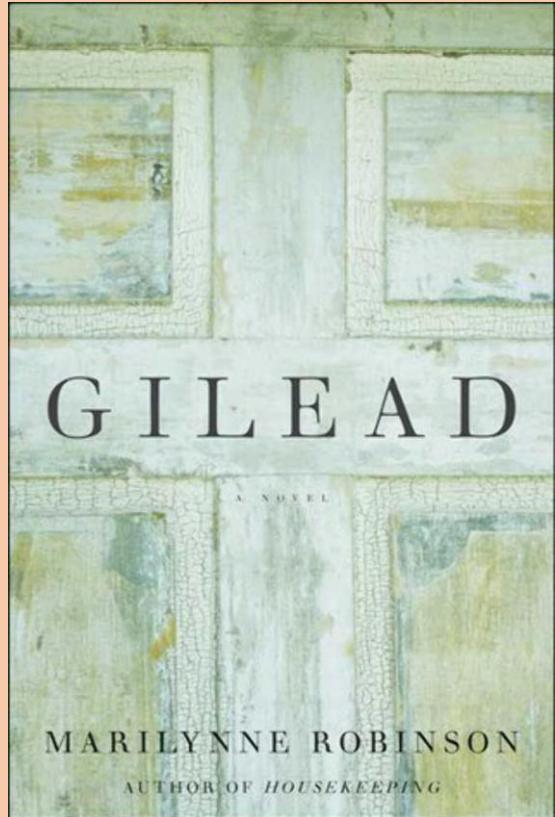
"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light... You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy." For countless generations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples lived according to cultural and spiritual laws grounded in unity, accountability, and deep interdependence with one another and with Country. The impacts of colonisation have left deep spiritual, cultural, and relational wounds; that continue to shape the land and its peoples today. These wounds are acknowledged in this artwork through the black pathway lines, which

represent shared sorrow, loss, and lament across the meeting places, and communities.

At the centre of the artwork is a gathering place holding family and community together beneath an ancestral presence. This central space reflects the reality that sorrow is not carried alone but held collectively. From this place, Songlines flow outward, connecting to other community gatherings, where people dance, teach, hunt, and celebrate their culture. Living connections remind us that healing does not happen in isolation, but moves through relationships, stories, and shared responsibility.

The growth of lighter colours and living pathways across the artwork, symbolises Christ's redeeming light. This light does not erase the darkness or deny past pain; instead, it brings restoration from within it. Just as Isaiah speaks of joy multiplying like a harvest; new life is shown emerging from places of sorrow, renewing community and strengthening connection. The figures dancing, gathering, and caring for Country, show that when culture is practiced through song, ceremony, art, and movement, life flourishes and connections can be rebuilt. In this way, culture itself is an expression of God's design for community, where people as part of creation, and spirit are held in right relationship.

This artwork invites the church to walk these pathways together: to acknowledge shared sorrow, to listen deeply, and to participate in the work of restoration. As we bless one another and nurture right relationships, we are called to plant new fields for harvest—multiplying joy, strengthening community, and allowing God's light to continue shining across Country and all its peoples.



Join us on the

6th February

@ 11:30am

At Bobbie's apartment in
St Patrick's Square

to discuss this Pulitzer
Prize winning novel by
Marilynne Robinson.
Talk to Bobbie about
how to get a copy and
directions to her
apartment.

Planning Ahead

- **Book Discussion Group at Bobbie's 11:30am The book to be discussed is Gilead by Marilynne Robinson**
- **February 19, 2026, Worship Task Group meeting @ 7pm via Zoom**

Please pray for ...

The mission and ministry of our congregation and for our Minister, Deok Hee, and Wynne Cheng as they make links to the Chinese community.

Worship leaders; helpers, leaders, followers The Kogarah Storehouse and its many clients; Lala and staff and volunteers at the Storehouse. Dorothy and Godfrey and the work of LACLA. The team, parents and children in the Early Learning Centre.

Those who are sick, sad or lonely: We pray especially today for Dennis and Robyn Lyons, Rhonda Chamberlain and family; Prema and Priya, Denis and Dolly, Ngahuia, Peter and Sue; Dinah; Ern Edwards; Jim Bird, Cindy, Dorothy and Godfrey, - For members of the Jewish community who continue to mourn. For others whom we name in our hearts.

Pray for the people of Syria, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Ukraine, Russia, Israel and Palestine, especially the people of Gaza and Lebanon. The USA and the countries of Europe. Sudan. The people of Venezuela, both there and in Australia.

Next Sunday

1st February 2026 @ 10am

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Blessed Ways

Leader Robert

Reflection Robert (Bruce Prewer)

(Deok Hee is on annual leave with his family in South Korea)

**Micah 6:1–8; Psalm 15, 1 Corinthians 1:18–31,
Matthew 5:1–12**



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