

Kogarah Uniting Church

WELCOME

LIGHT THE CANDLE / AFFIRMATIONS

God is here.....**God is always here**
God is with us.....**God is always with us**

MISSION STATEMENT:

Our vision is to be a loving and caring community, sharing God's love with the world. We are a congregation who welcome people of all cultures and lifestyles. We are creating a safe place for the community and sharing the journey of life and faith.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We listen to the breath of the earth.
May we hear the groaning of creation.

We listen to the sighing of the wind.
May we hear the songs from the skies.

We listen to the movement of the oceans and waters.
May we hear the shared waters of life in our being.

We open our ears to the wisdom
of the Land and her peoples.
May we listen, both to the silence and the speaking.

We honour and pay our respects
to those on whose Land we meet,
especially the Bidjegal people of the Eora nation.
We pause and we listen.

A silence is kept.

....

Those who have ears – Hear!

May we hear the voice of the Spirit in Creation,

Now and to the end of time. *(adapted from a prayer by Rev Dr Amelia Koh-Butler)*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Be still before God and wait patiently
for our hearts are offered safe space to wonder.
Be still before God, our harbour secure
as God's love calls us to worship.

SING – BRING FORTH THE KINGDOM – ONLINE

You are salt for the earth, O people:
salt for the kingdom of God!
Share the flavour of life, O people:
life in the kingdom of God!
Bring forth the kingdom of mercy,
bring forth the kingdom of peace;
bring forth the kingdom of justice,
bring forth the city of God.

You are a light on the hill, O people:
light for the city of God!
Shine so holy and bright, O people:
Shine in the kingdom of God!
Bring forth the kingdom of mercy,
bring forth the kingdom of peace;
bring forth the kingdom of justice,
bring forth the city of God.

You are a seed of the Word, O people:
bring forth the kingdom of God!
Seeds of mercy and seeds of justice,
grow in the kingdom of God!
Bring forth the kingdom of mercy,
bring forth the kingdom of peace;
bring forth the kingdom of justice,
bring forth the city of God.

We are a blest and a pilgrim people:
bound for the kingdom of God!
Love our journey and love our homeland:
love is the kingdom of God!
Bring forth the kingdom of mercy,
bring forth the kingdom of peace;
bring forth the kingdom of justice,
bring forth the city of God.

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OPENING PRAYER

In a moment of quiet we open ourselves to the wonder and the worth:
God beyond us and God with us.

Help us to be still

Help us to know

Help us to let go

Help us to be open

As we breathe in and out, Breath of God within us and between us

Help us to be still

Help us to know

Help us to let go

Help us to be open

And if we find ourselves weary or wounded

If we find ourselves brittle or broken then reassure us:

Your forgiveness is for us Your life is in us

We are salt. We are light. Because God wills it so.

So may healing come may light break forth and all for Love's sake.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Following Jesus is not about finding ourselves, or even seeking the meaning of life.

It is about opening our eyes to the world around us, to see the need of our neighbour,
to pick up on the unspoken cues the longing behind the smile the spark that is no longer there,
extinguished when hope took flight.

It is about recognising our kinship with the man and his dog begging on the station steps,
or the young woman sitting in the shop doorway, or the elderly veteran whose once proud
bearing is now stooped and dejected.

Following Jesus does not require us to travel far physically,
but to take huge steps in our understanding of our sisters and our brothers who make this
pilgrimage with us, to bear their burdens and lighten the load with love and grace
lived out in mercy and compassion, with steps more faltering than sure
and a hunger born of justice.

Is not this the fast that God chooses?

Help us to bring light into all the darkness of life, spreading hope for a better world,
a world where justice is made real by Your children living together
in harmony.

Help us to bring salt into the blandness of life, encouraging vitality and joy in living
in a world that dares to hope for the future that You promise
where all Your children will know themselves loved and valued
and treasured, created in Your image, bringing You glory forever.

Amen. (Liz Crumlish)

WORDS OF AFFIRMATION AND PEACE

READING FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES: Isaiah 58:1-9a

Shout out, do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their
rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins. ²Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my
ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of
their God; they ask of me righteous judgments, they delight to draw near to God.

³“Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?” Look, you
serve your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your workers. ⁴Look, you fast only to
quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make
your voice heard on high. ⁵Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow
down the head like a bulrush, and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day
acceptable to the Lord? ⁶Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo
the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? ⁷Is it not to share
your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the
naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

⁸Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your
vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. ⁹Then you shall call,
and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

SING – GOD OF FREEDOM, GOD OF JUSTICE – TIS 657, TUNE 432

God of freedom, God of justice,
God whose love is strong as death,
God who saw the dark of prison,
God who knew the price of faith:
touch our world of sad oppression
with your Spirit's healing breath.

Rid the earth of torture's terror,
God whose hands were nailed to wood;
hear the cries of pain and protest,
God who shed the tears and blood;
move in us the power of pity,
restless for the common good.

Make in us a captive conscience
quick to hear, to act, to plead;
make us truly sisters, brothers
of whatever race or creed:

teach us to be fully human,
open to each other's need.

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READING FROM THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES: Matthew 5:13-20

¹³“You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot. ¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

¹⁷“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. ¹⁸For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

REFLECTION -

SING – AS A FIRE IS MEANT FOR BURNING – RUTH DUCK

As a fire is meant for burning with a bright and burning flame,
so the church is meant for mission, giving glory to God's name.
Not to preach our creeds and customs , but to build a bridge of care,
we join hands across the nations, finding neighbours everywhere.

We are learners; we are teachers; we are pilgrims on the way.
We are seekers; we are givers; we are vessels made of clay.
By our gentle loving actions, we would show that Christ is light.
In a humble list'ning spirit , we would live to God's delight.

As a green bud in the springtime is a sign of life renewed,
so may we be signs of oneness mid earth's people's many hued.
As a rainbow lights the heavens when a storm is past and gone,
may our lives reflect the radiance of God's new and glorious dawn.

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OFFERING PRAYER:

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

In our prayer, please respond by repeating 'May we have the mind of Christ.'

We pray for ourselves and those we love:
We give thanks for times of grace and contentment and we bring to You
Times of anxiety, loneliness, ill-health and loss.

(pause)

As we navigate our daily living
'May we have the mind of Christ.'

'May we have the mind of Christ.'

We pray for our church, local and national.

We pray for neighbours of all faiths and none.
We pray for those needing welcome
needing a home
hungry, and anxious for tomorrow.

(pause)

As we play our part in community
'May we have the mind of Christ.'

'May we have the mind of Christ.'

We pray for our country, and for our leaders.
We pray for those tasked with upholding justice
and keeping peace
and those who are carers and educators

(pause)

We pray for business leaders and trade unionists
as we pray for unity and a hopeful future
'May we have the mind of Christ.'

'May we have the mind of Christ.'

We pray for our world, conscious of gross inequality
that millions toil without justice and scarce pay
for our comfort and convenience.

We cry out against the mountain of debt
which keeps countries from caring for their people.

We pray for our planet itself
exploited and abused
groaning and damaged.

(pause)

As we pray for Your kingdom of justice and wholeness
as we seek to live Your way
'May we have the mind of Christ.'

'May we have the mind of Christ.'

These and all our prayers we make in the name of Jesus
by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

COMMUNION HYMN: FEED US NOW – TIS 538

Feed us now, Bread of life,
in this holy meal;
let us know your love anew:
we hunger for you.

Feed us now, Bread of life,
come and live within;
let your peace be ours today,
Lord Jesus, we pray.

Piece of bread, cup of wine:
Lord, this food is good:
love and mercy come to us,
your promise we trust.

Piece of bread, cup of wine:
who can understand
how his mercy works in these?
Yet, Lord, we believe.

God is here, O so near,
nearer than our thoughts.
Stay with us where'er we go;
Lord, help us to grow.
God is here, O so near,
in this heaven's meal.
May we always feed on you –
on the bread that is true.

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SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Lets hear how the story of this sacrament began:

On the night on which Jesus was betrayed, he sat at supper with his followers. While they were eating, he took a piece of bread, said a blessing, broke it and gave it to them with the words, "This is my body. It is broken for you. Do this to remember me."

Later, he took a cup of wine saying, "This cup is God's new covenant, sealed with my blood. Drink from it all of you, to remember me."

So now, following Jesus' example and command we take this bread and this wine, the ordinary things of life, which God will make special.

Loving God, when we were nothing, you made us something. When we had no name, no faith and no future, you called us your children. When we lost our way, or turned away, you did not abandon us. When we came back to you, your arms opened wide in welcome. You call us to follow you, to share our faith, to share our experience of your love. You are our strength and our refuge, you help us to keep going.

You prepare a table for us – offering not just bread, not just wine, but your very self – so that we may be filled, forgiven, healed, blessed and made new again. So now, in gratitude, we join our voices to those of the Church on earth and in heaven saying:

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 remember at this time that you were not too proud to come and be one with us. For us you were born, for us you healed, preached, taught, and showed the way to your kingdom; for us you were crucified, for us, after death, you rose again.

Our hands are empty, our hearts are sometimes full of wrong things. But with you is mercy and the power to change us.

So we do in this place what you did in an upstairs room. Send down your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine, that they may become for us your body, healing, forgiving, and making us whole; and that we may become for you your body, loving and caring in the world until your kingdom is realized.

Amen

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be your name

Your kingdom come,

Your will be done on earth as in heaven.

Give us today your daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us

Save us from the time of trial

**And deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours, now and forever. Amen**

Among Friends gathered around a table, Jesus took bread, broke it and said, "This is my body, broken for you."

Jesus took the cup, and said " This is the new relationship with God made possible for all people." These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

Distribution:

Concluding Prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, you have put your life into our hands; now we put our lives into your hands.

TAKE US, RENEW US AND REMAKE US

WHAT WE HAVE BEEN IS PAST

WHAT WE SHALL BE STILL AWAITS US

LEAD US ON

TAKE US WITH YOU

Amen.

(adapted from a liturgy of the Iona Community)

Sing – Sent forth by God's blessing – TiS 531

Sent forth by God's blessing, our true faith confessing,
the people of God from his table take leave.

The supper is ended: may now be extended
the fruits of his service in all who believe.

The seed of his teaching, our hungry souls reaching,
shall blossom in action for all humankind.

His grace shall incite us, his love shall unite us
to work for his kingdom, his purpose to find.

With praise and thanksgiving to God ever-living

the task of our everyday life we will face,

our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring,

embracing as neighbours all those of each race.

One feast that has fed us, one light that has led us,

unite us as one in his life that we share.

Then may all the living, with praise and thanksgiving,
give honour to Christ and his name that we bear.

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BLESSING

God be in our heads, and in our understanding;

God be in our eyes and in our looking;

God be in our mouths and in our speaking;

God be in our heart, and in our thinking;

God be at our end, and at our departing.

And the blessing of God

Creator, Redeemer and ever-present Spirit

Be with us now and always.

AMEN.