



**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.**

**Next Sunday**

**15<sup>th</sup> March 2026 @ 10am**

**Lent 4**

**To See or Not to See**

**Leader Robert**

**Reflection Video - Pastor Duane Steele**

**1 Samuel 16:1–13; Psalm 23,  
Ephesians 5:8–14, John 9:1–41**



**(Deok Hee is on his rostered day off)**

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

**For pastoral concerns, please contact  
Rev Deok Hee Cho on 0401 975 745.**

### Scriptures

#### **1 Samuel 16:1–13**

God tells Samuel, as spiritual leader, that it is time to take the next step in succession planning for the nation's king. In trepidation, but with a clear sense of guidance that goes beyond first impressions, Saul selects the youngest son of Jesse.

#### **Psalm 23**

This well-loved psalm invites us to see and trust God as a shepherd, providing, caring, accompanying, and nurturing us.

#### **Ephesians 5:8–14**

The writer of the letter to the Ephesians uses the image of light and darkness to encourage Christians to live with an awareness of God and leave behind a life that shuts out the divine presence and illumination.

#### **John 9:1–41**

Jesus heals a blind man but encounters opposition and ultimately excommunication from the religious leaders. He shows courage in speaking out as a witness to what has happened to him, and Jesus comes alongside him to help him see at a deeper level.

## Theme Focus

As we walk with Samuel in God's surprising choosing, rest in the Shepherd's guiding care, awaken to Christ's light, and witness sight restored on the path, this week's scriptures invite us to open ourselves to God's presence and let this seeing shape our decisions, relationships, and daily journey of faith.

## Word for the Day

Have you ever seen the road safety sign that reads 'Where you look is where you go'? It's a short phrase that brings home the dangers of taking our eyes away from the road and ending up driving off it! Perhaps it's another way of expressing the need to be intentional as we travel through Lent. As with any journey, it is pointless to look back at where we have been or to look sideways at where others might be. Unless we focus on what is ahead, we may well lose our way.

The writer of the letter to the church at Ephesus uses images of contrasts: night and day, asleep and awake, death and life. They are linked to what is worthless rather than to what is good, honest, and truthful.

In our contemporary world, we often don't see such sharp contrasts: there is a time to welcome night and escape the glare and heat of the sun; we need sleep to restore our bodies; death brings an end to physical pain and suffering and comes to us all eventually. So let's look beyond the images and hear the summons to walk with a clear purpose, on the road with Christ.

These verses in the letter talk about belonging to God, but don't suggest it is an easy commitment or that it is something we achieve once and for all. There is plenty of encouragement to be active participants in the process. To suggest that we should 'act like' doesn't mean we are being deceptive. Can you think of a time when you acted in a way that you didn't feel? We may put on a brave face because that is what we want to be, even if we are fearful. We may smile at others when giving a

speech, even if our knees are shaking. Being people of the light, followers of Christ, does not come naturally; it requires a conscious effort, a positive intention.

Similarly, 'making our light (lives) shine' might bring to mind that a dusty lampshade or light bulb will be more effective when cleaned, or that a flickering wick needs careful protection from strong blasts until it is established. Treating others with respect when it is not reciprocated, being a good role model when we are tired or short of time, and going out of our way for others—all require effort. Actively working out how goodness, honesty and truthfulness can be expressed in our lives requires constant attempts!

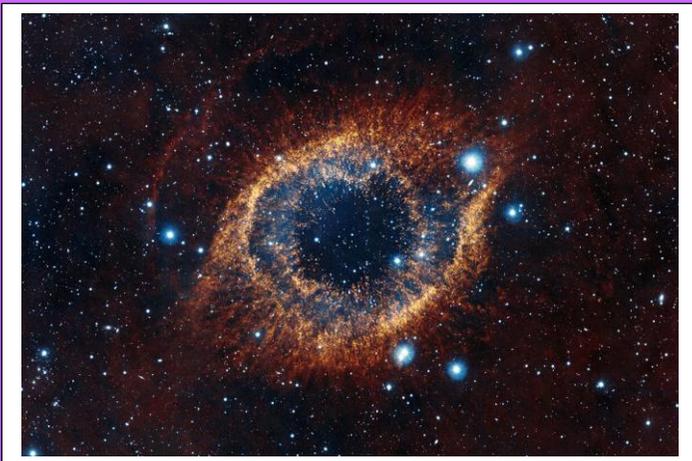
There is a plea in these verses for justice too, recognising when worthless and degrading practices are affecting others or ourselves. Calling them out and showing them up takes courage. Waking up to injustice can prompt us to get up and take action.



## Ideas for Reflection

Lent invites us to explore our lifestyle, our motives, our commitment to God's ways. We often think of the Lenten journey as a solitary one, walking with Christ as individuals. However, travelling is best done in company, whether it is a physical excursion or a spiritual path.

- What is happening in your community, in business or politics, in trade or social groups that is less than good, honest and true?
- Is there anything that you can identify and avoid, or call to account?
- Who can be your companions as individuals or as a faith community, as you travel through this stage of your life's journey?
- Are there other faith or secular groups that share your values and concerns?
- How could you work together on a project to help your community become a better place?
- What might it mean for you to 'wake up, rise and shine' as we move into this next week of our Lenten journey?



## EASTER PREPARATIONS 2026

### Lenten Studies

We will be using materials from Common Grace. We will meet in the church on the following Fridays at 10am for about an hour. More details to come.

- 20<sup>th</sup> March - The Woman with the Bleeding Condition  
(Mark 5:25–34)
- 27<sup>th</sup> March - The Paralysed Man Lowered Through the Roof  
(Mark 2:1–12)



### EASTER CELEBRATIONS

- 29<sup>th</sup> March – Palm Sunday/Passion Sunday (We make Palm Crosses)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> April @ 6:30pm– Maundy Thursday – A simple meal followed by worship, - songs, readings, hand washing and Holy Communion
- 3<sup>rd</sup> April 10am– Good Friday – we follow Jesus' journey to the cross. Hot Cross Buns. We view a video of Handel's *Messiah*
- 5<sup>th</sup> April 10am – Easter Day! We celebrate the Resurrection together as well as the Baptism of Mei Mei, one of our Chinese members. There will be many visitors today: friends and family of Mei Mei, John and Mariane and members of their Indonesian community whose choir will enliven our service. There will be cake and special food.

## Chinese Seminars

- 28 March - Legal seminar Title: *tenancy disputes, building management fees, and boundary/fence disputes.*

This seminar will be held in Chinese



Lebanon March 2026

## **THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA**

**Synod of NSW & ACT Bankstown District**

**Phone: +61 2 9790 1880 Email: [bunitingchurch@hotmail.com](mailto:bunitingchurch@hotmail.com) Web:  
[www.bankstownuca.com.au](http://www.bankstownuca.com.au)**

**72 Kitchener Parade – Bankstown P O Box 250 Bankstown - NSW 1885**

**Bankstown 4th March 2026**

### **Urgent Appeal – Lebanon in Crisis**

**Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,**

**The situation in Lebanon has dramatically escalated. In just the past 48 hours, 397 people have lost their lives, and more than 59,000 have been displaced from the south of the country.**

**Behind these numbers are grieving families, frightened children, and entire communities shattered by violence.**

**Many of the displaced have sought refuge in Beirut and surrounding areas. In an extraordinary witness of Christian love, our UCA partner churches have opened their doors. Church halls, schools, and parish buildings have become emergency shelters. Sanctuaries have become places of comfort, prayer, and refuge.**

**Yet the needs are overwhelming and urgent:**

- **Food and safe drinking water**
- **Mattresses, blankets, and bedding**
- **Hygiene kits and baby essentials**
- **Medical assistance and medications**
- **Pastoral care for the traumatised and grieving**

**We are witnessing deep suffering. Yet even in this darkness, the Church is called to shine the light of Christ. *“If one member suffers, all suffer together.”* (1 Corinthians 12:26)**

**During this season of Lent, we urgently appeal for your prayers and financial support. Your generosity will directly assist the churches and schools caring for displaced families and responding to immediate humanitarian needs.**

**Let us stand together. Let us be instruments of peace. Let us be the hands and feet of Christ in this hour of pain.**

**With prayer and hope,**

**Thank you & May God bless you**

***(From: Rev Gaby Kobrossi, Minister at Bankstown District UC)***

**To respond to current and future needs as they arise, please use our church account:**

**Bankstown District UCA BSB: 634634 Acc#: 100017777 Ref: Leb Urgent Appeal 2026**

**For further information contact us on 02 9790 1810 or by email: [bunitingchurch@hotmail.com](mailto:bunitingchurch@hotmail.com)**



### **Uniting Church in Australia Statement**

**Part of a statement by REV CHARISSA SULI President of the Uniting Church in Australia**

**As President of the Uniting Church in Australia, I speak with deep concern as violence escalates across the Middle East and the death and suffering of innocent civilians multiplies. In this moment of global uncertainty, when the drums of war grow louder, the Church cannot remain silent.**

**War is never an abstraction. It is homes destroyed, children living in fear, and families and communities forced into displacement and refuge, carrying wounds that last for generations.**

**The escalation of militarism and retaliatory violence across the region places millions of civilians at risk and threatens to draw the world into an even wider conflict.**

**We therefore call on political leaders in Australia and around the world:**

**First, to pursue urgent diplomatic efforts to prevent further escalation of violence and to prioritise negotiation, dialogue and peaceful resolution over military confrontation.**

**Second, to uphold international law and ensure the protection of civilians, humanitarian workers, places of worship and essential infrastructure.**

**Third, to resist the dangerous logic of militarism which assumes security can be achieved through ever-increasing force.**

**Fourth, we urge the use of every diplomatic avenue available to promote restraint, de-escalation and the protection of human life across the region.**

**The pursuit of peace requires courage – the courage of leaders willing to step back from the brink of violence and choose dialogue, diplomacy and reconciliation.**

**As followers of Jesus Christ, we believe that the path of peace is not weakness but moral strength.**

**The crucified Christ stands not with the powerful but with the vulnerable, the wounded, the displaced and the grieving. In him we see the truth that peace cannot be built on violence, nor justice secured through the destruction of human life.**

**On Monday 9 March 2026 at 8:30pm AEDT the President held a National Online Service of Prayer for Peace in the Middle East, bringing together members of our Church and Middle Eastern communities across Australia in prayer and solidarity**

**At this critical moment the world does not need further escalation.**

**The world needs courage – the courage of leaders willing to choose peace over power, diplomacy over destruction, and the protection of human life over the so-called logic of war.**

**History will judge our generation not by the wars we were capable of fighting, but by the peace we had the courage to pursue.**

### **Planning Ahead**

- **March 31 Church Council Meeting @ 7pm via Zoom**
- **April 12 Yum Cha after church at Kogarah RSL**
- **May 7 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, Nives - For others whom we name in our hearts.

Pray for the people of Syria, Iraq, Iran, Jordan and other Middle Eastern Countries involved in the current war; Ukraine, Russia, Israel and Palestine, especially the people of Gaza and Lebanon. The USA and the countries of Europe. Sudan.

**Next Sunday**

**22<sup>nd</sup> March 2026 @ 10am**

**Lent 5**

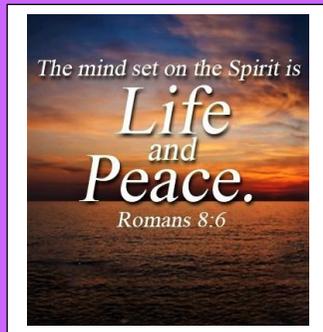
**To See or Not to See**

**Leader Deok Hee**

**Reflection Deok Hee**

**Holy Communion Deok Hee**

**Ezekiel 37:1–14; Psalm 130,  
Romans 8:6–11, John 11:1–45**



**Church Council 2025-2026**

***Chair***

**Richard Goodman**

***Secretary***

**Sue Baglin**

***Treasurer***

**John Baglin (2027)**

***Councillors***

**Robert McAlpine (2026)**

**Sue Baglin (2026)**

**Joshua Chang (2026)**

***Elders***

**John Baglin (2026)**

**Bobbie Miller (2028)**

**Richard Goodman (2027)**

**Dorothy Makasa (2026)**

***Culture of Safety Contact Person***

**Richard Goodman**