



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.**

22nd March 2026 @ 10am

Lent 5

Life in a Dry Valley

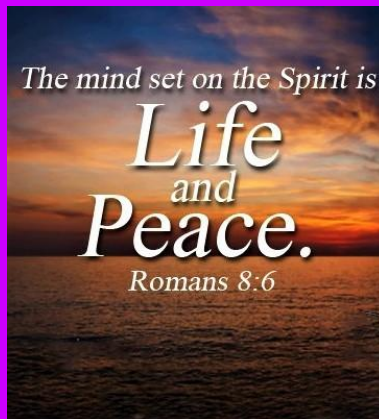
Leader Dinah

Reflection Deok Hee

Holy Communion Deok Hee

Ezekiel 37:1–14; Psalm 130,

Romans 8:6–11, John 11:1–45



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
Rev Deok Hee Cho on 0401 975 745.**

Scriptures

Ezekiel 37:1–14

From their place of exile, God's people receive a message of hope through the prophet's vision of life coming to dry bones.

Psalm 130

In a time of trouble, guilt and fear, the psalmist waits in hope and trust for God to act and forgive.

Romans 8:6–11

Paul writes about the difference it makes when God's Spirit guides our lives.

John 11:1–45

Jesus shares in the grief of his friend's death, then calls him from the tomb to new life.

Theme Focus

At a time of despair, we glimpse Ezekiel's vision of hope and look for life and peace in the world around us.

Word for the Day

Life and death, peace and conflict, ruled by the Spirit or ruled by our desires— these are the opposing pairs that Paul writes about in Romans 8:6–11. How challenging do you find these verses? How much does this either/or dichotomy mirror our experience of life in contemporary society?

In the ancient world, it made a difference to be a Roman citizen living under Roman rule, conformed to society's expectations and duties and, in turn, received its benefits and protection. The early Christians saw a direct conflict between serving Jesus Christ and obeying Caesar. Paul also saw a conflict between living under the Jewish law and living in the freedom of the Spirit. He wants to explain how belonging to God brings life and peace here and now because the Spirit of Christ lives in us.

Paul writes about desires in these verses—does he mean that following our desires is wrong? Not all our desires are bad! Some of our desires are life-giving: the desire to eat nourishing food, to seek human touch and conversation, to breathe fresh air, to stretch our limbs, and to respond to others in need or crisis. However, when having our desires met becomes an obsession or addiction, it can hurt others, distort our needs and drain our energy in harmful ways. For some, Lent is an opportunity to put limits on our own needs, perhaps by fasting or going without something. It can also be a time when we try to develop a desire for a life-giving practice, such as prayer, meditation, reading, or healthy exercise. As we try to follow the way of Jesus, what can we do this Lent to be more intentional about this journey?

Ideas for Reflection

Paul writes: 'If our minds are ruled by the Spirit, we will have life and peace.' (Romans 8:6)

- When and where do we look for life and peace today?
- Are there local communities that are creative and affirming?
- Can we find places to grow and become more like the people God wants us to be, and so we wish to become?
- Where will people find others who will encourage and care for them?
- How true is it that where there is life and peace, the Spirit is present?



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.

- 27th March - The Woman with the Bleeding Condition (Mark 5:25–34)



EASTER CELEBRATIONS

- 29th March – Palm Sunday/Passion Sunday (We make Palm Crosses)
- 2nd April @ 6:30pm– Maundy Thursday – A simple meal followed by worship, - songs, readings, hand washing and Holy Communion
- 3rd April 10am– Good Friday – we follow Jesus' journey to the cross. Hot Cross Buns. We view a video of Handel's *Messiah*
- 5th 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.

[John](#) by Malcolm Guite (*from Sounding the Seasons 2012*, written for the Feast of St John during the Christmas period. All is linked. Today we read of Lazarus.)

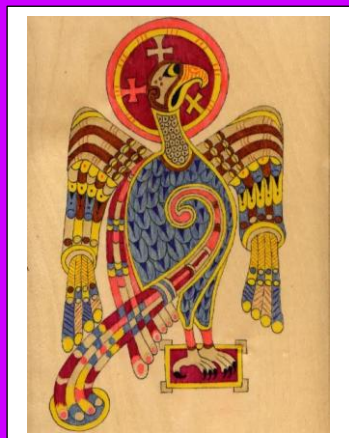
This is the gospel of the primal light,
The first beginning, and the fruitful end,
The soaring glory of an eagle's flight,
The quiet touch of a beloved friend.

This is the gospel of our transformation,
Water to wine and grain to living bread,
Blindness to sight and sorrow to elation,
And Lazarus himself back from the dead!

This is the gospel of all inner meaning,
The heart of heaven opened to the earth,
A gentle friend on Jesus' bosom leaning,
And Nicodemus offered a new birth.

No need to search the heavens high above,
Come close with John, and feel the pulse of Love.

(See the picture of the symbol of St John, the eagle, below)



Planning Ahead

- **March 31 Church Council Meeting @ 7pm via Zoom**
Daylight saving 2026 end date:
- *Date: Sunday 5 April 2026*
- *Time: 3am Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT)*
- *Clocks are moved back 1 hour to 2am, giving you more daylight in the morning*
- **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

29th March 2026 @ 10am

Lent 6 – Palm/Passion Sunday

The Road Between Hosanna and the Cross

Leader Deok Hee

Reflection Deok Hee

Liturgy of the Palms

Psalm 118:1–2, 19–29; Matthew 21:1–11

Liturgy of the Passion

Isaiah 50:4–9a; Psalm 31:9–16; Philippians 2:5–11;

Matthew 26:14–27:66 or Matthew 27:11–54



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