

KOGARAH UNITING CHURCH

5 April 2026

Easter Day

The Gathering of the People of God

WELCOME & GREETING

Hallelujah! Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!

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 together in this time and place, let us acknowledge the Bidjegal people of the Eora nation, who have gathered here for thousands of years and found life and hope in this land. We pay our respects to their elders, past and present who have listened to Country and lived in harmony with the land. As we remember today the new hope and life that Christ brings, let us commit ourselves to bringing new life to our relationship with the First Peoples of this land.

UC VISION STATEMENTS

Let us say together who we are.

***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

Night is over; morning has broken!

Jesus Christ is Risen!

The stone that closed off death has been rolled away!

In Christ we have the promise of resurrection!

It has been declared to us:

Jesus Christ has risen from the dead.

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen Indeed!

Let us worship and celebrate our Risen Lord;

Let us celebrate the resurrection, and the gift of eternal life with God.

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

God is here

God is always here

God is with us

God is always with us

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty and Loving God,

We thank you for this glorious Easter morning.

Today, we celebrate the victory of your Son, Jesus Christ,
who conquered death and rose again to give us eternal hope.

Lord, we pray that you open our hearts today.

As we gather here from different places as one family,
fill this place with your Holy Spirit and heavenly joy.

May our songs of praise and our shared stories bring glory to your name
and comfort to all who are gathered here.

We begin this worship with grateful hearts,
in the name of our risen Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

HYMN: Jesus Christ is risen today TIS 362

Jesus Christ is risen today, alleluia!
our triumphant holy day, alleluia!
who so lately on the cross, alleluia!
suffered to redeem our loss, alleluia!

Hymns of praise then let us sing, alleluia!
unto Christ our heavenly king, alleluia!
who endured the cross and grave, alleluia!
sinners to redeem and save. alleluia!

But the pain that he endured, alleluia!
our salvation has procured; alleluia!
now exalted he is king, alleluia!
and the angels ever sing, alleluia!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

*Merciful God,
We confess that we have not always lived
as people of the Resurrection.
We have kept our hearts closed in fear,
and we have forgotten the hope you gave us.
Forgive us for our doubts and our sins.
Wash us clean by your grace,
and fill us with the light of your risen Son.
Help us to walk in newness of life,
sharing your love and joy with the world.
In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.*

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Christ has died. Christ is risen!
Hear the good news!
Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven.
Thanks be to God!

Peace

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

Hymn: "Alleluia" TIS 390

*Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord,
alleluia, alleluia, give praise to his name.*

Jesus is Lord of all the earth; he is the king of creation.

*Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord,
alleluia, alleluia, give praise to his name.*

Spread the good news o'er all the earth:
Jesus has died and has risen.

*Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord,
alleluia, alleluia, give praise to his name.*

We have been crucified with Christ; now we shall live forever.

*Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord,
alleluia, alleluia, give praise to his name.*

God has proclaimed his gracious gift: new life for all! Alleluia!

*Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord,
alleluia, alleluia, give praise to his name.*

Come, let us praise our living God, joyfully sing to our Saviour.

*Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord,
alleluia, alleluia, give praise to his name.*

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The Service of the Word

BIBLE READINGS

Acts 10:34–43

34 Then Peter began to speak to them: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, 35 but in every people anyone who fears him and practices righteousness is acceptable to him. 36 You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. 37 That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: 38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. 39 We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, 40 but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, 41 not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. 42 He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. 43 All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

John 20:1–18

1 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. 2 So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know

where they have laid him.” 3 Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. 4 The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5 He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. 6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, 7 and the cloth that had been on Jesus’s head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed, 9 for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. 10 Then the disciples returned to their homes. 11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb, 12 and she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. 13 They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” 14 When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” 16 Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, “Do not touch me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’ ” 18 Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and she told them that he had said these things to her.

REFLECTION

Happy Easter, everyone! What a glorious, beautiful morning!

It’s so good to see so many happy faces here.

I love Easter. Don't you? Actually, I have a confession to make. When I was a little kid, Easter meant one thing to me: Chocolate. And maybe the excitement of finding that one chocolate egg my mom hid too well. And look around us! If you go to any shopping centre, what do you see? You see Easter bunnies, colourful eggs, and lots of chocolate. People are smiling and enjoying the holiday. It's a fun time, for sure! But if you stop and ask the average person in the street, “Why are you so happy about a rabbit and some chocolate today?” they would probably say, “I have no idea, but my kids love it!” We laugh, but it’s a bit sad, isn't it? Many people have completely forgotten the person at the very centre of this day: Jesus Christ. They are celebrating a party without knowing the birthday boy!

So, let's take just a few minutes to remember the real reason we are smiling today. Why are we here today? Why does a death and resurrection from 2,000 years ago still matter to us, here, in 2026? Think about this for a second. Imagine a man. A

kind man, a healthy man. Sadly, he has a sudden, tragic accident and passes away. It's a terrible loss for his family and friends. But wait. This man had made a wonderful decision before he died. He had signed up to be an organ donor. Because of that man's death, several other lives were changed forever. There was a man who had been blind for years; he received the donor's eyes and could finally see the faces of his children. Imagine his joy! There was a young mother whose heart was failing; she received the donor's heart and was given years more to watch her family grow. Imagine her relief! Others received a liver, a kidney, or lungs—people who were standing at the very edge of death. These people will never forget that day. Every year, on the anniversary of their surgery, they don't just "celebrate" with a chocolate rabbit. No. They celebrate with deep, overflowing gratitude. They live every single day differently because someone else's sacrifice gave them a brand-new life. They are walking, breathing proof of that person's love.

This, my friends, is exactly what Easter is! 2,000 years ago, Jesus Christ gave everything he had. On Good Friday, he gave his body on the Cross. It looked like a tragic end. But on this Sunday morning, he rose again to prove that death could not hold him! We were all like those people in the hospital. We were spiritually blind. We had "broken hearts" burdened by worry and sin. We were facing the end. But through Jesus' sacrifice and his victory over the grave, he offered us the ultimate "spiritual transplant." He took our brokenness and gave us his wholeness. He took our fear of death and gave us eternal life. This is why we smile! This is why we are so happy! This is why we are here! This is why we celebrate. We celebrate because we are the recipients of the Best Gift Ever: New Life! So today, as we share our stories, eat together, and yes, even enjoy some chocolate, let's remember the Donor. Let's live every single day with the same joy and gratitude as someone who was given a new heart.

Jesus is risen! He has given us new life!
Let's celebrate that every single day! Amen.

INDONESIAN SHARING (Choir and sharing)

BAPTISM

1. Presentation of the candidate

Mei Mei (Jian Hui Qian) is brought forward by her elder Bobbie. The elder says to the congregation:

Friends, the church council of this congregation has received a request for baptism from Mei Mei. This important decision has been prayerfully and carefully considered, and I am glad to welcome her here today.

The minister says to the candidate:

Mei Mei, what do you ask of God's Church?

I ask to be baptised into the faith and family of Jesus Christ.

Mei Mei has been called by the Holy Spirit to claim the faith of Jesus Christ as her own and, through baptism, to die to sin and rise to newness of life through a new birth by water and the Spirit.

The minister may touch the person's ears and mouth, saying:

Mei Mei, may the Lord open your ears to hear his word and your mouth to proclaim his praise.

2. Scripture

Hear the words of the Lord Jesus Christ:

All authority on heaven and earth has been given to me.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,

baptising them in the name of the Father

and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

and teaching them to obey everything

that I have commanded you.

And remember, I am with you always,

to the end of the age. *Matthew 28:18-20*

The apostle Paul said:

Do you not know that all of us

who have been baptised into Christ Jesus

were baptised into his death?

Therefore we have been buried with him

by baptism into death,

so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead

by the glory of the Father,

so we too might walk in newness of life. *Romans 6:3-4*

3. The meaning of baptism

The elder addresses the congregation.

Baptism is Christ's gift.

It is the sign by which the Spirit of God joins people to Jesus Christ

and incorporates them into his body, the Church.

In his own baptism in the Jordan by John,
Jesus identified himself with humanity
in its brokenness and sin;
that baptism was completed in his death and resurrection.

By God's grace,
baptism plunges us into the faith of Jesus Christ,
so that whatever is his may be called ours.
By water and the Spirit we are claimed as God's own
and set free from the power of sin and death.

Thus, claimed by God
we are given the gift of the Holy Spirit
that we may live as witnesses to Jesus Christ,
share his ministry in the world and grow to maturity,
awaiting with hope the day of our Lord Jesus.

4. The confession of faith

The minister says to Mei Mei:

In baptism, we are called out of darkness into God's marvellous light.
In response to the gospel, I ask you:

Mei Mei, do you repent of your sins?

I repent of my sins.

Mei Mei, do you turn to Jesus Christ
who has defeated the power of sin and death
and brought us new life?

I turn to Christ.

Mei Mei, do you commit yourself to God,
trusting in Jesus Christ as Saviour
and in the Holy Spirit
as God's power and presence along the way?

I commit myself to God.

The minister says to the congregation and to Mei Mei:

In unity with the whole Church,
let us stand and affirm the faith
into which we were baptised.

The people stand.

Do you believe in God?

***I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.***

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

***I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.***

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

***I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic(universal) Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.***

5. Prayer of thanksgiving

The elder comes forward to pour water into the font.

The minister says:

God of life, through the breaking of waters
and the coming of the Spirit,
you bring us new birth;
you give the living water, which becomes in us
an eternal spring quenching our thirst,
flowing through us and refreshing us for eternal life.
Washed and cleansed, we are called into service with Christ.

By the power of the Holy Spirit,
bless this water, and those to be baptised in it,

that they may be born anew,
live in your light all their days,
and come to share your likeness;
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

6. The baptism

Mei Mei,
for you Jesus Christ has come,
has lived, has suffered;
for you he endured the agony of Gethsemane
and the darkness of Calvary;
for you he uttered the cry, 'It is accomplished!'
For you he triumphed over death;
for you he prays at God's right hand;
for you, Mei Mei,
even before you were born.
In baptism, the word of the apostle is confirmed:
'We love, because God first loved us'.

The minister says:

Mei Mei, I baptise you
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

The people respond:

Amen.

The minister marks the sign of the cross on the person's forehead. The minister says:

Mei Mei, from this day on,
the sign of the cross is upon you.

The minister presents the newly-baptised to the congregation saying:

Mei Mei is now received into the one holy catholic and apostolic Church

according to Christ's command.
Let us welcome her with a clapping of hands.

7. Hymn TIS 491 "Father welcomes all his children"

*Father welcomes all his children
to his family through his Son;
Father giving his salvation,
life forever has been won.*

Little children, come to me,
for my kingdom is of these;
life and love I have to give,
mercy for your sin.

*Father welcomes all his children
to his family through his Son;
Father giving his salvation,
life forever has been won.*

In the water, in the word
in his promise, be assured:
those who are baptised and believe
shall be born again.

*Father welcomes all his children
to his family through his Son;
Father giving his salvation,
life forever has been won.*

Let us daily die to sin,
let us daily rise with him,
walk in the love of Christ our Lord,
live in the peace of God.

*Father welcomes all his children
to his family through his Son;
Father giving his salvation,
life forever has been won.*

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8. Responses

The minister says to the newly-baptised:

Mei Mei, you have been baptised into the faith of Christ,
and are called to the worship,
witness and service of God
in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Will you continue in the community of faith,
the apostles' teaching, the breaking of bread and the prayers?

With God's help, I will.

Will you proclaim, by word and example,
the good news of God in Christ?

With God's help, I will.

Will you seek Christ in all people,
and love your neighbour as yourself?

With God's help, I will.

Will you strive for justice and peace
and respect the dignity of every human being?

With God's help, I will.

May the God of grace,
who has given us new birth by water and the Spirit,
keep us steadfast in the faith of Christ
and bring us to eternal life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The minister addresses the congregation.

Friends in Christ,
will you promise to maintain a life of worship
and teaching, witness and service
so that Mei Mei may grow to maturity in Christ?

***With God's help,
we will live out our baptism
as a loving community in Christ:
nurturing one another in faith,
upholding one another in prayer,***

***and encouraging one another in service,
until Christ comes.***

9. Prayers after baptism

God of love, we rejoice again
to receive your grace in Word and Sacrament.
We have heard your call
and are made new by your Spirit.
Guide and guard Mei Mei all their days.

May your love hold Mei Mei and her family,
your truth guide them,
your joy delight them.

Give to the family
wisdom and courage, laughter and peace,
and the love that endures all things,
through Jesus Christ. ***Amen.***

10. Baptismal candle

The elder may take candle, present it to Mei Mei, saying:

Mei Mei, you belong to Christ,
the light of the world.
The word of God will guide you.

The minister says:

Mei Mei, let your light so shine before the world
that all may see your good works.
May the word of God be your wisdom and teacher.
And give glory to our God who is in heaven.

Presentation of baptism certificate

OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

With gladness, let us present the offerings
of our life and labor to the Lord.

Loving God, we thank you for this Easter Day –
with its promise of new life, and new opportunities.
Use us, and our gifts, to love and to serve you,
and to witness to Christ whom you have raised.
In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENT

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

Let us join our hearts and voices to offer our prayers to God.
God of the Risen Christ,
We rejoice in your resurrection power.
Today, we bring our prayers to you.
We pray for those suffering from war, conflict, and disaster.
***Living Lord, grant them your peace
and help them find hope in the gift of new life.***

God of Salvation,
We pray for our country and its leaders.
Guide those who shape our laws, teach our children, and heal the sick.
***Living Lord, grant them your wisdom
and help them serve with your love.***

God of Love,
We pray for our neighbours
who feel lonely or lost this Easter—
the immigrants in strange lands,
the addicted, the homeless, and those in prison.
***Living Lord, grant them your hope
and let them feel your presence in their lives.***

God of Mercy,
We pray for our congregation, our visitors,
and those who could not join us today.
Fill us with your truth
so that we may be your witnesses in the world.
Living Lord, grant us your joy and help us to live as people of the Resurrection.

God of Power,
We pray for the sick and the suffering among us.
Please provide your healing touch

and special care to them and their families.

We also pray for our elderly members;
keep them strong in your mighty hands.

We pray all these things

in the name of our risen Savior, Jesus Christ. 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

INVITATION

Come, all you who thirst,
all you who hunger for the bread of life,
all you whose souls cry out for healing;
Come, come to the feast of life.

The Table of Jesus is our place of gathering;
here we are welcomed, wanted, loved,
here there is a place set for us;
Let us come to the feast of life.

HYMN: You are holy TIS 753 (X2)

You are holy, you are whole.
You are always ever more than we ever understand.
You are always at hand.
Blessed are you coming near;
blessed are you coming here
to your church in wine and bread,
raised from soil, raised from dead.

*You are holy, you are wholeness,
you are present, let the cosmos praise you, Lord!
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
hallelujah, hallelujah, our Lord!*

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PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also 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.

Loving and Compassionate God,
all powerful and ever-living,
we do well always and everywhere
to give you thanks and praise
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We praise you with great joy on this Easter day,
when Christ rose in fulfilment of the promises
you made through the law and the prophets.
He is the true Lamb who takes away the sins of the world.

By dying he destroyed our death,
by rising he restored our life.
And so with all creation,
and with all the company of the redeemed,
we magnify your glorious name,
evermore praising you, 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.

Lord, you are holy indeed.

You are gracious to all who turn to you

And keep your promises to all who trust in you.
With grateful hearts we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is Risen.

Christ will come again.

We remember, on the night of his betrayal,
that Jesus took bread,
giving thanks, and 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.”

***When we eat this bread and drink this cup
we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,
until you come in glory.***

Worthy is the Lamb, the Lamb that was slain,
to receive all power and wealth, wisdom and might,
honour and glory and praise.

***Lord, by your cross and resurrection,
you have set us free.
You are the Saviour of the world.***

Loving God, send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts,
that the bread we break may be for us communion in the body of Christ,
and the cup of blessing which we bless may be for us communion
in the blood of Christ;
that being built up in love
we may be strengthened in the unity of the faith

and come to the fullness of the stature of Christ our Lord. 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

***All: Loving God, you have nourished us
with the body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.***

***Fill us with your Spirit and make us one
in peace and love. Amen.***

The Sending Forth of the People of God
--

HYMN It is well, it is well with my soul

When peace, like a river, attends all my way,
when sorrows like sea-billows roll,
whatever my path, you have taught me to say,
'It is well, it is well with my soul.'

*'It is well with my soul,
it is well, it is well with my soul.'*

Though Satan may buffet, though trials may come,
let this calm assurance control:
that Christ knows my need and my helplessness here
and has shed his own blood for my soul.

*'It is well with my soul,
it is well, it is well with my soul.'*

The joy, O the joy of this glorious thought!
My sin, not in part but the whole,
is nailed to his cross and I bear it no more;
praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

*'It is well with my soul,
it is well, it is well with my soul.'*

For me it is Christ, it is Christ now to live!
Though death's waters over me roll,
no fear shall be mine, for in death as in life
you will whisper your peace to my soul.

*'It is well with my soul,
it is well, it is well with my soul.'*

BLESSING

God of our salvation,
you have restored us to life,
you have brought us back again into your love
by the triumphant death and resurrection of Christ:

continue to heal us
as we go to live and work
in the power of your Spirit,
to your praise and glory.

May 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 (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.