

KOGARAH UNITING CHURCH

12 April 2026

Easter 2

The Gathering of the People of God

WELCOME & GREETING

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 meet today, we acknowledge that we are meeting on the lands of the Bidjegal people of the Eora nation, who have been custodians of these lands, waters and skies since time immemorial. We give thanks for their stewardship, and pay respect to their elders—past, present, and future. We acknowledge that our relationship with them has not always been life-giving nor peaceful, and commit ourselves to nurturing understanding and mutual respect.

KUC 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

We have come to this place with wars and famine in the world around us.

Give us peace in the presence of Holy Spirit.

We have come to this place from the busyness of home.

Give us peace in the presence of Holy Spirit.

We have come with minds buzzing.

Give us peace in the presence of Holy Spirit.

We have come with one purpose;

to worship Holy One, Holy Three.

May this time of worship,

give us peace in the presence of Holy Spirit. Amen.

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

God is here

God is always here

God is with us

God is always with us

OPENING PRAYER

Loving God,

we come before you today with open hearts.

Thank you for bringing us together to worship you.

Please leave our busy week behind

and help us to focus only on your presence.

Fill this room with your Holy Spirit.

As we sing and pray, may our hearts find your true peace.

We offer this time to you.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

HYMN: Yours be the glory TiS 380

Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory over death you've won;
angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes, where your body lay.

Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory over death you've won.

See, Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;
lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,
for the Lord is living, death has lost its sting.
Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory over death you've won.

No more we doubt you, glorious Prince of life;
life is naught without you: aid us in our strife;
make us more than conquerors through your deathless love;
bring us safe through Jordan to your home above.
Yours be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory over death you've won.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

*Almighty God,
we confess that we do not always live as resurrected people.
We live within the fears and cares of this world,
that we don't have enough, that we are not good enough.
Forgive us for not seeing your image in us.
Forgive us for not seeking your life in us.
Help us to see we are made in your love, your image, your peace.
In the name of the risen Christ,
who offers us peace, we pray. Amen.*

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

“...There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:28)
And - “If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation”;
everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!
Hear then Christ's word of grace to us:
'Your sins are forgiven.'
Thanks be to God.

PEACE

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

HYMN: Comfort, comfort all my people TiS 647

(Refrain)
Comfort, comfort all my people
with the comfort of my Word.
Speak it tender to my people:
all your sins are taken away.

Though your tears be rivers running,
though your tears be an ocean full,
though you cry with the hurt of living:
comfort, comfort.

Every valley shall be lifted,
every mountain shall be low,
every rough place will be smoother:
comfort, comfort.
(Refrain)

Though your eyes see only darkness,
though your eyes can see no light,
though your eyes see pain and sorrow:
comfort, comfort.

Every night will have its morning,
every pain will have an end,
every burden will be lightened:
comfort, comfort.
(Refrain)

Words and music © R. Mann
Reproduced under Copyright Licences: ONE LICENSE A-604712; CCLI #45150

The Service of the Word

BIBLE READINGS Psalm 16, John 20:19–31

Psalm 16

1 Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge. 2 I say to the Lord, “You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you.” 3 As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble ones in whom is all my delight. 4 Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names upon my lips. 5 The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot. 6 The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage. 7 I bless the Lord, who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me. 8 I keep the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure. 10 For you do not give me up to Sheol or let your faithful one see the Pit. 11 You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

John 20:19–31

19 When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. 21 Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has

sent me, so I send you.” 22 When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.” 24 But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.” 26 A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” 27 Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” 28 Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” 29 Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.” 30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. 31 But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

CHOIR “Low in the Grave He Lay”

REFLECTION

Last week, we had a truly beautiful and special Easter Sunday. It was a day full of joy for our church! We shouted, "Hallelujah! Jesus is risen!" and we really felt the celebration. We had a wonderful time sharing with our Indonesian friends about their ministry. And we had another huge reason to smile: Mimi, from our new Chinese Bible study group, was baptized! We also shared Holy Communion together. It was a perfect, meaningful day. And because we are in Australia, we had Easter Monday too! It was a public holiday, so we had one more day to rest, relax, and eat with our families. It felt great, didn't it? But then... Tuesday morning came. The holiday was over. We had to go back to work, back to school, and back to our busy lives. Let me ask you: Did that Easter joy stay in your heart all week? Or, by Tuesday afternoon, did you feel tired again? Did the stress come back as soon as you opened your emails or started your chores?

The disciples in the Bible felt the same way. Just a few days before, everything was amazing! When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the crowds were shouting, "Hosanna! Save us!" I bet the disciples felt very proud. They probably thought, "Finally! We are going to be successful! I'm going to be a very important person in Jesus' new kingdom!" But that joy didn't last long. In just a few days, everything changed. On Friday, Jesus died a painful death on the cross. The disciples' hearts were completely broken. Can you imagine how they felt? They

felt guilty because they ran away. They felt terrified, thinking, "Are they going to catch us and kill us too?" They had no hope left. They were lost. They didn't know what to do next. They didn't know where to go. Their leader was gone, their dreams were gone, and their hearts were filled with a thousand worries. That is why, in today's Bible story, we see the disciples in a very sad situation. They were all gathered in a room, and the doors were locked tight. Why? Because they were scared.

It reminds me of a news story from just a few days ago. A plane took off from São Paulo, Brazil, heading to Atlanta. Think about the people on that plane. Before they got on, they were so excited! Some were going on holidays, some were going home to see family. They were smiling and taking photos. But just a few minutes after take-off, something terrible happened. One of the engines started shooting out fire and sparks! People looking out the window saw bright flames in the dark sky. For 10 long minutes, the plane was shaking, and everyone thought, "This is it. We are going to die." They didn't know if they would see tomorrow. They were just waiting for the crash. Imagine the fear in that cabin. People were probably crying, praying, too scared to even scream. But then, the pilot managed to turn the plane around and landed safely. Can you imagine the feeling when the wheels finally touched the ground? That huge sigh of relief? The tears of joy? The disciples were like the people on that burning plane. On Palm Sunday, they were excited and happy. But by Friday, their "engine" had failed. Their world was on fire. They were trapped in a room, shaking with fear, wondering if they would crash. They weren't just "quiet"—they were paralyzed by the "sparks and flames" of their life. They were hiding, holding their breath, too scared. But right then, something amazing happened. In the middle of their terror, Jesus "landed" right in front of them. The doors were locked, but Jesus just appeared. He didn't knock. He didn't ask for a key. He just broke through the walls of their despair and walked in.

And what was the first thing he said? "Peace be with you." Jesus didn't say, "Where were you on Friday when I was suffering on the cross? Why did you all run away and hide?" Jesus didn't look at Peter and ask, "Why did you pretend you didn't know me?" He didn't say, "Why don't you have more faith? After all the miracles I showed you, why are you still hiding in this dark room?" No. Jesus didn't ask any of those questions. He knew they were feeling guilty. He knew they were ashamed. He knew they were broken. So, he didn't bring a list of their mistakes. Instead, he brought exactly what they needed. He looked into their eyes with love and spoke the most important words: "Shalom. Peace be with you." He showed them the scars on his hands and his side. It was his way of saying, "Look, I have won. The pain was real, but I am alive. I am not here to punish you. I am here to heal you. I am not looking at your past; I am giving you a future. Now, you can be at peace. My peace is enough for your fear." But

there was one person who was not there. His name was Thomas. When the other disciples told him, "We saw Jesus!" Thomas said, "No way. I won't believe it unless I see the holes in his hands and touch his side myself." We often call him "Doubting Thomas," but I think he was just being honest. He didn't want to pretend. And honestly, if I were Thomas, I think I would have done the same thing. A week later, Jesus came back again. This time, he came just for Thomas. Jesus didn't get angry. He said, "Thomas, come here. Put your finger here. See my hands. Do not doubt, but believe." Jesus accepted Thomas's doubts and gave him the same peace and certainty.

Now, let's look at our own lives today. How about you? Like the disciples, sometimes we have very "exciting" days. But other times, we live in despair. We doubt. We fear. We worry. We have painful lives and difficult moments. Sometimes, we fall into sin. Sometimes, we make big mistakes and feel so ashamed. When you are shaking with fear, or when you feel guilty about your life, what do you think Jesus says to you? Does he ask, "Why did you do that?" Does he say, "I am so disappointed in you"? Does he ask, "Why do you keep making the same mistakes?" No. Jesus looks at you today—right in the middle of your mess, your stress, and your fear—and he says the exact same thing: "Shalom. Peace be with you."

This is the word we need the most. Jesus doesn't point a finger at your past. He opens his arms to your future. He doesn't give you a lecture; he gives you his Peace. In this world of war, sickness, and uncertainty, don't try to fix everything yourself. Don't stay behind your "locked doors" of worry. Jesus is here. He is standing right next to you, and he is offering you the only thing that can truly calm your heart. "Peace be with you."

Let's breathe in that peace today. Let's trust the One who landed the "burning plane" of our lives safely. Amen.

OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

Out of the fullness of your gifts to us, Holy One,
we bring these offerings now.

Not just the money in the plate,
but the time and talents which we give in your service.

We dedicate this money to your work in this community and beyond.

We also dedicate ourselves to the service of Christ wherever we are.

Through the power of Holy Spirit.

Amen.

SHARING (Mai Mai)

SOLO "The Holy City" Ern Edwards

ANNOUNCEMENT

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

Loving God,

We come to you today with heavy hearts as we look at our world.

Your Son, Jesus, stood among his disciples and said, "Peace be with you."

Today, we ask for that same peace to break through the walls of our world.

Lord, we pray for our world.

We see so much pain around us—wars, poverty, and sickness.

We ask for your healing hand to touch the broken places of this earth.

May your peace rule where there is conflict,

and your comfort reach those who are suffering in silence.

Lord, we pray for the future of our church.

You know the challenges we face and the concerns we carry for our future.

We ask for your blessing upon our congregation.

Please give us a clear vision and a heart of hope.

We pray especially for our church leaders;

give them wisdom, strength, and your guidance as they lead us forward.

Lord, we pray for our church family.

We bring before you our brothers and sisters

who are going through difficult times.

We remember those who are sick in body,

those who are lonely in spirit,

those who are worried about their future, their jobs, or their families,

and those who are struggling with heavy burdens in their hearts.

May the peace of the Risen Christ be with them.

Heal their wounds and give them the strength to stand again.

Hear our prayers, O Lord.

Break through our fears, bless our future, and fill us with your amazing peace.

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Prince of Peace, 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 Sending Forth of the People of God
--

HYMN: Beauty for brokenness TiS 690

1. Beauty for brokenness Hope for despair
Lord, in the suffering This is our prayer
Bread for the children Justice, joy, peace
Sunrise to sunset Your kingdom increase!

2. Shelter for fragile lives Cures for their ills
Work for the craftsman Trade for their skills
Land for the dispossessed Rights for the weak
Voices to plead the cause Of those who can't speak

(Refrain)

*God of the poor Friend of the weak
Give us compassion we pray
Melt our cold hearts Let tears fall like rain
Come, change our love From a spark to a flame*

3. Refuge from cruel wars Havens from fear
Cities for sanctuary Freedoms to share
Peace to the killing-fields Scorched earth to green
Christ for the bitterness His cross for the pain

4. Rest for the ravaged earth Oceans and streams
Plundered and poisoned Our future, our dreams
Lord, end our madness Carelessness, greed
Make us content with The things that we need
(Refrain)

5. Lighten our darkness Breathe on this flame
Until your justice Burns brightly again
Until the nations Learn of your ways
Seek your salvation And bring you their praise
(Refrain)

BLESSING

Go now in peace.

Do not be afraid, for the Risen Christ is with you.

May His Shalom fill your hearts and guide your path this week.

Be a light of hope to everyone you meet.

And may the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

SENDING SONG: Shalom, my friends, shalom All Together 195

Shalom, my friends, shalom, my friends,
shalom, shalom.

Shalom, my friends, shalom, my friends,
shalom, shalom.

Shalom, haverim, shalom, haverim,
shalom, shalom.

Shalom, haverim, shalom, haverim,
shalom, shalom.

Share peace, my friends, share peace, my friends,
God's peace, God's peace.

Share peace, my friends, share peace, my friends,
God's peace, God's peace.