

KOGARAH UNITING CHURCH

April 19th 2026

Recognising God with us

The Gathering of the People of God

WELCOME & GREETING

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:

We acknowledge that this land is God's land, and God's Spirit dwells here. We pay our respects to the elders past, present and emerging of the Bidjegal people of the Eora nation, who have cared for this land in time beyond our dreaming. This land on which we live and move was and always will be Aboriginal Land.

KUC MISSION STATEMENT

**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

Whether our journey was a long one or a short one,
help us to recognise God's presence here today.

Whether we feel close to God or far off,

help us to recognise God's presence here today.

In a world that often seems devoid of God's presence,

help us to recognise God's presence here today.

Let us worship God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit/Creator, Redeemer,
Sustainer,

knowing their presence with us as we do so.

Amen.

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

God is here

God is always here

God is with us

God is always with us

SING: One more step along the world I go ATA 200

**One more step along the world I go,
one more step along the world I go,
from the old things to the new
keep me travelling along with you.
And it's from the old I travel to the new.
Keep me travelling along with you.**

**Round the corners of the world I turn,
more and more about the world I learn.
All the new things that I see,
you'll be looking at along with me:
And it's from the old I travel to the new.
Keep me travelling along with you.**

**As I travel through the bad and good,
keep me travelling the way I should.
Where I see no way to go,
you'll be telling me the way, I know:
And it's from the old I travel to the new.
Keep me travelling along with you.**

**Give me courage when the world is rough,
keep me loving though the world is tough.
Leap and sing in all I do,
keep me travelling along with you:
And it's from the old I travel to the new.
Keep me travelling along with you.**

**You are older than the world can be,
you are younger than the life in me.
Ever old and ever new,
keep me travelling along with you:
And it's from the old I travel to the new.
Keep me travelling along with you.**

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OPENING PRAYER

Holy One, Holy Three,
We praise you for your majesty and power as we wonder at your creation.
We thank you for all your gifts to us, particularly that of Jesus and the gift of
life to us through his rising.
There are many things that we are thankful for today.

For the things that have been said
and those that have remained unsaid,
we thank you, loving and gracious God.
Amen.

SING: In the presence of your people TIS 727

**In the presence of your people
I will praise your name;
For alone you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.
Let us celebrate your goodness
and your steadfast love;
may your name be exalted here on earth and in heaven above.**

**In the presence of your people
I will praise your name;
For alone you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.
Let us celebrate your goodness
and your steadfast love;
may your name be exalted here on earth and in heaven above.**

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PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of boundless grace,
we know that there are times when we shut you in boxes of our own making

—
boxes that limit who you are
that limit what you can do in our lives
that limit who will bear your image
that limit who you can be to us and to others.
In the silence, we bring those times to you.

A moment of silence

Forgive us for all these moments when we have failed to recognise you in our
lives.

Amen.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Because the death and resurrection of Jesus have unleashed the grace of
God, we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God.

PEACE:

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

The Service of the Word

BIBLE READING: ACTS 2:14a and 36-41

^{14a}But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them,

³⁶Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified."

³⁷Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?"³⁸Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.³⁹For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him."⁴⁰And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."⁴¹So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

BIBLE READING: LUKE 24:13-35

¹³Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem,¹⁴and talking with each other about all these things that had happened.¹⁵While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them,¹⁶but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.¹⁷And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad.¹⁸Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there

in these days?"¹⁹He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,²⁰and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him.²¹But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place.²²Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning,²³and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive.²⁴Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him."²⁵Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared!²⁶Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?"²⁷Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.²⁸As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on.²⁹But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them.³⁰When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.³¹Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight.³²They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?"³³That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together.³⁴They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!"³⁵Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

REFLECTION – Deok Hee

Good morning everyone, again welcome to our worship this morning in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a blessing to be with you today. Today, I want to talk about a journey. Not just a journey from 2,000 years ago, but the journey of our lives. We are looking at Luke chapter 24, the famous story of the road to Emmaus. This story begins with two men. They are walking on a dusty road, leaving the great city of Jerusalem and heading toward a small village called Emmaus. These two men were likely locals of Emmaus. That was their home. But for a long time, they had lived in Jerusalem to be near Jesus. They were not just "fans" of Jesus; they were dedicated followers. They had spent their days listening to him, watching him heal the sick, and believing that he was the one who would change the world. But today, they are leaving. They are heading back to Emmaus. Why? Because they are broken. For them, Jerusalem is no longer the city of God; it is the city of death. It is now a place of failure and fear for them. Their Master, the one they trusted with their whole lives, had died a terrible death. The distance from Jerusalem to Emmaus is about 12 kilometers. A 12-kilometer walk usually takes 4 hours. But on those rugged, ancient roads—and with hearts full of grief—it felt much longer. It was likely a 6 or 7-hour struggle. As they walked, they talked. They replayed the movie of the last three days in their heads over and over again. The trial, the whipping, the cross, the silence of the tomb. Each step away from Jerusalem was a step into deeper darkness.

As I was reflecting on their feelings, I thought about our culture. Here in Australia, when someone passes away, we have a "eulogy" at the funeral. People stand up and say, "He was a great man," or "She was so funny." They share happy memories.

But in our Korean funeral tradition, we have a very different, very intense moment. It's the moment of "Ipmyeon"—the last time we see the face of our loved one before the casket is closed. In that room, you don't hear people telling funny stories. What do you hear? Almost every single time, you hear the children or the spouse crying out: 'Mom, I'm sorry... Dad, I was wrong... Please forgive me for not being a better son. I'm so sorry for making you worry about me all the time. I'm sorry I didn't take better care of you when you were with us. Please forgive me for not being there when you needed me.' I wonder if this was what was happening in the hearts of these two men. Perhaps it wasn't just simple sadness they were feeling. Maybe it was this kind of heavy weight—a mix of regret and sorrow—that was crushing their souls as they walked. They were carrying the pain of what they saw—the trauma of the cross. They were carrying broken dreams, feeling like their entire future had died with Jesus. And most of all, they carried guilt. They probably thought: 'When the soldiers came, I ran away. When Jesus was thirsty, I wasn't there. I called him my King, but I did nothing to help him.' That 12-kilo-

meter walk was a long, painful eulogy of regret. Their hearts were crying out: 'I'm so sorry, Jesus. We failed you, and now everything is over.'

And then, a stranger comes and walks beside them. It's Jesus! But they don't recognize him. Jesus starts to talk. He explains the Word. He shows them that the suffering they saw was not a mistake—it was the plan! As they listen, something happens. They don't recognize his face yet, but their hearts begin to feel something. Later they said, "Were not our hearts burning within us?" Finally, they reach Emmaus. It's getting dark. Jesus acts like he's going to keep walking. They say, "Stay with us." They sit down for a simple meal. And then, the guest becomes the host. Jesus takes the bread, blesses it, and breaks it. In that simple—the breaking of the bread—their eyes are opened. They see the scars. They see the love. They realize: "He is alive! He was here all along!" And then, he disappears. Now, look at the change. These two people had just walked 12 kilometers. They were exhausted. They were ready for bed. It was dark outside, and the roads were dangerous. But the Bible says they got up that very hour and ran back to Jerusalem. They ran all the way back to find the other disciples and the crowd. When they arrived, they didn't just say Jesus was alive. They shouted to everyone: "We are not alone! The resurrected Jesus is walking with us!"

Brothers and sisters, as we look at these two men, I want to share two important lessons for our own lives today. First, we must ask ourselves: Do we recognize Jesus in our own difficult journeys? The two disciples were walking in deep despair. They were filled with pain, regret, and the feeling of failure. Because their hearts were so heavy and their eyes were filled with tears, they didn't realize that Jesus himself was walking right next to them. We are often the same. When life gets hard—when we feel sick, when we are lonely, or when we face the many challenges of our journey. Sometimes that challenge is the struggle of everyday life. Other times, it is the fear that comes as we get older and realize our health is not what it used to be. We look at the road ahead and it feels uncertain. In those quiet, difficult moments, we cry out, "Lord, where are you? Why am I on this difficult journey all alone?"

I remember a time in my own life here in Australia. There have been many good years, but there was also a season that was very dark. I was overwhelmed with worry and disappointment. I felt like there was no hope for my future. I felt completely empty. One day, while I was driving and lost in my worries, Jesus suddenly visited my heart. In that car, he gave me a peace that I cannot explain. He gave me comfort that the world could not give. That day, I cried so much—not from sadness, but from joy and gratitude. I spent the entire day singing and thanking God. For the first time, I truly felt it: 'He is here. He is walking this road with me.' Whether you are young and struggling with your future, or older and worried about your health, he is there. He is in the silence of your room. You might not see him yet, but he is in the conver-

sation. He is the 'Unknown Friend' who never leaves your side, through every season of your life.

Second, I want us to think about the direction of our lives. The moment these two men recognized Jesus, their direction changed instantly. They didn't stay in Emmaus to rest or hide. Even though it was late at night and the road was dangerous, they stood up immediately and ran back to Jerusalem. Jerusalem was once the place of their greatest pain, but now it had become their place of greatest hope and joy. So, I ask you today: Where is your faith heading? Are you living a life heading toward Emmaus? A life where you are walking away from hope, hiding in your disappointment, and just trying to survive the day? Or are you ready to live a life heading toward Jerusalem? A life filled with the hope of the Resurrection, where you face your challenges with courage because you know the Lord is alive? Through our worship today, I pray that your spiritual eyes will be opened. If any of you are currently on a journey toward Emmaus—feeling lost, tired, or without hope—I pray that you will realize this truth: the resurrected Jesus is with you at every single moment. May you turn your steps around! May your journey change from the darkness of Emmaus to a journey toward Jerusalem—a life filled with hope, joy, and passion.

Please remember, Christianity is not a religion that promises a life without suffering. Rather, it is about walking through that suffering together with our Lord. Every time you whisper, 'I'm so sorry,' or 'Lord, it's too hard,' remember—Jesus is right there, listening to every word of your heart. I hope you go home today saying: 'Oh, I wasn't alone. Jesus has been walking with me through all the difficult days of my life.' Our Lord is with us until the very end. I pray that this amazing power of the Resurrection will fill your lives, your work, and your homes all through this coming week.

Amen.

SING: Companions on the journey Seasons 8-8

**We are companions on the journey,
breaking bread and sharing life;
and in the love we bear is the hope we share
for we believe in the love of our God,
we believe in the love of our God.**

**No longer strangers to each other,
no longer strangers in God's house;
we are fed and we are nourished
by the strength of those who care,
by the strength of those who care.**

**We are companions on the journey,
breaking bread and sharing life;
and in the love we bear is the hope we share
for we believe in the love of our God,
we believe in the love of our God.**

**We have been gifted with each other,
and we are called by the Word of the Lord:
to act with justice, to love tenderly,
and to walk humbly with our God,
to walk humbly with our God.**

**We are companions on the journey,
breaking bread and sharing life;
and in the love we bear is the hope we share
for we believe in the love of our God,
we believe in the love of our God.**

**We are companions on the journey,
breaking bread and sharing life;
and in the love we bear is the hope we share
for we believe in the love of our God,
we believe in the love of our God.**

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OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

What you have given to us, Holy One, is immeasurable.
From that abundance, we bring a small amount to you—
as money in the offering before us or given electronically;
as time and skills given to serve you.

**We ask you to help us use money, time, and skills wisely
in your service in this community and beyond.**

Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

Holy One, who gives us hope,
we pray for those who have lost hope:
for those in grief for the loss of loved ones,
for those who have lost jobs or homes,
for those unsure what their next step will be.
And in the silence, we pray for others close to our hearts who need to feel
your presence in their lives.

Silence

Hear these prayers—those spoken and those cried out in the silence of our hearts. Speak the light of your hope, however dim, into these situations.
May we cling to that hope and share it with others.
Amen.

THE LORDS 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

SING: You are holy you are whole TIS 753

**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!**

**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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BLESSING:

As we go into the week, may our hearts be warmed as we make room for Jesus, so that he can meet us where we are.
May he help us understand when we don't get it.
And may we share that knowledge with others.
Amen.

SENDING SONG: 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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