



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.**

3rd May 2026 @ 10am

Easter 5

Living Stones

Leader Robert

Reflection Deok Hee

Acts 7:55–60; Psalm 31:1–5, 15–16; 1 Peter 2:2–10;

John 14:1–14



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

Acts 7:55–60

A promising leader of the burgeoning young church takes a courageous stand and pays the ultimate price. Nevertheless, his faith and forgiving words are noticed by a key future leader.

Psalm 31:1–5, 15–16

In need of protection and a sense of God's presence, the psalmist finds reassurance in the rocky landscape around him.

1 Peter 2:2–10

The writer of this letter to the early church somersaults through different images, including stones, in an enthusiastic plea for members to put Christ in the centre of their lives.

John 14:1–14

At a time of fear and uncertainty, Jesus reassures his disciples about the future through his own confidence in God, a God he knows as a dependable and welcoming parent.

Theme Focus

As we gather among the images of keystones, cornerstones, and living stones, we open ourselves to be shaped by the risen Christ and to grow as a people of strength and compassion.

Word for the Day

No one likes the idea of getting lost—or trying to find someone when we don't know what they look like. This seems to be how the disciples feel as Jesus prepares to leave them. Jesus has a clear sense of where he is going and tries to put their minds at rest.

As we find so often in scripture, there is a call not to be afraid but to trust in God (Exodus 14:13; Isaiah 41:10; Luke 2:9). Fear and faith are sometimes presented as opposites—if we are afraid, perhaps we do not have faith. Yet for the writer of 1 John, it is perfect love that casts out fear (1 John 4:18).

Thomas is not afraid to articulate the awkward question and speak on behalf of the group (as he also does in John 14:5): 'Lord, we don't even know where you are going! How can we know the way?'

Philip, usually so ready to draw others towards Jesus (John 1:43–46; John 12:20–22), is now uncertain and asks Jesus, 'Show us the Father. That is all we need.' (John 14:8) Despite being confident in the past, both disciples are now floundering.

Have we, like them, found ourselves unsure of the direction our lives or faith are taking, even after periods of confidence? There is no shame in asking genuine questions.

For us in a contemporary world, what might be the questions we would ask of Jesus today?

Ideas for Reflection

- Where in your life do you feel unsure of the way forward, and what might it mean to trust Christ's steady presence there?
- How is Christ shaping you— and us—like living stones into something strong, purposeful, and life-giving?
- What does being part of a community built on Christ the cornerstone mean for how we live, serve, or offer compassion this week?
- What questions are you carrying today, and how might Christ be inviting you to bring them honestly, without fear or shame?
- Who in your life has revealed something of God's welcome or wisdom? What qualities made their presence healing or grounding?

People have been using stones and rocks for thousands of years! Can you think of some of their uses?

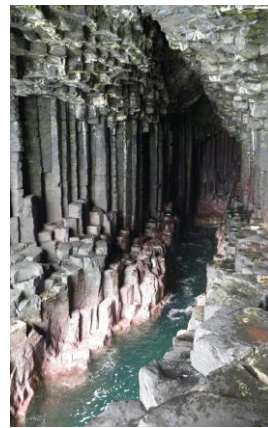
Can you see any of them here in our city/town/area, where we live?

Some of today's Scripture readings mention stones. Stones and rocks were often seen as objects of protection and safety, so the psalmists speak of God as being like a rock, ready to protect us. But stones can be used to cause harm, and we hear about Stephen being stoned by people who didn't like what he was saying.

The writer of Peter's letter was thinking of stones in a building, and when he saw the keystone of an arch or the strong cornerstone in a wall, it reminded him of how important Jesus is and how he gives us strength and stability. The writer also invites us to imagine people as stones or blocks, fitting together to make a house. The bricks and blocks of a house can't put themselves in position but need to be placed by a skilled worker. These verses suggest that, unlike solid blocks, we can be living stones.

- I wonder how we might work with God to build a strong community?
- I wonder how we might cooperate with God in shaping a loving congregation, or school, workplace or home?

Stone (s)



Baptism and Living Stones

A further sonnet by Malcolm Guite

Baptism

***Love's hidden thread has drawn us to the font,
A wide womb floating on the breath of God,
Feathered with seraph wings, lit with the swift
Lightning of praise, with thunder over-spread,
And under-girded with an unheard song,
Calling through water, fire, darkness, pain,
Calling us to the life for which we long,
Yearning to bring us to our birth again.
Again the breath of God is on the waters
In whose reflecting face our candles shine,
Again he draws from death the sons and daughters
For whom he bid the elements combine.
As living stones around a font today,
Rejoice with those who roll the stone away.***



Planning Ahead

- **May 6 Kogarah Storehouse Board Meeting**
- **May 7 Worship Task Group meeting @ 7pm via Zoom**
- **May 8 Book discussion @ Bobbie's @ 11:30am**
- **May 14 Kogarah Church Council via Zoom @ 7pm**

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, Ngahua, 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

10th May 2026 @ 10am

Easter 6

Never Far from Us

Leader Deok Hee

Reflection Deok Hee

Holy Communion Deok Hee

Acts 17:22–31; Psalm 66:8–20; 1 Peter 3:13–22;

John 14:15–21



Church Council 2025-2026

Chair

Richard Goodman

Secretary

Sue Baglin

Treasurer

John Baglin (2027)

Councillors

Robert M^cAlpine (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