

# 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

Come, you who long for a new beginning.

**God calls us into promise.**

Come, you who carry grief or shame.

**Christ meets us with mercy.**

Come, you who hope for healing.

**Spirit, make us a blessing on the move.**

## LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

God is here

**God is always here**

God is with us

**God is always with us**

**SING: Will you come and follow me / The Summons ATOK 413**

**Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?  
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?  
Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,  
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?**

**Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?  
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?  
Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare?  
Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?**

**Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?  
Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same?  
Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as this unseen,  
and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?**

**Will you love the 'you' you hide if I but call your name?  
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?  
Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around  
through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?**

**Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.  
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.  
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.  
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.**

© 1987 The Iona Community  
Reproduced under Copyright Licences:  
ONE LICENSE A-604712; CCLI #45150

**OPENING PRAYER**

God of promise and compassion, call our names, loosen our grip on the familiar, and set us walking in step with your mercy.

Sit at our tables, heal our hidden aches and make us a people who bless.  
Amen.

**SING: Come as you are that's how I want you TIS 693**

**"Come as you are: that's how I want you.  
Come as you are; feel quite at home,  
close to my heart, loved and forgiven.  
Come as you are: why stand alone?"**

**“No need to fear, love sets no limits;  
no need to fear, love never ends;  
don’t run away shamed and disheartened,  
rest in my love, trust me again.**

**“I came to call sinners, not just the righteous;  
I came to bring peace, not to condemn.  
Each time you fail to live by my promise,  
why do you think I’d love you the less?**

**“Come as you are; that’s how I love you;  
come as you are, trust me again.  
Nothing can change the love that I bear you;  
all will be well, just come as you are.”**

© Deidre Brown, Spectrum Publications  
Reproduced under Copyright Licences:  
ONE LICENSE A-604712; CCLI #45150

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Merciful God, we confess our small circles and slow feet. We guard our tables, delay our apologies, and call caution what is really fear.

Forgive us. Call us again, heal us again, send us again, until mercy becomes our way.

We hold a moment of silence.

*Silence is held.*

## **DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

Hear Christ’s word: ‘It is kindness that I want, not sacrifice.’

In him, you are welcomed, forgiven, and restored, freed to walk in the wide-ness of grace.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **PEACE:**

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**And also with you.**

<b>The Service of the Word</b>
--------------------------------

**BIBLE READING: Genesis 12:1-9**

**12Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. <sup>21</sup>**

will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup>I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

<sup>4</sup>So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. <sup>5</sup>Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother’s son Lot, and all the possessions that they had gathered, and the persons whom they had acquired in Haran; and they set forth to go to the land of Canaan. When they had come to the land of Canaan,

<sup>6</sup>Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. <sup>7</sup>Then the LORD appeared to Abram, and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. <sup>8</sup>From there he moved on to the hill country on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the LORD and invoked the name of the LORD. <sup>9</sup>And Abram journeyed on by stages toward the Negeb.

#### **BIBLE READING: Matthew 9:1-13 and 18-26**

<sup>9</sup>As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he got up and followed him. <sup>10</sup>And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. <sup>11</sup>When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” <sup>12</sup>But when he heard this, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. <sup>13</sup>Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.”

<sup>18</sup>While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader of the synagogue came in and knelt before him, saying, “My daughter has just died; but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.” <sup>19</sup>And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. <sup>20</sup>Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from

hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, <sup>21</sup>for she said to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well.” <sup>22</sup>Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, “Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.” And instantly the woman was made well. <sup>23</sup>When Jesus came to the leader’s house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, <sup>24</sup>he said, “Go away; for the girl is not dead but sleeping.” And they laughed at him. <sup>25</sup>But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. <sup>26</sup>And the report of this spread throughout that district.

### **CHOIR: Touch the Earth Lightly**

**Touch the earth lightly,  
use the earth gently,  
nourish the life of the world in our care:  
gift of great wonder,  
ours to surrender,  
trust for the children tomorrow will bear.**

**We who endanger,  
who create hunger,  
agents of death for all creatures that live,  
we who would foster  
clouds of disaster,  
God of our planet, forestall and forgive!**

**Let there be greening,  
birth from the burning,  
water that blesses and air that is sweet,  
health in God’s garden,  
hope in God’s children,  
regeneration that peace will complete.**

**God of all living,  
God of all loving,  
God of the seedling, the snow and the sun,  
teach us, deflect us,  
Christ re-connect us,  
using us gently and making us one.**

## REFLECTION – Deok Hee

### Genesis 12:1–9, Matthew 9:9–13, 18–26

To begin this morning, I want to talk about a movie that some of you might have seen. Have you ever seen the movie, “Green Book”? It came out a few years ago, in 2018, and it actually won the Oscar for Best Picture. It’s a beautiful movie, and it is based on a true story. The story is about two men in America during the 1960s. The first man is Dr Don Shirley. He is a world-class, genius African-American pianist. He is highly educated, refined, and wealthy. The other man is Tony Lip, a rough, working-class Italian-American from New York, who gets hired to be Don Shirley’s driver for a concert tour through the Deep South. In America in the 1960s, there was a lot of racism. There were strict social rules. Black people and white people could not mix. There was a literal book called the “Green Book.” This book told Black travelers which hotels and restaurants were “safe” for them. Most white-owned places refused to serve Black people. There is a very sad scene in the movie. Dr Don Shirley is the star of the night. He plays beautiful piano music in a luxury restaurant. The rich white audience claps and cheers for him. They love his music. But during the break, Don Shirley wants to have dinner. He sits down at a table in the same restaurant. Suddenly, the manager comes over. He says, “I am sorry, Dr Shirley. You cannot eat here. Our rule says Black people cannot eat in this dining room.” Think about this. They liked his music, but they did not want to sit with him. They did not want to eat with him. Why? Because he was different. He was on the other side of the line. But as Tony and Don travel together in a small car for many weeks, something changes. They start to talk. They share fried chicken together. They talk about their lonely lives and their struggles. They cross the social lines. They become true friends. At the end of the movie, their friendship heals their hearts. Why am I telling you this story today? Because 2,000 years before the movie Green Book, there was a man who made a habit of crossing every social line, every religious boundary, and every cultural wall to sit down and eat with the people the world rejected. That man, of course, is Jesus.

Today, we want to look at what Jesus did 2,000 years ago, and see what we are doing today, and ask ourselves: What is God calling us to do right now, in our community? Let’s look at the story in Matthew chapter 9. Jesus is walking, and he sees a man named Matthew. Matthew is a tax collector. 2,000 years ago, tax collectors were the most hated people. They worked for the Roman enemy. People thought they were thieves and traitors. Good religious people never talked to them. Tax collectors were totally alone. But Jesus walks up to Matthew, looks at him, and says two words: “Follow me.” Then, Jesus does something even more shocking. He goes straight to Matthew’s house for a big dinner! Many other tax collectors and “sinners” came and ate with them. This was a huge shock! This was a scandal! In that culture, shar-

ing a meal meant deep acceptance. By sitting at that table, Jesus completely broke the religious border-line. He was saying, "I don't care about your past. You are my friends. You belong with me." The religious leaders—the Pharisees—saw this. They were very angry. They stood outside the house, pointed their fingers, and asked, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" They wanted to keep the lines clear. "Good people inside; bad people outside." But Jesus heard them and he said: "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick... I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." He simply crossed the line to meet people exactly where they were.

While Jesus is talking, a leader from the synagogue comes. He kneels before Jesus. He is crying. He says, "My daughter has just died. But come and touch her, and she will live." A father's heart is completely broken. Jesus immediately stands up and walks to the man's house. But on the way, another interruption happens. A woman in the crowd reaches out and touches the edge of Jesus' clothes. She had been bleeding for 12 long years. In those days, her sickness made her "unclean." Society drew a hard border-line around her. People stayed away from her. She was treated like a sinner, completely isolated and rejected. But when this rejected woman touched Jesus, Jesus did not hesitate. He did not care about her "unclean" status. He did not care about what other people would think. Instead, Jesus immediately crossed the cultural border-line to meet her. He looked at her with love and said: "Take heart, daughter; your faith has healed you." The most beautiful thing here is not just the physical healing. It is that Jesus filled his heart with deep compassion for her. He did not care about the rules; he only cared about her pain. Jesus willingly crossed the border-line to reach her with pure love, showing her that she was truly cared for and loved by God.

After this, Jesus finally arrives at the leader's house, and the little girl is already dead. In those days, a dead body was the ultimate border-line. According to religious law, touching a dead body made you "unclean." It was strictly forbidden. But Jesus does not hesitate at the line of death. He does not care about religious rules when a child needs to be saved. Jesus walks straight into the room, reaches out, and takes the dead girl by her hand. He crosses the final line. And immediately, the little girl stands up! Look at Jesus. From a hated tax collector, to an unclean woman, to a dead child—Jesus broke every border-line to meet people, love them, and save them.

Now, let's look at ourselves. How do we live our lives here in Australia? Sometimes, it is very easy to stay inside our comfortable church, look out the window, and judge the world. It is easy to use God's Word to point fingers at

people. We draw our own border-lines. But today, Jesus is calling us to follow his footsteps. He wants us to cross our comfort lines and become his hands and feet. Think about the people around us today. Who are the "outsiders" in our daily lives? If we look closely at our community, they are everywhere:

- The homeless people on the street who might smell bad or look messy.
- The new immigrants and their children, who are struggling to fit into a new culture.
- The people with different religions or cultures.
- The people with physical or mental disabilities.
- The people with deep emotional pain and broken hearts, hiding their suffering.
- The people with difficult or unusual personalities, who are just hard to get along with.
- And the needy people who come to our Kogarah Storehouse every week looking for help.

What does Jesus want us to do? He does not want us to judge them from a distance. He wants us to cross the line, meet them, and invite them to our table. Just like the movie Green Book, he wants us to share a meal, listen to their stories, and share our lives. Our church is a big dinner table where everyone is welcome, especially the lonely and the broken.

So today, I want to leave you with a quiet question to think about this week. Look into your own heart right now. What is your border-line? Who is standing outside your border-line? Who are they? Jesus did not hesitate. He crossed every line of status, sickness, and shame to reach you and me. He broke the rules to bring us into his family. This week, let us step over our lines. When you see someone hurting, don't look away. Cross the line. Meet them. Love them with the heart of Christ.

Amen.

**SING: For everyone born / A place at the table Seasons 4-14**

**For everyone born, a place at the table,  
for everyone born, clean water and bread,  
a shelter, a space, a safe place for growing,  
for everyone born, a star overhead,  
and God will delight when we are creators  
of justice and joy, compassion and peace:  
yes, God will delight when we are creators**

**of justice, justice and joy!**

**For woman and man, a place at the table,  
revising the roles, deciding the share,  
with wisdom and grace, dividing the power,  
for woman and man, a system that's fair,  
and God will delight when we are creators  
of justice and joy, compassion and peace:  
yes, God will delight when we are creators  
of justice, justice and joy!**

**For young and for old, a place at the table,  
a voice to be heard, a part in the song,  
the hands of a child in hands that are wrinkled,  
for young and for old, the right to belong,  
and God will delight when we are creators  
of justice and joy, compassion and peace:  
yes, God will delight when we are creators  
of justice, justice and joy!**

**For just and unjust, a place at the table,  
abuser, abused, with need to forgive,  
in anger, in hurt, a mindset of mercy,  
for just and unjust, a new way to live,  
and God will delight when we are creators  
of justice and joy, compassion and peace:  
yes, God will delight when we are creators  
of justice, justice and joy!**

**For everyone born, a place at the table,  
to live without fear, and simply to be,  
to work, to speak out, to witness and worship,  
for everyone born, the right to be free,  
and God will delight when we are creators  
of justice and joy, compassion and peace:  
yes, God will delight when we are creators  
of justice, justice and joy!**

**For gay and for straight, a place at the table,  
a covenant shared, a welcoming space,  
a rainbow of race and gender and colour,  
for gay and for straight, the chalice of grace,  
and God will delight when we are creators  
of justice and joy, compassion and peace:  
yes, God will delight when we are creators  
of justice, justice and joy!**

## **OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER**

You call us into promise and send us as mercy.

Receive these gifts and multiply them into meals shared, burdens lifted, and neighbours restored.

Amen.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **PRAYERS FOR OTHERS**

God of the road and the room,

for migrants and those uprooted, grant companionship and safety;

for the isolated, an invitation and a friend;

for the sick and sorrowing, healing, presence, and rest;

for this nation, courage to honour covenant and cherish creation;

for your Church, feet quick with mercy.

*Pause*

Hear the names we bring before you now, spoken aloud or helped in silence

*Names may be spoken.*

*Silence is held.*

In your compassion, make us blessings. **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.**

<b>The Sending Forth of the People of God</b>
---

**SING: Be thou my vision O Lord of my heart TIS 547**

**Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,  
naught be all else to me, save that thou art -  
thou my best thought, by day or by night,  
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.**

**Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word;  
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;  
thou my great Father, thy child let me be;  
thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.**

**Be thou my armour, my sword for the fight,  
be thou my dignity, thou my delight;  
thou my soul's shelter and thou my high tower:  
raise thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.**

**Riches I scorn and the world's empty praise,  
thou mine inheritance, now and always;  
thou and thou only the first in my heart,  
high King of heaven, my treasure thou art.**

**High King of heaven, after victory won,  
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!**

**Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
still be my vision, O ruler of all.**

Words from The Poem Book of the Gael

Reproduced under Copyright Licences:

ONE LICENSE A-604712; CCLI #45150

## **BLESSING:**

Go now in the promise of God, the mercy of Christ,  
and the companionship of the Spirit—  
to walk, to welcome, to heal. **Amen.**

## **SENDING SONG: Jesus calls us here to meet him TIS 477**

**Jesus calls us here to meet him,  
as through word and song and prayer,  
we affirm God's promised presence  
where his people live and care.  
Praise the God who keeps his promise;  
praise the Son who calls us friends;  
praise the Spirit who, among us,  
to our hopes and fears attends.**

**Jesus calls us to confess him,  
Word of Life and Lord of All,  
sharer of our flesh and frailness  
saving all who fail or fall.  
Tell his holy human story;  
tell his tales that all may hear;  
tell the world that Christ in glory  
came to earth to meet us here.**

**Jesus calls us to each other:  
found in him are no divides.  
race and class and sex and language –  
such are barriers he derides.  
Join the hand of friend and stranger;  
join the hands of age and youth;  
join the faithful and the doubter  
in their common search for truth.**

© 1989 The Iona Community

Reproduced under Copyright Licences:

ONE LICENSE A-604712; CCLI #45150