

## KOGARAH UNITING CHURCH

21 June 2026

Pentecost 4

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:

As we gather on this land, we pay our respects to the Bidjegal people of the Eora nation, who have lived, worked and played on this country for thousands of years. We bring to mind their elders, past and present, and their place in passing on story and song, language and lore. May we commit ourselves to ongoing peace, joy, love, and hope as we grow in relationship as First and Second Peoples of this land.

### KUC VISION STATEMENTS

Let us say together who we are.

***Our vision is to be a loving and caring community,  
sharing God's love with the world.***

***We are a congregation  
who welcome people of all cultures and lifestyles.***

***We are creating a safe place for the community  
and sharing the journey of life and faith.***

### CALL TO WORSHIP

To the God who sees and hears,  
***we bring our truth and our thirst.***

To the Christ who calls and keeps,  
***we bring our fear and our yes.***

To the Spirit who opens wells,  
***we come, ready to live the new life.***

## LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

God is here

***God is always here***

God is with us

***God is always with us***

## OPENING PRAYER

Loving God,

thank you for bringing us safely into your house today.

Thank you for this beautiful day to worship you and rest in your presence.

Lord, as we begin this service,

we leave all our worries and busy thoughts outside these doors.

We invite your Holy Spirit to fill our hearts right now.

Open our ears to hear your voice and open our hearts to feel your deep love.

May everything we do today—our songs, our prayers, and our reflection—bring glory to you alone.

Speak to us today, Lord, and renew our strength.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

**HYMN:** Glory be to God the Father TiS 142

Glory be to God the Father,

glory be to God the Son,

glory be to God the Spirit,

God almighty, Three in One!

Glory, glory, glory, glory

while eternal ages run.

Glory be to him who loved us,

washed us from each spot and stain;

glory be to him who bought us,

made us kings with him to reign;

glory, glory, glory, glory

to the Lamb that once was slain.

Glory to the king of angels,

glory to the church's king,

glory to the king of nations,

heaven and earth, your praises bring;

glory, glory, glory, glory  
to the King of Glory bring.

'Glory, blessing, praise eternal!  
thus the choir of angels sings;  
'Honour, riches, power, dominion!  
thus its praise creation brings;  
glory, glory, glory, glory,  
glory to the King of kings!

PD; text, Horatius Bonar

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## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

*Merciful God,  
We confess that we have sinned against you.  
In this scary and difficult world,  
we often let fear and worry control our lives.  
We forgot your deep love,  
and we did not trust your shaking hands.  
We followed our own selfish ways  
instead of resting in your perfect peace.  
Lord, we are truly sorry. Please have mercy on us.  
Wash away all our sins and clean our hearts today.  
Fill us with your Holy Spirit,  
so we can overcome every fear and walk forward in faith. Amen.*

## **DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

"If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins  
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Dear brothers and sisters,  
Because of the perfect love of God and the precious blood of Jesus,  
you don't have to carry your guilt or fear anymore.  
You are completely washed clean.

Hear then Christ's word of grace to us:  
Our sins are forgiven.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## PEACE

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

***And also with you.***

**HYMN:** Jesus Came Bringing Us Seasons 3-7

Jesus came bringing us hope.

Jesus came bringing us hope.

Jesus came bringing us hope.

Hallelujah for evermore!

Jesus came showing God's peace.

Jesus came showing God's peace.

Jesus came showing God's peace.

Hallelujah for evermore!

Jesus came bringing us joy.

Jesus came bringing us joy.

Jesus came bringing us joy.

Hallelujah for evermore!

Jesus came showing God's love.

Jesus came showing God's love.

Jesus came showing God's love.

Hallelujah for evermore!

Jesus came showing justice.

Jesus came showing justice.

Jesus came showing justice.

Hallelujah for evermore!

Traditional Cameroon folk song.

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The Service of the Word

## BIBLE READINGS

### **Psalm 86:1–10, 16–17**

1 Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. 2 Preserve my life, for I am devoted to you; save your servant who trusts in you. You are my God; 3 be gracious to me, O Lord, for to you do I cry all day long. 4 Gladden the soul of your

servant, for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. 5 For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you. 6 Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer; listen to my cry of supplication. 7 In the day of my trouble I call on you, for you will answer me. 8 There is none like you among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like yours. 9 All the nations you have made shall come and bow down before you, O Lord, and shall glorify your name. 10 For you are great and do wondrous things; you alone are God.

16 Turn to me and be gracious to me; give your strength to your servant; save the child of your maidservant. 17 Show me a sign of your favor, so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame, because you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

### **Matthew 10:24–39**

24 “A disciple is not above the teacher nor a slave above the master; 25 it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household! 26 “So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered and nothing secret that will not become known. 27 What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. 28 Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, fear the one who can destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. 30 And even the hairs of your head are all counted. 31 So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. 32 “Everyone, therefore, who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven, 33 but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven. 34 “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace but a sword. 35 For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, 36 and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household. 37 “Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me, 38 and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

### **REFLECTION**

This week, while preparing my reflection, I was thinking about the human emotion of fear. I got curious, so I went online and searched for "What are the top things humans are most afraid of?" I found a list of the most common phobias in the world. So today, I want to ask you: Do you know what people fear the most? Let’s look at the results together and see how brave our congregation is.

(Slide 1: Spider)

Number one on the list is this guy... the spider! Living in Australia, we all know this guy—the famous Huntsman. Now, scientists online say these spiders are completely harmless and they are actually good because they eat mosquitoes. But let's be honest. When you are driving down the motorway at 100 km/h, and this giant hairy hand suddenly crawls out from your sun visor right in front of your eyes... nobody thinks, "Oh, what a helpful little creature!" Your heart stops, you forget how to drive, and you instantly start praying for your life!

(Slide 2: Snakes)

Alright, next one is this. Snakes. Imagine it's a beautiful sunny Saturday afternoon in Sydney. The weather is perfect, and you decide to do some gardening. You are pushing the lawn mower, enjoying the smell of fresh grass, and suddenly, you see a long, brown snake sliding on the grass right in front of your feet! At that exact moment, it doesn't matter how big or tough you are—you will jump high, scream, and leave the lawn mower running while you run inside the house!

(Slide 3: Sharks)

Next on the list... is sharks. We all love our beautiful Australian beaches, don't we? Imagine you are floating peacefully in the ocean, completely relaxed. But then, you turn your head. And just 20 meters away... you see a sharp fin cutting through the water. In that exact moment, you forget about being relaxed. Your body moves faster than an Olympic swimmer, and you literally run on top of the water all the way back to the sand!

(Slide 4: Flying Cockroach)

And the last one on the list... is the flying cockroach. Imagine it's midnight. You walk into the dark kitchen to get a glass of water. You turn on the light, and there it is on the wall! You pick up a shoe to hit it, but suddenly... it opens its wings and flies straight at you! You try to escape, but it lands right on your shoulder, and then crawls up to your hair! Isn't that the most scary and horrible moment in life? You scream and run for your life!

We laugh because it's true. The internet is right; we all have these funny, instinctive fears. But if we are being serious for a moment, there are other fears in our lives that are not funny at all. They are heavy, and they keep us awake at night. We fear the rising cost of living. We fear the diagnosis from the doctor. We fear losing our financial security, or we fear for the future of our children. Fear can completely trap us and drain our energy. And that is exactly why, in today's Gospel reading from Matthew 10, Jesus speaks directly to our fears. Three times in this short passage, Jesus says the exact same words: "Do not be afraid." Let's look deeply into why Jesus

said this, what kind of fears his disciples were facing, and how we can find true peace in our fears today.

To understand today's message, we have to look at the situation. Jesus is sending his twelve disciples out on their very first missionary trip. But instead of giving them nice and easy words like, "Go out and enjoy your day!", Jesus gives them a very heavy warning. He tells them, "People will hate you because of me. You will be persecuted. A student is not above their teacher. They called me bad names, so they will call you names too." And then, Jesus says that shocking part at the end... 'Your enemies will be the people in your own home.' When we read this today, we get so confused. We think, 'Wait, how can Jesus say this? Does he want us to fight with our families?' Not at all. Jesus is simply describing the painful cultural reality of that time. In the ancient Jewish world, your family, your religion, and your society were one single package. If you decided to follow Jesus, you were changing your entire identity. It was a massive scandal. Imagine a family dinner where a young son stands up and says, "I believe Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah." Instantly, the table goes silent. The parents are furious and terrified. Why? Because that one statement could get the whole family kicked out of the local community. They would lose their business, their friends, and their home. This is not just an ancient story. I think about when Christianity first arrived in Korea over a hundred years ago. Korean society was deeply traditional, based on strict ancestor worship. When someone became a Christian, they refused to worship their ancestors because they wanted to worship God alone. Do you know what happened? Their families were furious. They were beaten, called "bad children," and kicked out of their families. Jesus was not commanding families to fight. He was realistically warning his disciples: "Choosing to follow me will bring you into deep conflict with the world. You will face the terrifying fear of rejection, isolation, and loneliness."

So, how do we stand strong when we face such terrifying rejection or difficult situations? The answer is simple: We must look at how much our God loves us. In today's Bible reading, Jesus gives us a beautiful picture. He says, "Look at the sparrows. You can buy two sparrows for just one cheap coin. They are worth almost nothing. Yet, your Heavenly Father cares for every single one of them." And then Jesus says something even more amazing: "Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth much more than many sparrows." Think about this. God's love for you is so deep and detailed. He even knows the exact number of hairs on your head! If God cares about the tiny details that we don't even think about, don't you think he cares about your big worries? When we truly understand that the Almighty God is our loving Father and Mother, we can stand strong in any storm.

Hundreds of years before Jesus, King David knew this secret. In Psalm 86, David was in a terrible situation. Cruel people were trying to kill him, and his heart was pounding with fear. But David didn't just look at his problems. He prayed to God and said, "Lord, you are full of compassion. You are slow to anger and abounding in love." David asked God for help, and because he trusted God's love, his fear turned into peace. Even Jesus experienced deep, human fear. The night before the cross, in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus knew the terrible pain that was coming. The Bible says his sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground. He was in agony. But what did Jesus do in that fearful moment? He fell to his knees and talked to his Father. He cried out to the One who loved him completely. God didn't magically take the cross away, but God gave Jesus the heavenly strength to overcome the fear and win the victory.

I understand this journey because I have been there too. When I first arrived in Australia as a new migrant, I faced so much fear. Everything was new, everything was strange, and the future was completely uncertain. There were many days when the anxiety was so heavy that it felt like a dark cloud over my head. I had so many questions and so few answers. But in those dark moments, just like David and just like Jesus, I went to my knees. I cried out, "God, I am scared. Please help me." And do you know what happened? God did not instantly fix all my problems overnight. The challenges were still there. But as I prayed, something shifted inside me. I felt the overwhelming love of my God. I realized that the God who counts the hairs on my head was right there with me in Australia. When I looked at my problems again with the eyes of faith, they were no longer scary. They were no longer walls blocking my way. God gave me a new strength, a new courage, and a new peace. And step by step, He helped me overcome every single obstacle.

My dear brothers and sisters, what is making you afraid today? Are you worried about the rising bills? Are you anxious about your health, your job, or the future of your children? Remember the wise words: "Worrying is like sitting in a rocking chair. It gives you something to do, but it doesn't get you anywhere." Today, Jesus is inviting you to get out of that rocking chair of worry. No matter how difficult or scary your situation looks right now, please look up. Look at your God who loves you more than you can imagine. He knows your name. He knows your pain. He knows every detail of your life. When you feel weak, don't run away from God—run to him. Cry out to him in prayer. Trust his loving heart, rest in his arms, and walk forward in faith. Amen.

**HYMN:** 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.'

But, Lord, for your coming in glory we wait;  
the sky, not the grave, is our goal;  
the trumpet shall sound and the Lord shall descend:  
bless the Lord, bless the Lord, O my soul!  
'It is well with my soul,  
it is well, it is well with my soul.'

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## **OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER**

Loving God,  
Thank you for your endless love and for providing all our needs.  
Today, with thankful hearts, we bring our offerings to you.  
Please bless these gifts to spread your love and grow your kingdom.  
Bless every family here, and fill our homes with your perfect peace.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

## **ANNOUNCEMENT**

### **PRAYERS FOR OTHERS**

Loving God,

You are the God who counts every hair on our heads  
and holds the whole world in your hands.

Today, we bring this hurting world and our anxious hearts before you.

We pray for this world.

Lord, so many people are living in deep fear today.

We pray for those trapped in the terror of war and violence.

We pray for millions facing the fear of famine, poverty, and rising costs of living.

We pray for those suffering from painful diseases and heavy grief.

Lord, in their darkest hours, please show your mercy.

Bring peace to the nations, fill the empty hands, and comfort every crying heart.

We pray for our church family.

You know every detail of our lives.

We pray for the lonely, the sick, and the brokenhearted among us.

We especially lift up all the names on our church prayer list today.

Lord, touch them with your healing hands.

Take away their fears and worries about their health,  
their jobs, and the future of their children.

Let them feel your overwhelming love right now.

We pray for the future of our church.

As we look ahead, we face challenges,

and sometimes we feel uncertain and anxious about our ministry and our tomorrow.

But Lord, help us to look up.

Help us to stand strong, trusting that you are leading us step by step.

Use our church to be a light of hope for those who are afraid.

We leave everything in your loving hands, trusting in your perfect peace.

In Jesus' name we pray, 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:** Brother, sister, let me serve you TiS 650

Brother, sister, let me serve you,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey  
and companions on the road;  
we are here to help each other  
walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you  
in the night-time of your fear;  
I will hold my hand out to you,  
speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping;  
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;  
I will share your joy and sorrow  
till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven  
we shall find such harmony,  
born of all we've known together  
of Christ's love and agony.

Brother, sister, let me serve you,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.

## **BLESSING**

Go into the world without fear.  
Go and call out God's name,  
knowing that love will meet you.  
Steadfast love will lead you  
through every question and every wondering.  
God's love carries us through every disruption.  
Do not be afraid to change the world.  
God's peace goes before you.

And 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 you find peace    Seasons 7-26

May you find peace,  
may you find hope,  
may you find joy this day.  
May you find love,  
may you find rest  
here in this place together.

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