

# KOGARAH UNITING CHURCH

28 June 2026

Pentecost 5

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 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

How long, O Lord?

***We trust your steadfast love.***

When tests confuse, and fears rise,

***Christ, be our mercy and our way.***

When small kindness is all we have,

***Spirit, make it like living water.***

Come, let us worship.

## LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

God is here

***God is always here***

God is with us

***God is always with us***

## OPENING PRAYER

Holy and loving God,  
we have come to worship you today. Come to us now.  
In our silence, singing, and praying, come with your cleansing love.  
Speak to our hearts with guidance and comfort.  
Tell us not just what we want to hear, but what we need to hear.

You came to us in Jesus, and you still come through your Word.  
Keep us attentive today, so that we may be shaped by the gift of your presence.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**HYMN:** Joyful, joyful, we adore you TiS 152

Joyful, joyful, we adore you,  
God of glory, God of love;  
hearts unfold like flowers before you  
opening to the sun above.

*Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,  
drive the dark of doubt away;  
giver of immortal gladness,  
fill us with the light of day.*

All your works with joy surround you,  
earth and heav'n reflect your rays,  
stars and angels sing around you,  
centre of unbroken praise.

*Field and forest, vale and mountain,  
flowery meadow, flashing sea,  
singing bird and flowing fountain  
call to praise you joyfully.*

You are giving and forgiving,  
ever blessing, ever blest,

well-spring of the joy of living,  
ocean-depth of happy rest.

*You our Father, Christ our brother,  
all are yours who live in love;  
teach us how to love each other,  
lift us to your joy above.*

PD; text, Henry Van Dyke

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## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

***We come before you, confessing  
that we have not welcomed others as we should.  
We have turned away those that beg,  
we have ignored the cries of the poor and the hungry,  
and we have not met the needs of those  
who have come before us.  
We have put our own desires  
above the needs of our neighbours.***

***Forgive us, O God.  
Call us back to your ways of mercy, compassion and love.  
Help us to see our neighbour as ourselves,  
to love our neighbour as ourselves,  
to know our neighbour as Christ knows us. Amen.***

## **DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away, see, everything has become new! All this is from God, to whom we have been reconciled through Christ. And so, rejoice!

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:** Seek ye first TiS 745

Seek ye first the kingdom of God  
and his righteousness,  
and all these things shall be added unto you.  
Allelu, alleluia.

*Alleluia, alleluia,  
alleluia, allelu, alleluia.*

Ask and it shall be given unto you,  
seek and you shall find,  
knock and it shall be opened unto you.  
Allelu, alleluia.

*Alleluia, alleluia,  
alleluia, allelu, alleluia.*

We shall not live by bread alone,  
but by every word  
that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.  
Allelu, alleluia.

*Alleluia, alleluia,  
alleluia, allelu, alleluia.*

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The Service of the Word
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## **BIBLE READINGS**

### **Genesis 22:1–14**

1 After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 2 He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you." 3 So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt offering and set out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him. 4 On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away. 5 Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you." 6 Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. And the two of them walked on together. 7 Isaac said to his father Abraham, "Father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said,

“The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” 8 Abraham said, “God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” And the two of them walked on together. 9 When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. 10 Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son. 11 But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” 12 He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.” 13 And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 So Abraham called that place “The Lord will provide,” as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.”

### **Matthew 10:40–42**

40 “Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. 41 Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous, 42 and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”

### **REFLECTION**

Have you ever watched this kind of a short video on YouTube? There’s a beautiful, shiny, incredibly expensive sports car—a Lamborghini—parked on the side of the street. And next to it stands a man dressed in a very sharp, expensive suit. He looks wealthy, important, and highly successful. A young woman passes by, and her eyes light up. She immediately walks up to this sharply dressed man. She smiles warmly, starts a friendly conversation, and even gives him her phone number. She’s putting in 100% effort to be welcoming and kind. But right at that moment, another man walks past them. This man is wearing very old, poor-looking clothes. He looks tired, and honestly, a bit out of place. As he passes by, he gently looks at the woman, smiles, and says, "Hello, how are you?" Just a simple, polite greeting. But the woman takes one look at his messy appearance, rolls her eyes, and completely ignores him. She doesn't even say hello back. She turns her head away as if he is invisible, treating him like he doesn't even exist, and goes right back to flirting with the man in the nice suit. But here is the big surprise. The man in the expensive suit suddenly turns to the poor-looking man, bows his head respectfully, and hands him the car keys. He says, "Here are your keys, sir. The car is ready." As it turns out, the man in the fancy suit was just the driver. The man in the old, poor-looking clothes was the actual owner of the Lamborghini! He was the multi-millionaire. You should have seen the woman's face. She was so embarrassed. She immediately ran after the poor-looking owner,

saying, "Oh, I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to ignore you!" But it was too late. The owner just smiled, got into his luxury car, and drove away.

We laugh at stories like this, don't we? But if we are completely honest, this video shows the exact world we are living in today. We live in a world that only looks at outward appearance. Everywhere we look—on TV or Instagram—we are told that looks are everything. People spend so much money on cosmetic surgeries and expensive clothes, trying desperately to change how they look on the outside. Now, don't get me wrong. Taking care of our appearance is not a bad thing. But the problem is that we judge people by how they look. Because of this, people who look weak, poor, or uncool are easily ignored and left out. We practice "selective hospitality." We are naturally nice to successful-looking people, but we ignore the ones who seem to have nothing.

Today, in our Gospel reading from Matthew chapter 10, Jesus challenges this exact mindset. He calls us to a completely different kind of hospitality. In Verse 42, Jesus says: "And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward." I love how simple Jesus keeps it. He talks about giving "a cup of cold water." He isn't asking us to build a giant charity foundation or donate millions of dollars. He is talking about a tiny, ordinary act of kindness. A cup of water. But the most important part of this verse is who we are giving this water to. Jesus calls them "these little ones." Who were the "little ones" in Jesus' time? They weren't just children. The "little ones" were the people who held no power in society. They had no wealth, no high status, and no voice. They were the outsiders and the vulnerable. We are talking about the widows who had no financial support, the orphans who had no family to protect them, the strangers and foreigners who had no rights, and the sick and disabled who were pushed to the edges of the city. They were the ones who were easily ignored and completely forgotten by the rest of the world. If you were kind to one of these "little ones," you got absolutely nothing in return. They had no money to repay you, they had no social influence to help you, and they couldn't improve your reputation. They were completely powerless. The only thing they can do for you is look into your eyes and say, "Thank you." Other than that, they have absolutely nothing to give back. And Jesus says: That is exactly where true hospitality begins.

Now, why does Jesus care so much about how we treat these "little ones"? The answer is found just a few chapters later, in Matthew chapter 25, which beautifully supports our text today. It's a famous passage where Jesus talks about the final judgment. The King sits on his throne and says to his followers, "Thank you. When I was hungry, you fed me. When I was thirsty, you gave me something to drink. When I was a stranger, you invited me in." And the people are genuinely confused! They look at the King and say, "Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty? When

did we see you as a stranger and welcome you? We've never seen you in such a terrible state!" And then, Jesus gives one of the most powerful lines in the entire New Testament. He says: "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." (Matthew 25:40)

Brothers and sisters, this is a beautiful, yet shocking truth. Jesus Christ, the King of kings, the Creator of the universe, does not always show up in glory, riding a luxury car or wearing a fancy suit. Instead, He chooses to walk among us in disguise. He hides himself in the faces of the lonely, the broken, the poor, and the forgotten. When we look at the "little ones" in our world, we are not just looking at people in need. We are looking at the face of Jesus. Let's think about our own lives, our own community here in Australia. If Jesus is walking around in disguise today, who are the "little ones" among us right now? We don't have to look very far. We know that right now, so many people around us are quietly struggling. Think about the elderly people around us. Many of them spend days completely alone, just wishing someone would say hello. Think also about the new migrants and international students, who are trying to survive in a completely foreign country. I know exactly how that feels because this is my story. When I came to Australia in 1994, I couldn't speak a word of English. It was incredibly difficult because of the language barrier and culture shock. But a wonderful volunteer named Gwen stepped into my life, and I will never forget her. For years, she walked with me. She patiently listened to my broken English, made me warm tea, and always encouraged me. What Gwen gave me was exactly that "cup of cold water." To me, a struggling outsider, her simple kindness was absolutely life-changing. We see this beautiful hospitality every Wednesday at the Kogarah Storehouse. Volunteers come and work so hard, sweating as they pack food parcels. They carefully sort through everything, separating the good food from the bad, making sure our neighbours receive only the best. Every time I watch them serve with such passion, I am deeply moved. They are truly giving out cups of cold water. And think about the people who come to pick up those parcels. They are the "little ones" of our day, quietly struggling. They are the very people who desperately need our smiles, respect, and welcoming hearts. Every single one of them is an opportunity for us to see the face of Christ. Our Uniting Church has a long, beautiful history of standing up for justice and being a welcoming community. But real welcoming doesn't just happen because we have a sign outside our church building that says "All Welcome." It happens when you and I, individually, decide to open our hearts in our daily lives.

Brothers and sisters in Christ. Remember this, Jesus promises us in Matthew 10:40: "Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me." When you offer a simple cup of cold water—a small act of kindness, a moment of your time, a word of encouragement—you are not just being a good person. You are opening the door of your heart to Jesus himself. You are welcoming the King. May we be a church and a people known for

this radical, beautiful hospitality. Let's go out this week, find the "little ones," and give them a cup of cold water in the name of Jesus. Amen.

**HYMN:** When I needed a neighbour, were you there TiS 629

When I needed a neighbour, were you there, were you there?

When I needed a neighbour, were you there?

*And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,  
were you there?*

I was hungry and thirsty, were you there, were you there?

I was hungry and thirsty, were you there?

*And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,  
were you there?*

I was cold, I was naked, were you there, were you there?

I was cold, I was naked, were you there?

*And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,  
were you there?*

When I needed a shelter, were you there, were you there?

When I needed a shelter, were you there?

*And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,  
were you there?*

When I needed a healer, were you there, were you there?

When I needed a healer, were you there?

*And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,  
were you there?*

When they put me in prison, were you there, were you there?

When they put me in prison, were you there?

*And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,  
were you there?*

Wherever you travel, I'll be there, I'll be there,

wherever you travel, I'll be there.

*And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,  
I'll be there.*

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**COMMISSIONING SERVICE**

(Elders/Church Councillors)

Last week, our church prayerfully elected new leaders to serve among us. Today, we will commission them for this important role in our worship.

## 1 SENTENCES

There are diverse gifts;

***but it is the same Spirit who gives them.***

There are different ways of serving God:

***but it is the same Lord who is served.***

God works through people in different ways:

***but it is the same God whose purpose is achieved through them all.***

Each one of us is given a gift by the Spirit:

***and there is no gift without its corresponding service.***

There is one ministry of Christ:

***and in this ministry we all share.***

Together we are the body of Christ:

***and individually members of it.***

## 2 PRESENTATION

**The minister addresses the people:**

The Uniting Church provides for the exercise by men and women of the gifts God bestows upon them for the building up of the Church. Having sought the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we are now to commission as elders / church councillors those whom we have elected to this ministry.

I present the following persons to be recommissioned as elders / church councillors:  
Elders: Dorothy Makasa. Church Councillor: Robert McAlpine, Joshua Chang.

**The minister reads the names of the candidates.**

**The candidates stand together facing the congregation  
and the Minister addresses them:**

Brothers and sisters,

the congregation has elected you to serve as elders / church councillors.

The church council shall give priority in its life to building up the congregation in faith and love, sustaining members in hope, and leading the congregation to a fuller participation in Christ's mission in the world.

**If there are elders to be commissioned/recommissioned,**

the following statement shall be included:

The ministry of elder is one of spiritual oversight, and may also be exercised in pastoral visitation, teaching, encouraging members of the congregation to share in mission, and assisting the minister in leadership of worship and administration of the sacraments.

Where the elders are to be members of the church council,  
the following should be included:

Elders who serve on the church council have a particular responsibility to ensure that such matters have priority in the work of the church council.

### 3 THE VOWS

The minister asks the candidates:

Do you confess anew Jesus Christ as Lord?

***I do.***

Do you believe that you are called by God through the Church to this ministry?

***I do.***

Being guided by the Basis of Union of the Uniting Church in Australia, will you live and work within the faith and unity of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church?

***With God's help I will.***

Relying on God's grace, do you promise to carry out the duties of your office?

***I do.***

The people stand. The minister says:

Will you, the members of this congregation,  
accept these brothers and sisters as elders and church councillors?

***We will.***

Will you encourage them in love and support them  
in their ministry, serving with them the one Lord Jesus Christ?

***We will.***

May God give you strength to fulfil these vows,  
and to him be the glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus  
from generation to generation for ever. ***Amen.***

The people sit.

### 4 ACT OF COMMISSIONING

The minister says:

Beloved in Christ, let us pray in silence for these people before we commission them for the work to which we believe the Holy Spirit has called them.

After a time of silence, the minister says:

Almighty God,  
we thank you that in every age you have chosen leaders  
to serve and care for your people.  
We thank you that you have called these brothers and sisters,  
our new elected elders / church councillors to serve you.

May those you have chosen have the same mind which was in Christ Jesus  
and be faithful disciples, giving example to Christ's flock  
and witnessing to the truth of the gospel; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

The minister lays hands on the head of each candidate  
in turn, and the minister says:

God of grace,  
through the Holy Spirit  
empower your servants  
Dorothy Makasa, Robert McAlpine, Joshua Chang.

The people respond:

**Amen.**

## 5 DECLARATION

The minister says:

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
I declare you to be elders / church councillors of the Uniting Church in Australia  
in the Kogarah Congregation.

The people may applaud.

## OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

Loving God,

We offer these gifts with grateful hearts.  
Use our resources to extend your kingdom  
and to provide a cup of cold water to the lonely,  
the hurting, and the marginalized in our community.

May this offering be the opening of our hearts to the world,  
committing us to see the "little ones" with your eyes  
and to share your practical love this week.  
In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

## **ANNOUNCEMENT**

### **PRAYERS FOR OTHERS**

Loving God,  
We come to you today with hearts open  
to the world around us.

[Our World]

Lord, we lift up our broken world to you.  
We pray for all those suffering from the horrors of war and violence,  
especially those who have lost their loved ones,  
their homes, and their peace.  
Look with mercy upon the weak, the poor, and the hungry  
who are crying out for help.  
In the midst of darkness, please bring your justice,  
protection, and comfort to these vulnerable children of yours.

Lord, in your mercy,  
***Hear our prayer.***

[Our Community]

We also pray for our local community.  
In a society that so often focuses on success and outward appearance,  
help us not to pass by those who are quietly hurting.  
Open our eyes to see the lonely, the marginalized,  
and the struggling neighbours right next to us.  
Give us hands that are ready to offer  
even a single cup of cold water to those in need.

Lord, in your mercy,  
***Hear our prayer.***

[Our Church Family]

We lift up the members of our church family,  
especially those who are sick, grieving,  
or going through difficult times.

May they feel your deep comfort, healing, and peace today.  
Surround them with your love,  
and use us to be a source of strength for them.

Lord, in your mercy,

***Hear our prayer.***

[The Future of Our Church]

Finally, we pray for the future of our church.  
Guide us as we move forward.

May we grow into a beautiful community  
that sees this world through the eyes of Jesus—  
always ready to notice, welcome,  
and serve the "little ones" in our midst.

Lord, in your mercy,

***Hear our prayer.***

Let us pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us

***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 Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
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## **INVITATION**

I am the bread of life.

Those who come to me shall not hunger,  
and those who believe in me shall never thirst.

Whoever comes to me I will never drive away.

Draw near with faith.  
Receive the body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,  
and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

**COMMUNION HYMN:** Come as you are 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.

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### **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you.  
**And also be with you.**  
Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them to the Lord.**  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Thanks and praise, glory and honour are rightly yours,  
our Lord and God, for you alone are worthy.  
In time beyond our dreaming  
you brought forth life out of darkness,

and in the love of Christ your Son  
you set man and woman at the heart of your creation.

For this we praise you with the faithful of every time  
and place joining with the whole creation  
in the eternal hymn:

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.***

We thank you that you called a covenant people  
to be a light to the nations.  
Through Moses you taught us to love your law,  
and in the prophets you cried out for justice.

In the fullness of your mercy  
you became one with us in Jesus Christ,  
who gave himself up for us on the cross.  
You make us alive together with him,  
that we may rejoice in his presence and share his peace.

***By water and the Spirit  
you open the kingdom to all who believe,  
and welcome us to your table:  
for by grace we are saved, through faith.***

We remember, on the night of his betrayal, that Jesus took bread,  
giving thanks, and broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take, eat. This is my body given for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me.”

In the same way, after supper, he also took the cup and said:  
Drink from this all of you.  
This is my blood shed for you and for the whole world  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this in remembrance of me.”

With this bread and this cup we do as our Saviour commands:  
we celebrate the redemption he has won for us.  
***Christ has died.***

***Christ is risen.***

***Christ will come again.***

Pour out the Holy Spirit on us  
and on these gifts of bread and wine,  
that they may be for us the body and blood of Christ.  
Make us one with him,  
one with each other,  
and one in ministry in the world,  
until at last we feast with him in the kingdom.

Through your Son, Jesus Christ,  
in your holy church,  
all honour and glory are yours, Father almighty,  
now and for ever. ***Amen.***

## **BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

### **LAMB OF GOD**

Jesus, Lamb of God,

***Have mercy on us.***

Jesus, bearer of our sins,

***Have mercy on us.***

Jesus, redeemer of the world,

***Grant us peace.***

## **The Communion**

### **Prayer after Communion**

Loving God,

We thank you for feeding us at your table  
and renewing us with your grace.

Through this holy meal, you have made us one  
with Christ and with each other.

Now, send us out by the power of your Holy Spirit.  
Help us to be your hands and feet in the world—  
bringing your hospitality, peace, and practical love  
to everyone we meet, especially the "little ones" in our midst.  
In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

The Sending Forth of the People of God
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**HYMN:** Kneels at the feet of his friends TiS 640

Kneels at the feet of his friends,  
silently washes their feet:  
master who acts as a slave to them.

*(Refrain)*

*Yesu, Yesu, fill us with your love,  
show us how to serve  
the neighbours we have from you.*

Neighbours are wealthy and poor,  
varied in colour and race,  
neighbours are near us and far away.

*(Refrain)*

These are the ones we should serve,  
these are the ones we should love;  
all these are neighbours to us and you.

*(Refrain)*

Loving puts us on our knees,  
Silently washing their feet:  
this is the way we should live with you.

*(Refrain)*

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## **BLESSING**

Go forth into the world in peace.  
Be of good courage, hold fast to that which is good,  
and render to no one evil for evil.  
Strengthen the discouraged,  
support the weak, and help the suffering.  
Open your hearts to notice and welcome the "little ones" in your midst,  
sharing Christ's warm hospitality wherever you go.

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 God's blessing (Benediction)

May God's blessing surround you each day,  
as you trust Him and walk in His way.

May His presence within  
guard and keep you from sin,  
go in peace, go in joy, go in love.

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