



The Uniting Church in Australia

KOGARAH UNITING CHURCH

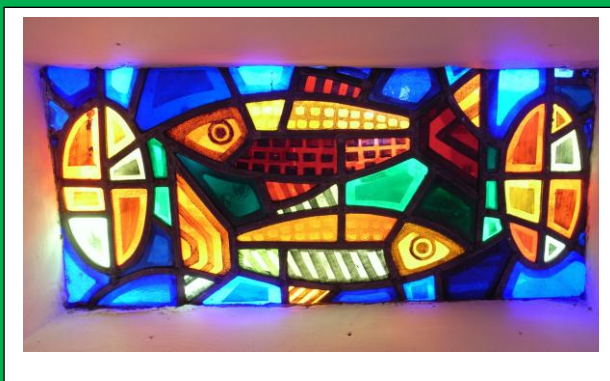
**We welcome people of all cultures and lifestyles,
We create a safe place for the community
We share the journey of life and faith.**

2nd August 2026 @ 10am

Pentecost + 10 - Changed in the Struggle

**Leader Richard
Reflection Deok Hee**

**Genesis 32:22–31; Psalm 17:1–7, 15;
Romans 9:1–5; Matthew 14:13–21**



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/>

New email address for Kogarah Uniting Church: kogarahuc@gmail.com

**For pastoral concerns, please contact
Rev Deok Hee Cho on 0401 975 745.**

Scriptures

Genesis 32:22–31

Jacob, having left Laban, is on his way home and facing the uncertainty of meeting Esau again. Carrying fear and unresolved tension, he spends the night alone, where his struggle deepens. He leaves changed—marked and blessed—reminding us that encounters with God can be both costly and life-giving.

Psalm 17:1–7, 15

In this psalm, the writer brings their struggle honestly before God, trusting they are seen and heard. Like Jacob, it reflects a faith that holds on through uncertainty and finds assurance in God's presence.

Romans 9:1–5

Paul speaks with deep sorrow and longing for others, holding a grief that does not easily resolve. It reminds us that faith can include carrying concern and love for others, even when the way forward is unclear.

Matthew 14:13–21

This familiar story echoes others in the Hebrew Scriptures, drawing us into God's ongoing story of compassion and provision. What seems not enough becomes enough in God's hands.

Theme Focus

We watch as Jacob wrestles through the night and Jesus feeds a crowd, and begin to trust that God meets us in our wrestling, our exhaustion, and our not-enough, inviting us to be transformed.

Word for the Day

Jacob has been on a long journey—fleeing, striving, and slowly being changed. Now, alone in the night, he wrestles and refuses to let go until he is blessed. He leaves marked, renamed, and changed, discovering that encountering God is not easy, and transformation does not come quickly.

In the gospel, Jesus meets a crowd with compassion and takes what seems not enough and makes it more than enough. In both stories, we see that God meets us where we are and continues to work within and through us, shaping something new over time.

Ideas for Reflection

- When have you found yourself wrestling with something—an idea, a decision, or part of your life—that stayed with you over time?
- In Jacob's story, what do you notice about the way he stays in the struggle through the night?
- What do you notice about the way Jacob is both changed and marked by this encounter?
- We might think of blessing as something that makes life easier, but here the blessing and the wound arrive together. What might this say about our encounters with God?

- Jacob leaves both blessed and marked. What do you notice about the way change in our lives can be both life-giving and challenging?
- Where might we be called to stay with something rather than walk away, trusting that God is at work?
- How does it feel to have a God with whom you can wrestle?
- Where might we be called to offer what we have, even when it feels not enough?

* * *

Last Sunday we watched a video from Saltbush. His article from the Synod website is by the Saltbush Ministry Team Leader, Rev Mark Faulkner

A New World Needs a New Church

It's hard to describe exactly what season the rural and coastal church is in right now. But one thing is clear: the season has changed. And so has the world around us. One missional author put it simply: "If you have a new world, you need a new church. You have a new world!"

Not long ago, Presbyteries were mostly made up of congregations with their own ministers. That's no longer true in most rural and coastal areas. Today, there are very few ministers in these communities. In their place, we have something just as valuable: strong, capable lay leaders. But the wider church hasn't always kept up with this shift. In many ways, it still expects things to work the way they used to, even though the season has clearly moved on.

This new season asks something of us. It asks us to stop overloading our lay leaders with endless meetings. It asks us to stop expecting them to simply repeat what ministry looked like in the past. It asks us to make sure our training and education actually reflect the reality of ministry today. And it asks us to think practically about how we support and encourage lay leaders in whatever gifts they bring.

Some of the best moments in Saltbush's work happen at our gatherings, retreats, and simple visits with congregations. We sit with people from all over the state, listen to their stories, and share in Christian community together. But almost every time, we hear the same thing underneath those stories: weariness. Burden.

It's worth sitting with these words from the Gospel of Matthew: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." These words are hard to live out fully, especially when the very church meant to offer that rest is sometimes the one placing the burden in the first place.

Our lay leaders often hold their whole church community together. With so few ministers around, Presbyteries rely on them heavily. In their towns, they're often seen as the face of the church, the presence that shows up in times of struggle and pain. They support others through faith, through hardship, through everyday human need, often without much support themselves.

Over the past couple of months, Saltbush has held gatherings in Lake Cargelligo and Gloucester, and a Lay Leader's Retreat at Galong. People travelled from every corner of NSW to be part of them. These were times full of warmth and encouragement, but also honesty, people spoke openly about the weight of expectation, the distractions they carry, and the seasons of change they're living through.

At Saltbush, our core purpose is simple: to walk alongside our lay leaders, wherever they are and however many (or few) of them there are, and to keep exploring what faith and Christian community can look like today.

We're deeply thankful for the time we've shared with communities over these past months, and we're already looking forward to the years of ministry and encouragement still ahead.

(Comment: The situation described here is not restricted to the rural regions and coastal areas. It's here amongst us right now.)

Planning Ahead

- **August 5 – Worship Task Group meeting @ 7pm via Zoom***
- **August 6 – Kogarah Church Council @ 7pm via Zoom***
- **August 30 – Closure of Ministry service for Deok Hee (organised by Presbytery)**
- **September 18 Chinese Community Health Seminar 10:30-12**
- ****Note changes of date***

Please pray for ...

The mission and ministry of our congregation at this time of great need and uncertainty, 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, Ngahuia, Peter and Sue; Dinah; Ern Edwards; Jim Bird, Cindy, Dorothy and Godfrey, Nives, Mike, Mei Mei -Bobbie in her time of loss; Deok Hee and his family as they prepare to move to Moss Vale to take up ministry there.

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. Venezuela.

JACOB STRUGGLED FOR A BLESSING

1. Jacob struggled for a blessing
in the darkness all night long,
holding tightly to a stranger -
could he hear a distant song?
God of every person's future,
you gave him a change of name'
give to us a new direction
out of struggle, out of pain.

Jesus, you are the name of God,
Jesus, you are the face of God,
Jesus, you are the help of God,
keep us through our night

2. Jesus struggled in the garden
in the night of blood and tears.
He was lonely in the darkness,
though there was an angel near.
God of hope and transformation,
it took tears and pain and death
to destroy the power of evil,
to give us the Spirit's breath.

3. When we struggle in the darkness,
take away our fear and doubt.
In the dirt beneath the surface
quiet seeds begin to sprout.
God of great surprise and mystery,
make us constant in our prayer.
As we ask and search for answers,
may we come to know your care.

Robin Mann ©

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1995Next Sunday

9th August 2026 @ 10am

Pentecost + 11 - Jesus meets us in the storm

Leader Deok Hee

Reflection Deok Hee

Holy Communion Deok Hee

Genesis 37:1–4, 12–28; Psalm 105:1–6, 16–22, 45b;

Romans 10:5–15; Matthew 14:22–33



Church Council 2025-2026

**(New elections will be held at our next meeting to appoint the chair.
Secretary and treasurer.)**

Chair

Richard Goodman

Secretary

Sue Baglin

Treasurer

Joshua Chang

Councillors

Robert M^cAlpine (2027)

Sue Baglin (2027)

Joshua Chang (2027)

Elders

Bobbie Miller (2028)

Richard Goodman (2027)

Dorothy Makasa (2027)

Culture of Safety Contact Person

Richard Goodman