



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.**

23rd August 2026 @ 10am

Pentecost + 13 - Standing on the Rock

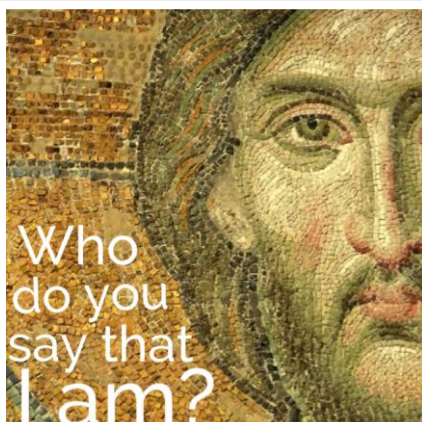
Leader Deok Hee

Reflection Deok Hee

Holy Communion Deok Hee

Exodus 1:8–2:10; Psalm 124;

Romans 12:1–8; Matthew 16:13–20



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

Exodus 1:8–2:10

The story of Moses begins in a time of fear and oppression, where ordinary people act with quiet courage to protect life. Long before Moses led the people, others risked themselves to ensure that hope could survive. Where do we see small acts of courage helping life to grow in difficult places?

Psalms 124 remembers times when danger threatened to overwhelm God's people, yet they found that their help came from God. Looking back, the community recognises how close they came to destruction and how God sustained them. This prayer reflects on what might have been without God's presence, protection, and care.

Romans 12:1–8

Paul describes a community shaped by faith in Christ, where each person's gift helps build the whole body. Belonging to Christ takes shape in the ways we serve and support one another.

Matthew 16:13–20

At Caesarea Philippi, a place associated with political and religious power, Jesus asks his disciples who they believe him to be. Peter's answer becomes a turning point, revealing a faith on which a new community will be built. How does our own understanding of Jesus shape the way we live and stand in the world?

Theme Focus

We hear Jesus ask, 'Who do you say I am?' and consider how our answer shapes where we stand and the lives we build.

Word for the Day

Jesus leads the disciples to a place considered the literal gateway to the underworld. Jesus doesn't avoid the place. It is here, in the shadow of competing powers, that he speaks of his identity and the community that will be built upon this confession.

In a place filled with competing loyalties and claims to power, Jesus asks his disciples who they believe him to be.

During the rise of the Third Reich, this passage was of great importance to the Confessing Church. The 'gates of Hades' metaphor served as a spiritual and political cry against those who sought to merge the Protestant church with Nazi ideology. For leaders such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Karl Barth, Jesus' words were not a promise of institutional safety but a call to active resistance. The Barmen Declaration of 1934, the movement's foundational document, used this passage to assert that the church is built on the Word of God alone, not on a 'Führer' or national identity. They stood upon the 'rock' of a singular confession—that Christ alone is Lord—turning the Barmen Declaration into a quiet, steady anthem of holy defiance against the deafening roar of the state. By identifying Christ as the only 'Rock,' they declared the Nazi state's 'totalitarian claims' to be a form of idolatry that the gates of hell could not protect. This promise gave the Confessing Church the courage to face state-sponsored death. They argued that since Christ had already 'stormed the gates of death,' the Nazi threat of the concentration camp was a shadowy power that the resurrection had already defeated.

Faith calls us to stand firm in difficult places.

It also calls us to build communities shaped by courage and hope.

Ideas for Reflection

- Who do people say Jesus is today? What is he like according to popular opinion? What do you say?
- Caesarea Philippi was a place of competing 'gods' and political power. What voices or loyalties shape your life today? How does your confession of Christ influence where you stand and how you live?
- What systems of injustice or patterns of harm in your community call for courage and faith?
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer understood confession as more than words; it shaped how the church lived. Where might your faith call you to act with courage rather than remain at a distance?

(TiS 240)

All go to God when they are sorely placed,
they plead to him for help, for peace, for bread,
for mercy, for them sinning, sick or dead.

We all do so in faith or unbelief.

We all go to God when he is sorely placed,
find him poor, scorned, unsheltered, without bread,
whelmed under weight of evil, weak or dead.

We stand by God then, in his hour of grief.

God comes to us when we are sorely placed,
body and spirit feeds us with his bread.

For everyone, he as a man hangs dead:
forgiven life he gives all through his death.

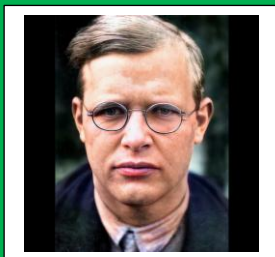
Friedrich Bonhoeffer 1906-1945

Translated by Walter Henry Farquharson (1936 altered)

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Bonhoeffer was executed by the Nazis in the last days of the Second World War.



St. Peter

(Matthew 16:13–20)

Impulsive master of misunderstanding

You comfort me with all your big mistakes;

Jumping the ship before you make the landing,

Placing the bet before you know the stakes.

I love the way you step out without knowing,

The way you sometimes speak before you think,

The way your broken faith is always growing,

The way he holds you even when you sink.

Born to a world that always tried to shame you,

Your shaky ego vulnerable to shame,

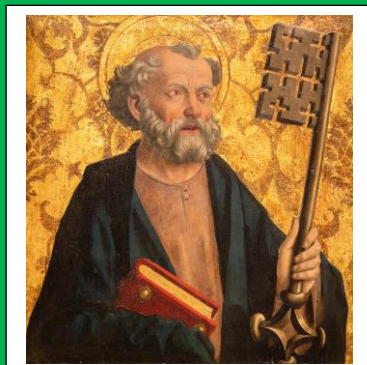
I love the way that Jesus chose to name you,

Before you knew how to deserve that name.

And in the end your Saviour let you prove

That each denial is undone by love.

Malcolm Guite - Malcolm shared this Sonnet on St Peter's Day, the anniversary of his ordination in 2012.



Planning Ahead

- **30th August– Closure of Ministry service for Deok Hee (organised with Presbytery)**
- **2nd September Worship Task Group via Zoom @ 7pm**
- **3rd or 10th September KUC Church Council via Zoom @ 7pm**
- **September 18 Chinese Community Health Seminar 10:30-12**

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; Prema and Priya, Denis and Dolly, Ngahuia, Peter and Sue; Dinah; Ern Edwards; Jim Bird, Cindy, Dorothy and Godfrey, Nives, Mike, Mei Mei;

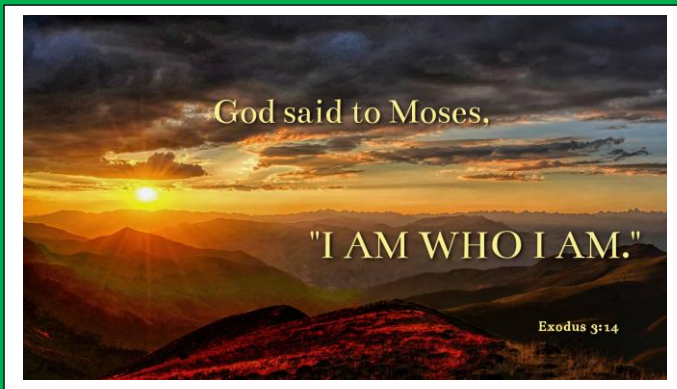
Deok Hee and his family as they prepare to move to Moss Vale to take up ministry there.

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.

Next Sunday
39th August 2026 @ 10am
Pentecost + 14 - Letting Go
Deok Hee's Final Service with Us

Leader Richard
Reflection Deok Hee
Closure of Ministry with Rev Steve Aynsley (GRP)
Exodus 3:1–15; Psalm 105:1–6, 23–26, 45b;
Romans 12:9–21; Matthew 16:21–28



Church Council 2025-2026

Chair
Secretary
Treasurer
Councillors

Richard Goodman
Sue Baglin
Joshua Chang
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