

KOGARAH UNITING CHURCH
September 27th 2026
Season of Creation River Sunday
The Gathering of the People of God

WELCOME & GREETING

Introduction to Theme

Today is River Sunday, a time to honor the waters that sustain life, shape landscapes, and connect communities. Rivers are more than channels of water; they are lifelines that nourish forests, wetlands, farms, towns, and countless creatures. In Scripture, rivers are signs of God's generosity and renewal, flowing from the garden of creation to the river of life in the new creation. They remind us that life is sustained not by standing still but by continual movement, generosity, and connection.

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

The river of life flows from God.
Its waters bring healing to the nations.
The trees clap their hands beside its banks.
Its waters bring healing to the nations.
Christ is risen and new creation has begun.
Its waters bring healing to the nations.
Come and drink deeply of hope.
We come to worship the God of living water.

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

God is here

God is always here

God is with us

God is always with us

SING: I danced in the morning / Lord of the Dance TIS 242

I danced in the morning when the world was begun,
I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun;
and I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth,
at Bethlehem I had my birth:

Dance then, wherever you may be;

“I am the Lord of the dance,” said he;

“and I’ll lead you all wherever you may be,
and I’ll lead you all in the dance,” said he.

I danced for the scribe and the pharisee,
but they would not dance and they wouldn’t follow me.

I danced for the fishermen, for James and John,
they came with me and the dance went on:

Dance then, wherever you may be;

“I am the Lord of the dance,” said he;

“and I’ll lead you all wherever you may be,
and I’ll lead you all in the dance,” said he.

I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame:
the holy people said it was a shame.

They whipped and they stripped and they hung me high,
and they left me there on a cross to die:

Dance then, wherever you may be;

“I am the Lord of the dance,” said he;

“and I’ll lead you all wherever you may be,
and I’ll lead you all in the dance,” said he.

I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black;
it’s hard to dance with the devil on your back.

They buried my body and they thought I’d gone;
but I am the dance and I still go on:

Dance then, wherever you may be;

“I am the Lord of the dance,” said he;

“and I’ll lead you all wherever you may be,
and I’ll lead you all in the dance,” said he.

They cut me down and I leap up high,
I am the life that will never, never die;
I’ll live in you if you’ll live in me:

**"I am the Lord of the Dance," said he:
Dance then, wherever you may be;
"I am the Lord of the dance," said he;
"and I'll lead you all wherever you may be,
and I'll lead you all in the dance," said he.**

© 1963, Stainer & Bell, Ltd., London; words and music: Sydney Carter
Reproduced under Copyright Licences:
ONE LICENSE A-604712; CCLI #45150

OPENING PRAYER

God of rivers and rainfall,
you move through creation bringing life where there was dryness,
hope where there was grief,
and healing where there was harm.
Move us to flow toward life,
to nourish what is fragile,
and to become streams of grace for a thirsty world.

Amen.

SING: Joyful joyful we adore thee 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
Reproduced under Copyright Licences:
ONE LICENSE A-604712; CCLI #45150

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of rivers and rainfall, we confess that we have too often treated water as a resource rather than a relationship.

We have polluted, taken more than we need, and forgotten that downstream communities inherit the choices of those upstream.

Forgive us for the ways we participate in the wounding of creation and for the times we believe our actions are too small to matter.

Help us to become people through whom life flows freely, justice runs deeply, and healing reaches far beyond our own shores.

WORDS OF GRACE

Like a river that keeps flowing, God's mercy does not run dry. Like rain returning to thirsty ground, God's grace seeks out what is weary and what longs for new life. The One who made a covenant with all creation has not forgotten the world. In Christ, you are forgiven, creation is cherished, and hope continues to flow.

Thanks be to God.

PEACE:

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

The Service of the Word

BIBLE READING: GENESIS 8:20-22 and 9:12-17

²⁰Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. ²¹And when the LORD smelled the pleasing odour, the LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of humankind, for the inclination of the human heart is evil from youth; nor will I ever again destroy every living creature as I have done. ²²As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease."

¹²God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations:

¹³I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” ¹⁷God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

BIBLE READING: MATTHEW 28:1-10

After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ²And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. ⁵But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come; see the place where he lay. ⁷Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ This is my message for you.” ⁸So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”

BIBLE READING: REVELATION 22:1-5

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; ⁴they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

REFLECTION – SALTBUSH

Online Link: <https://vimeo.com/355680356>

SING: Where wide sky rolls down and touches red sand TIS 188

**Where wide sky rolls down and touches red sand,
where sun turns to gold the grass of the land,
let spinifex, mulga and waterhole tell
their joy in the One who made everything well.**

**Where rain-forest calm meets reef, tide and storm,
where green things grow lush and oceans are warm,
let every sea-creature and tropical bird
exult in the light of the life-giving Word.**

**Where red gum and creek cross hillside and plain,
where cool tree-ferns rise to welcome the rain,
let bushland, farm, mountain-top, all of their days
delight in the Spirit who formed them for praise.**

**Now, people of faith, come gather around
with songs to be shared, for blessings abound!
Australians, whatever your culture or race,
come, lift up your hearts to the Giver of grace.**

© E.J. Smith
Reproduced under Copyright Licences:
ONE LICENSE A-604712; CCLI #45150

OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

As rivers gather countless streams into one current, so our gifts become part of something larger than ourselves. Receive these offerings, and use them for the healing of communities, the restoration of creation, and the flourishing of generations yet to come.

May what passes through our hands become life for others.

Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Moon Festival Singing

《月亮代表我的心》 English is "The Moon Represents My Heart"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=liFm7AWP9n4>

English Translation) Lyrics

[Chorus]

You ask me how deep my love for you is

How much I really love you
My affection is real,
My love is real
The moon represents my heart

You ask me how deep my love for you is
How much I really love you
My affection does not waver
My love will not change
The moon represents my heart

[Verse 1]
Just one soft kiss
is enough to move my heart
A period of time when our affection was deep
Has made me miss you until now

[Chorus]
You ask me how deep my love for you is
How much I really love you
Go think about it

Go and have a look (at the moon)
The moon represents my heart

[Instrumental Break]

[Verse 2]
Just one soft kiss
is enough to move my heart
A period of time when our affection was deep
Has made me miss you until now

[Chorus]
You ask me how deep my love for you is
How much I really love you
Go think about it
Go and have a look (at the moon)
The moon represents my heart

Go think about it
Go and have a look (at the moon)
The moon represents my heart

Changing Partners

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EsMWrOH8la0>

We were waltzing together to a dreamy melody
When they called out, "Change partners, " and you waltzed away from me
Now my arms feel so empty, as I gaze around the floor
And I'll keep on changing partners 'til I hold you once more

Though we danced for one moment, and too soon we had to part
In that wonderful moment, something happened to my heart
So I'll keep changing partners 'til you're in my arms, and then
Oh, my darling, I will never change partners again

Though we danced for one moment, and too soon we had to part
In that wonderful moment, something happened to my heart
So I'll keep changing partners 'til you're in my arms, and then
Oh, my darling, I will never change partners again

Carpenters -Yesterday Once More

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YTaWayUE5XA>

When I was young
I'd listen to the radio
Waitin' for my favorite songs
When they played I'd sing along
It made me smile.

Those were such happy times
And not so long ago
How I wondered where they'd gone
But they're back again
Just like a long lost friend
All the songs I loved so well.

Every Sha-la-la-la
Every Wo-o-wo-o
Still shines
Every shing-a-ling-a-ling
That they're startin' to sing's
So fine.

When they get to the part
Where he's breakin' her heart
It can really make me cry
Just like before
It's yesterday once more.

Lookin' back on how it was
In years gone by
And the good times that I had
Makes today seem rather sad
So much has changed.

It was songs of love that
I would sing to then
And I'd memorize each word
Those old melodies
Still sound so good to me
As they melt the years away.

Every Sha-la-la-la
Every Wo-o-wo-o
Still shines
Every shing-a-ling-a-ling
That they're startin' to sing's
So fine.

All my best memories
Come back clearly to me
Some can even make me cry.
Just like before
It's yesterday once more.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

God of streams and estuaries, of rainfall and springs, we pray for rivers that no longer run clean, for wetlands that have disappeared, and for communities whose access to water is uncertain or unjust.

Hear us as we pray:

Let your love flow through us.

We pray for those affected by drought, flooding, sea level rise, and increasingly unpredictable seasons.

Hear us as we pray:

Let your love flow through us.

We pray for scientists, conservation workers, community restoration groups, and all who labor quietly for the healing of waterways.

Hear us as we pray:

Let your love flow through us.

We pray for rivers and harbors near us, for the streams in our care, and for all creatures who depend upon them.

Hear us as we pray:

Let your love flow through us.

We pray for ourselves that we may learn to live upstream with those downstream in mind and become people through whom your compassion flows into the world.

Hear us as we pray:

Let your love flow through us.

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.**

COMMUNION:

INVITATION

This is not our table; it is the table of Jesus Christ. He invites all who love him, all who seek him, and all who desire to walk with him in faith.

You do not need to be perfect or have all the answers - you only need to come.

So come, taste and see that the Lord is good.

All are welcome at the Lord's table.

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.

All: Why do we give thanks and praise before this table?

We give thanks for God's work of creation, liberation, and salvation.

It is indeed right, our duty and delight, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, O holy Lord, eternal God. You created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them; you made us in your own image; and in countless ways you show us your mercy.

Therefore, with choirs of angels and the whole company of heaven, we worship and adore your glorious name, joining our voices in their unending praise:

All: 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.

All glory and blessing are yours, O holy God, for in your mercy, you gave your only Son, Jesus Christ.

He took our human nature and suffered death on the cross for our redemption.

There he made a perfect sacrifice for the sins for the whole world.

We praise you that before he suffered and died, our Savior gave us this holy sacrament and commanded us to continue it until he comes again.

All: Why do we eat bread at this table?

On the night before he died, Jesus took bread.

After giving thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying,

“Take, eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

All: Why do we drink from the cup at this table?

The same night Jesus took the cup, saying,

“This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me.”

All: What do we remember at this table?

We remember God’s gracious love for us,

Christ’s death and resurrection for us,

and the Spirit’s tender care for us.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

All: Dying, you destroyed our death;

rising, you restored our life.

Lord Jesus, come in glory.

Merciful God, pour out your Holy Spirit on these gifts of bread and wine, that in eating and drinking we may be made one with Christ and one another.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, now and forever.

Amen.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The Bread of Life, Christ's body broken for you.

The Cup of Hope, Christ's blood shed for you.

The gifts of God for You the People of God.

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 with the bread of life and the cup of salvation.

Through this holy meal, you have reminded us who Jesus is and how deeply we are loved.

Send us out now in the power of your Spirit - refreshed, forgiven, and united - to share your love, peace, and grace with a waiting world.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

The Sending Forth of the People of God

BLESSING:

Go now as people of the river.

May the God who placed a rainbow in the sky give you faithfulness.

May the risen Christ, who met his disciples in the garden, give you hope.

May the Spirit, who moves like living water through creation, make you a source of healing wherever you flow.

Go in peace, to refresh the weary, to protect what is precious, and to join the river of life that is already flowing through the world.

SING: Let all creation dance TIS 187

**Let all creation dance
in energies sublime,
as order turns with chance,
unfolding space and time,
for nature's art
in glory grows,
and newly shows God's mind and heart.**

**God's breath each
force unfurls,
igniting from a spark
expanding starry swirls,
with whirlpools
dense and dark.
Though moon and sun
seem mindless things,
each orbit sings: "Your will be done."**

**Our own amazing earth,
with sunlight, cloud and storms
and life's abundant growth
in lovely shapes and forms,
is made for praise,
a fragile whole,
and from its soul
heaven's music plays.**

**Lift heart and soul and voice:
in Christ all praises meet
and nature shall rejoice
as all is made complete.
In hope be strong,
all life befriend
and kindly tend creation's song.**

© 1996 Hope Publishing; text, Brian Wwren.

Reproduced under Copyright Licences:

ONE LICENSE A-604712; CCLI #45150