



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.**

11th October 2026 @ 10am

Pentecost 20

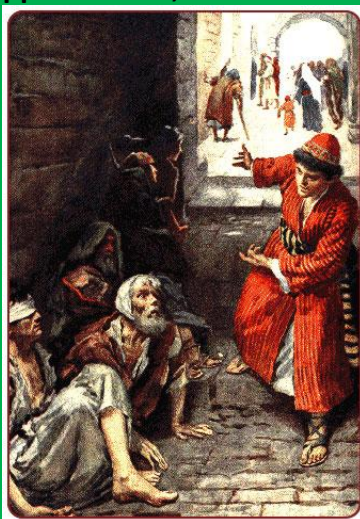
Singing in Tune with God's Love

Leader Robert

Reflection Saltbush

Exodus 32:1–14; Psalm 106:1–6, 19–23;

Philippians 4:1–9; Matthew 22:1–14



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
Richard Goodman on 0434 127 340**

Scriptures

Exodus 32:1–14

While Moses is delayed on the mountain, the people's anxiety grows, and they make a golden calf: a god they can see, hold, and control. This story invites us to notice what we reach for when God feels silent or slow to act.

Psalms 106:1–6, 19–23 looks back at the golden calf with honesty, confession, and remembrance. It names the people's forgetfulness, as well as God's mercy and Moses' courage in standing 'in the breach.' As we reflect on this psalm, we might recall the sustaining grace and kindness that have sustained us through our own faltering trust.

Philippians 4:1–9

Paul encourages the community to stand firm not by denying but by bringing it into prayer and focusing on what is true, just, pure, pleasing, and worthy of praise. Where Exodus shows anxiety in seeking something visible to control, Paul invites us to receive the peace of God that guards hearts and minds. What might it mean to clothe our thoughts in prayer, gratitude, and peace this week?

Matthew 22:1–14

Jesus's parable of the wedding banquet is both extravagant and unsettling. The invitation is wider than expected, gathering 'both good and bad,' yet the story asks whether those who come are willing to be changed by the feast as they enter. As we listen, we might notice the distractions, refusals, and anxieties that keep us from receiving God's invitation and living in the way of grace.

Theme Focus :As the people make a golden calf and Jesus speaks of a wide-open banquet, we ponder the fears and distractions that cause us to turn away from trust, and listen for God's call to trust and celebration.

Word for the Day

It's helpful to approach the parable of the wedding banquet (Matthew 22:1–14) not as a moral warning about worthiness, but as an invitation to discover our lives within God's generous embrace. Jesus asks us to imagine the reign of God as a feast already prepared: abundant, joyful, and wider than expected. The invitation does not go only to the impressive or deserving, but into the streets, gathering until the hall is filled.

At the same time, the parable is not without difficulty. Some are too busy, distracted, or resistant to come. Others respond with hostility. And the guest without a wedding robe reminds us that welcome is not the same as indifference. To enter the feast is also to be drawn into the life of the feast, clothed in grace, mercy, joy, and love.

Read alongside Exodus 32, the parable invites us to notice what happens when anxiety, impatience, or preoccupation pulls us away from the living God. The people in the wilderness reach for a golden calf they can see and control. The invited guests turn aside to other concerns. In both stories, God's invitation remains: come back, receive grace and learn to live as people shaped by trust and gratitude.

Ideas for Reflection

- Scripture often uses feasting as an image of God's welcome, joy, and promised future. Where have you experienced a table, meal, or gathering as a sign of grace?
- In the parable, some invited guests are too distracted or preoccupied to come. What kinds of busyness, anxiety, or self-reliance can keep us from noticing God's invitation?
- The invitation goes out into the streets and gathers 'both good and bad.' What does this suggest about the wideness of God's welcome? Where might our own welcome need to grow wider?
- The wedding robe is a difficult image. What might it mean, not as a test of worthiness, but as a sign of being willing to live in the spirit of the feast?

From the Wayside Chapel (submitted by Jim Bird)

Every community has faultlines that threaten to divide us: the “old” and “the new”, young and elderly, I could go on. Our vision of Love Over Hate asks us to stand at those faultlines and invite healing, which is always a collective endeavour. To be part of that healing means learning the art of multivalent listening.

On Sunday at Wayside’s chapel services, Uncle Ray Minniecon spoke about how three voices interact: the powerful, the powerless and the divine.

The powerful speak as they always have. What has changed is that some now stand at the faultlines calling not for healing but for hate as a way to unity. It is as nonsensical as it is harmful.

The powerless – not meant badly, but as in people stripped of dignity and then choked by systems that strip them of agency – cry out for a listening ear. Yet that cry often comes with a target, and the target is often those trying their best to listen and care. Hurt people hurt people. It can be indelicate and attacking, easily confused with the voice of the powerful, yet it is utterly different.

The divine is more elusive.

At any moment on any day, someone somewhere can push an imaginary button and all of a sudden, it's "Wharfie Time" at Wayside. If you don't know what that is, that's ok – just know it's when, in a matter of minutes, calm turns to chaos. Sunday just gone was one of those times. After a beautiful welcome, someone quietly sniped at our welcomer, “You b*#ch!”. Not realising the mic was still on, our welcomer replied, "Say that again c*&t, I'll end you, let's go!" A few of us were a little bemused, as it is common for us at this point to collectively respond, "Thanks be to God!" The third voice is the hardest to hear, because it is a whisper. 'I have a dream, will you join me?'... Uncle Ray

implored us to listen for it, and then to live ourselves into a new way of thinking, rather than think ourselves into a new way of living. Listening makes all the difference.

Our youngest, who helps at a Sunday School in the Inner West, told me about a student who was asked, "What is the biggest thing you can imagine?" The young girl, just eight years old, replied, "Physically? The whole universe. Emotionally? Tomorrow."

May we all learn to hear the whisper and possess the wisdom of a child.



Rev. Jon Owen CEO & Pastor

And more from this week

The best presents come unwrapped and go easily unnoticed. Our mission is a bit like that. For those who come here wanting to make a difference, it is an invitation to look beyond the self and to the gifts every human possesses. For those who are struggling, it is an invitation to see that others are there with them and for them, and that they are more than any label or diagnosis that has been allocated. Relief from these self-applied labels and the erasure of familiar dividing lines, even if for a fleeting moment, helps us be recaptured by the awesome reality that we simply belong together within the family of humanity. This

opens us up to adventures and discoveries never before thought possible.

Last week, two lifelong mates huddled in a hospital room to watch the Grand Final, one in the bed and the other visiting. Long before the final siren had rung, the place had been locked shut. The visitor eventually managed to escape, but it felt like a jailbreak, something he "may or may not have participated in many moons ago." He's enjoyed regaling us all with this tale all week.

Then there was the man who came in soaked after a rough weekend sleeping out. A volunteer handed him a cup of tea and took the time to sit beside him once he'd freshened up with a shower. Twenty minutes later they were swapping stories about their mums, and by the time he left, neither could have told you who had been helping whom, and soon they worked out they knew each other and had grown up two streets and ten years apart. Those are the kind of tables we want to set; where hope, discovery and possibility are passed as easily as the sugar.

If you come into our centre at Kings Cross this Monday morning, you'll notice something a little different. Weekends can be a testing time for many who come through our doors. There is limited support and buffeting weather can lead to extreme exhaustion. So we're giving something new a go: a simple breakfast for all who come in. Volunteers, staff and anyone else around, please bring your hunger and your joy with us from about 9.30am for an hour. What better way to start your week than with friends, and who knows what might open up in the breaking of bread together?

Planning Ahead

- 15th October Kogarah Church Council Meeting @ 7pm via Zoom
- 18th October @ 2pm at Moss Vale UC – Induction of Rev Deok Hee Cho
- 20th November Book Club @ Bobbie's (11:30am) to discuss *Question 7* by Richard Flanagan

Please pray for ...The mission and ministry of our congregation at this time of great need and uncertainty, 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, Ngahuaia, Peter and Sue; Dinah; Ern Edwards; Jim Bird, Cindy, Dorothy and Godfrey, Nives, Mike, Mei Mei;. and 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. Nepal and China.

Next Sunday
18th October 2026 @ 10am
Pentecost 21
Singing in Tune with God's Love

Leader Hye Kyoung
Reflection Hye Kyoung
Exodus 33:12–23; Psalm 99;
1 Thessalonians 1:1–10; Matthew 22:15–22



Church Council 2025-2026

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Richard Goodman
Sue Baglin
Joshua Chang
Robert McAlpine (2027)
Sue Baglin (2027)
Joshua Chang (2027)

Elders

Bobbie Miller (2028)
Richard Goodman (2027)
Dorothy Makasa (2027)

Culture of Safety Contact Person

Richard Goodman