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.

25th October 2026 @ 10am

Pentecost 22

Love at the Centre

Leader Richard

Reflection Richard

Holy Communion Richard

Deuteronomy 34:1–12; Psalm 90:1–6, 13–17;
1 Thessalonians 2:1–8; Matthew 22:34–46



Mount Pisgah (Jordan)

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

Deuteronomy 34:1–12
Moses stands at the edge of the promise, able to see but not enter. It is a moment of both fulfilment and limitation. Faithfulness is not always about arriving; sometimes it is about trusting the story continues beyond us.

Psalm 90:1–6, 13–17 holds together human fragility and God's enduring faithfulness. Life is fleeting, yet held within the presence of the One who has been our dwelling place across generations. The psalm calls us to live wisely within the time we are given.

1 Thessalonians 2:1–8
Paul describes ministry not as authority or performance, but as gentleness: like a caregiver offering not just words, but their very self. Love here is relational, vulnerable, and embodied.

Matthew 22:34–46
When asked for the greatest commandment, Jesus gathers everything into love, love of God and love of neighbour. These are not separate, but inseparable. Love becomes the centre from which all other commandments find their meaning.

Theme Focus

As Jesus gathers the commandments into love of God and neighbour, we are invited to place love at the centre of everything and live with courage, honesty, and embodied care.

Word for the Day

Jesus is asked to name the greatest commandment. But instead of choosing one, he binds two together: love God, and love your neighbour.

Something shifts. These are no longer separate. We cannot love God while turning away from our neighbour; and when we love our neighbour with honesty, courage, and care, something of God's life is revealed among us.

This love is not abstract. It is lived. It shows up in how we speak, how we listen, how we use our time, and how we respond when it would be easier not to. It is present in the gentleness Paul describes, in ministry that offers not only words but self. It is present in Moses' faithfulness at the edge of what he will not live to see.

Perhaps love is not only the centre of faith, but the centre of life itself.

And perhaps the question for us is not whether love matters, but what might change if we lived as though love truly held everything together.

Ideas for Reflection

- **Where has love become small or safe in your life?**
- **Who is your neighbour right now?**
- **What might it mean to love more honestly this week?**
- **Where are you being invited to love through listening, patience, courage, or practical care?**
- **What helps our community place love at the centre of its decisions?**
- **What might change if love of God and love of neighbour were never separated?**

October 19, 2026

A prayer from the UCA National President, Rev Charissa Suli.

I invite the Uniting Church across Australia to pray for Helen Haines, the independent Federal Member for Indi, following a serious incident outside her electorate office in Wangaratta on Monday afternoon.

We hold Helen, her family, friends, staff and the wider Indi community in our prayers at this distressing time. We pray for her healing and recovery, for wisdom and skill for those providing her medical care, and for comfort and strength for all who have been affected by this incident.

As people of faith, we affirm the dignity of every person and reject violence in all its forms. We give thanks for the members of the community who acted quickly to assist and support Helen in the immediate aftermath of the incident.

At this difficult time, may we resist speculation, hold one another with kindness, and continue to uphold compassion, respect and peace in our communities and public life.

May God's healing presence surround Helen, may God's peace be with her loved ones, and may God's love sustain all those who are worried and concerned.

Amen

(Submitted by Jim Bird)

Dear Inner Circle,

Fear needs distance to exist, and truth most often comes to us from the edges rather than the centre of things. This week a group gathered outside our Bondi Beach Community Centre, where Uncle Ringo performed a smoking ceremony for us. Rituals like this are used for a number of purposes, and Uncle Ringo spoke to us about the importance of storytelling and language as a way into deeper connection, into closing the distances between each other.

He then shared some of the history of William Dawes, who sought to connect with and document local Aboriginal culture and language during colonial times. His curiosity led him into relationship with the local Aboriginal men and women he encountered, and his records have been an important asset in language revitalisation efforts.

How did he do this? It wasn't only what he did, it was where he did it. He built his hut at the edge of the Sydney Cove encampment, a quiet place, just at the edge of things, where many Aboriginal people felt safe and welcomed. Mutual respect and learning were a hallmark of their time together. He was one of the first to learn that cultures and languages differed from region to region. Do you ever wonder why we have so many places named "Myall"? It comes from a local word for stranger, picked up by the colonists and scattered across the map.

Uncle Ringo walked around the circle and smoked everyone, then did another round and hugged everyone. Some cried, some laughed, some stood awkwardly. Each was the right response, and it was a healing moment.

Only days later our community found itself gathering around something very different.

We faced the sudden loss a much-loved member of our community. Here one day, gone the next. She passed away the day before her birthday, and as the news was filtering through our community, two cakes appeared. One came from her best friend, who was yet to hear the news. The other came from a volunteer who shared her birthday. The team, in their grief, cut both cakes and handed slices to anyone who walked through the door.

Grief and celebration sat at the same table, and no one kept their distance. That's what the edge of things looks like here: a place where people feel safe enough to come close, to share cake and tears.

Fear needs distance. This week, we gave it none.

Thank you for being part of the Inner Circle,

Jon

Rev. Jon Owen

CEO & Pastor

Wayside Chapel

Planning Ahead

- **5th November Worship Task Group via Zoom @ 7pm**
- **12th November Kogarah Church Council @ 7pm via Zoom**
- **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 she make links to the Chinese community.

Worship leaders; helpers, leaders, followers of 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.

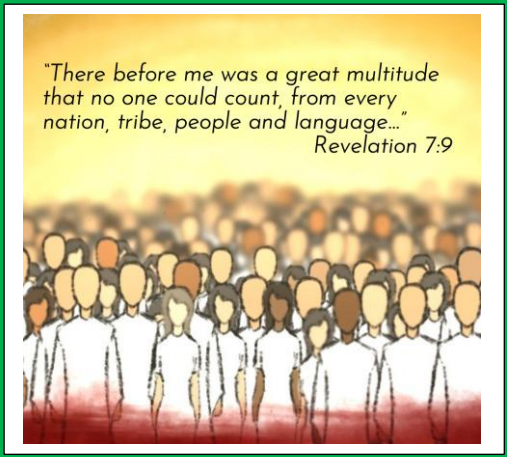
Those who are sick, sad or lonely: We pray especially today for Dennis and Robyn Lyons, Rhonda Chamberlain; Prema and Priya, Denis and Dolly, Ngahuia, Peter and Sue; Dinah; Ern Edwards; Jim Bird, Cindy, Dorothy and Godfrey, Nives, Mike, Mei Mei, Henry Xiao, and for others whom we name in our hearts.

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

1 November 2026
All Saints Day
A Great Cloud of Witnesses

Leader Hye Keoung
Reflection Hye Keoung
Holy Communion Hye Keoung
Revelation 7:9–17; Psalm 34:1–10, 22;
1 John 3:1–3; Matthew 5:1–12



Church Council 2025-2026

Chair	Richard Goodman
Secretary	Sue Baglin
Treasurer	Joshua Chang
Councillors	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