KOGARAH UNITING CHURCH
October 25th 2026
Love at the centre

The Gathering of the People of God

WELCOME & GREETING
Introduction to Theme

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.

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 Biddegal 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

Come, you who are searching for what matters most.

We come, longing for truth.

Come, you who carry love and struggle to live it.

We come, seeking to be formed again.

Come, beloved of God.

We come, drawn back to love.

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE
God is here
God is always here
God is with us
God is always with us

SING: When I needed a neighbour were you there TIS 629

When I needed a neighbour, were you there, were you there?
When I needed a neighbour, were you there?

And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, were you there?

I was hungry and thirsty, were you there, were you there?
I was hungry and thirsty, were you there?

And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, were you there?

I was cold, I was naked, were you there, were you there?
I was cold, I was naked, were you there?

And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, were you there?

When I needed a shelter, were you there, were you there?
When I needed a shelter, were you there?

And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, were you there?

When I needed a healer, were you there, were you there?
When I needed a healer, were you there?

And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, were you there?

When they put me in prison, were you there, were you there?
When they put me in prison, were you there?

And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, were you there?

Wherever you travel, I'll be there, I'll be there,
wherever you travel, I'll be there.

And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, I'll be there.

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OPENING PRAYER

God of love, you have made us for relationship: with you, with one another,

and with the world. And yet we forget.

We complicate what you have made clear, and avoid what love asks of us.

Draw us back again, not to rules alone, but to love that breathes through everything.

Amen.

SING: Brother, sister, let me serve you TIS 650

Brother, sister, let me serve you,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey
and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you
in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping;
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow
till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven
we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together
of Christ's love and agony.

Brother, sister, let me serve you,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

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PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of love, we confess how easily we lose our way.

We say we love you, but withhold ourselves.

We say we love our neighbour, but choose comfort over compassion.

We make love small safe, manageable when you have made it wide and demanding.

Forgive us.

Return us to love.

WORDS OF GRACE

Hear this: Love has not given up on you.

Even now, God draws near not to condemn, but to restore.

In Christ, you are forgiven, and invited again into love.

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: DEUTERONOMY 34:1-12

Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top
of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho, and the LORD showed him the
whole land: Gilead as far as Dan, [2]all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and
Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea, [3]the Negeb,
and the Plain—that is, the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees—as far
as Zoar. [4]The LORD said to him, "This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants';
I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there."

[5]Then Moses, the servant of the LORD, died there in the land of Moab, at
the Lord's command. [6]He was buried in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor, but no one knows his burial place to this day. [7]Moses
was one hundred twenty years old when he died; his sight was unim-

paired and his vigour had not abated. [8]The Israelites wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the period of mourning for Moses was ended.

[9]Joshua son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, because Moses had laid his hands on him; and the Israelites obeyed him, doing as the LORD had commanded Moses. [10]Never since has there arisen a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face. [11]He was unequalled for all the signs and wonders that the LORD sent him to perform in the land of Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his servants and his entire land, [12]and for all the mighty deeds and all the terrifying displays of power that Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

BIBLE READING: MATTHEW 22:34-36

[34]When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, [35]and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. [36]"Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" [37]He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' [38]This is the greatest and first commandment. [39]And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' [40]On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

[41]Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: [42]"What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?" They said to him, "The son of David." [43]He said to them, "how is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying, [44]'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet"'? [45]If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?" [46]No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

REFLECTION – SALTBUSH

Online Link: https://saltbushcommunity.uca.org.au/resources/the-word-around-the-bush/pentecost-22-love-and-humility-matthew-2234-46/

G'day friends, and welcome to Saltbush United and the Scattered Communities and to "Word Around the Bush." I'm Reverend Tim Jensen.

I'm standing here not far from my home, well, probably half an hour from my home, on Bundjalung country, and we pay our respects to elders past, present, and emerging.

Humility is an important way of understanding our humanity, what it means to be human.

It's also helpful to understand the teachings and the person of Jesus and our relationship with the living God. Yet many today consider humility to be weakness in a world where being arrogant and conceited is considered strength, and that allows bullies and despots to become leaders, leaders whether it's in the political realm or whether it's in business, or whether it's just in our communities, in the smaller recesses of our own lives.

Humility or the word humble is rooted in the word humus, earth, as does the root for the word human, which connects to earth, to the ground.

Now, this reading comes towards the end of Jesus' dialogue, conversation, or argument with the chief priests and the elders and the Pharisees and the Sadducees, who were trying to trap Jesus with blasphemy. Is he saying anything which is against Jewish law, against our understanding of the commandments?

I reckon they're trying to trap him with anything else that they consider disruptive to their control, to their sphere of influence. So from halfway through chapter 21 of Matthew, when we explore these parables and examples that Jesus poses to his listeners, one of the underlying themes is how we are to show humility to the other, how we are to live humble lives.

Now, in this passage we have today, at the end of the passage, Jesus is giving a really good example of one who showed humility when he asked the question of those gathered about the Messiah, "Whose son is he?" Ancestry is very important, so he asked the question, "Whose son is he?" And they answer, "King David." And yet David, and this is what Jesus says, David calls the Messiah, Lord. How can that be? And that's in Psalm 110. How can the Messiah then be David's son if David calls him Lord?

Now here, Jesus is highlighting the humility of David, that we are all called to be humble and to show humility, even David, King David, who is the most honoured of Israel's leaders. And so Jesus is highlighting David's humility. He's highlighting David's understanding that the

Messiah cannot be bound to the limits of ancestry, but is grounded in the eternal sacredness of God.

Jesus is then asked, "What is the greatest commandment?" Now we're going back again, but he's asked, "What is the greatest commandment?" And his answer is from the teachings of the Torah, "Love God with everything you have," which is from Deuteronomy 6:5, and to "Love your neighbour as yourself," which is from Leviticus 19:18. Each of these commandments invite us into a relationship with God, with ourselves, and our neighbour and these relationships require humility.

To love God with all your self, heart, mind, and soul, may be an invitation into letting go of all those things that we want to control. And we kind of want to control God sometimes, maybe a lot of the time. How we believe that God should behave, how we believe that God should be described, how we believe God then should be in relationship with us instead of letting God be God. Yet to allow God to be God gives us the freedom to enter into this sacred relationship with God in which our humanity is realized, that we are loved by the eternal one, and this eternal one is love, is grace, is mercy.

And it's interesting, as this passage calls us, that we love God with all our heart, soul, and mind. It is actually, when we look at this, suggesting that it is our whole selves that enter into this relationship. Almost there is this oneness with God, and if we sit with this understanding that our oneness with God, the one who is love, the one who is all mercy, the one who is all grace, then we, in our lives, are expressions of this one, this love, this grace, this mercy, or we can be.

We know we're imperfect. We know that we get it wrong. But we also know that we are in this relationship with this God, and as we encounter love and mercy and grace, we are freed to share it, to share it with others, as well as knowing it in our own lives, that we are loved and that we can share that love with others. A life where we love the self that God loves, that we extend that love to others, where we share with our neighbour a oneness of humanity found in love and humility.

This love is demanding and risky. It is the love that Jesus shows, and it disempowers the powerful, and that is dangerous. If everyone knows they are loved, if you know you are loved and valued, then it is very difficult for those who are in power to believe that they can control you, that they have the power over you.

In Jesus, we find the fullest expressions of God's love, and here, no one person is privileged above others, and all are welcome in the reign of God. From tax collectors to sex workers, all are welcome in the reign of God, that they know that we all know we are loved, and that we are free

to share that love, that sacred love with others, because we know it within ourselves, and we're then free to share it with all we come across.

So God bless you as you encounter this love, as you walk humbly with God, with yourself, and with others.

As you know the ground of your being is found in God.

God bless you.

Amen.

SING: A new commandment I give unto you TIS 699

A new commandment I give unto you
that you love one another as I have loved you,
that you love one another as I have loved you.
By this will others know that you are my disciples
if you have love one for another;
by this will others know that you are my disciples
if you have love one for another.

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OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

We bring what we have, trusting that love multiplies what is given.

Receive these gifts, O God, and use them to make love visible in acts of care, in works of justice, and in the life of our community.

Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

God of love, we bring before you a world that aches for what you have already given.

For those who are lonely,

bring presence.

For those who are suffering,

bring compassion.

For those who are overlooked,

bring dignity.

For those who are grieving,

bring comfort.

For those who are unsafe,

bring protection and justice.

For our communities and leaders,

shape justice with love.

For the church,

return us to the heart of your way.

And for ourselves, teach us to love, even when it is difficult.

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.

SING: Jesu Jesu fill us with your love / Kneels at the feet of his friends TIS 640

Kneels at the feet of his friends,
silently washes their feet:
master who acts as a slave to them.
Yesu, Yesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from you.

**Neighbours are wealthy and poor,
varied in colour and race,
neighbours are near us and far away.
Yesu, Yesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from you.**

**These are the ones we should serve,
these are the ones we should love;
all these are neighbours to us and you.
Yesu, Yesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from you.**

**Loving puts us on our knees,
Silently washing their feet:
this is the way we should live with you.
Yesu, Yesu, fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from you.**

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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 into the world with love at the centre.

Love that is patient, love that is courageous, love that tells the truth, love that does not give up.

And may the God who is love go with you, dwell within you, and move before you, now and always.

Amen.

SING: Take my life and let it be TIS 599

Take my life, and let it be
consecrated, Lord, to thee.
Take my moments and my days,
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move
at the impulse of thy love.
Take my feet, and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing
always, only for my King.
Take my lips, and let them be
filled with messages from thee.

Take my silver and my gold,
nothing, Lord, would I withhold.
Take my intellect and use
every power as thou shalt choose.

Take my will and make it thine,
it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love: my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure-store.
Take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.

PD ; words, Frances Ridley Havergal

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