



# Kaurihohore Historic Church

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## Kaurihohore / Kamo Co-operating Parish Combined with St John's Golden Church, Kamo Road, Kensington Sunday 5 May 2024 – Easter 6

The service this morning is led by Rev Freddy De Alwis,

### **Welcome to our service this morning.**

In working together on our shared mission, we commit to seven core values:

***Togetherness, Humility, Curiosity, Love, Inclusiveness, Justice, Sustainability.***

**Justice:** we hope for a better world for all and work together to be part of making that happen.

### **Welcome and Introduction:**

**Sentence:** Jesus said in John 15: 9 As the Father loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my Love.

**Song: I Will Enter His Gates** – 306 Mission Praise

I will enter his gates with thanksgiving in my heart  
I will enter his courts with praise.  
I will say this is the day that the Lord has made.  
I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

He has made me glad. He has made me glad.  
I will rejoice for He has made me glad.  
He has made me glad. He has made me glad,  
I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

Mission Statement: Sharing God's love, creating hope, working for justice.

## **Call to Worship:**

God of love  
we gather together here today  
as your children of all ages;  
from the very oldest  
to the very youngest-  
and we say together:

**We love and adore you, Lord our God.**

God of creation  
we see you all around us:  
in the tall trees that make the shade;  
in the wind that chills us;  
in the clouds that carry the rain;  
in the moon that says goodnight-  
and we say together:

**We love and adore you, Lord our God.**

God of life  
we feel your love for us in so many ways:  
the special people who touch our lives;  
old friends who share life with us;  
the sound of children laughing;  
and in the smiles of first love-  
and we say together:

**We love you and adore you.  
God of all our days,  
all glory be yours  
now and forever. Amen.**

## **Celebrations and Notices:**

**Hymn: [Be Thou My Vision](#) – 455 WOV**

Lord, be my Vision, O Lord of my heart;  
Bid every rival give way and depart;  
you my best thought in the day or the night,  
Waking or sleeping, your presence my light.

Lord, be my Wisdom and be my true Word;  
I ever with you and you with me, Lord;  
You my great father and I your- true child;  
Once far away, but by love reconciled.

I need no riches, nor earth's empty praise,  
You my inheritance through all my days;  
All of your treasure to me you impart,  
High King of heaven, the first in my heart.

High King of heaven, when battle is done  
grant heaven's joy to me, bright heaven's sun  
Christ of my own heart, whatever befall,  
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

*(Mary Elizabeth Byrne)*

### **Prayer of Healing and Reconciliation:**

Creative, passionate God,  
you delight to shape the world in beauty and harmony.  
You invite us to participate in the balance of creation.  
**Yet we stumble around with our eyes shut.**

We grow in wisdom as our experience unfolds;  
we take good learning out of difficult situations,  
**yet we also find our well-meant endeavours  
lead to unintended consequences.**

Too often we give into temptation  
that disrupts the peace in mind and heart,  
We give into the chaotic order of the universe.  
We cannot undo all our mistakes,  
**but we can turn once more to the living presence of Jesus  
and find new ways to live and love each other and the earth.**

Do not let our hearts be fearful,  
but let us in silence acknowledge  
our sin of slowness and selective deafness  
and seek the forgiveness that restores your peace in mind and in heart.

*Silence*

*Lord hear our prayers!*

**Amen thanks be to God!**

## Hymn: Called As Partners in Christ's Service

1. Called as partners in Christ's service,  
Called to ministries of grace,  
We respond with deep commitment  
Fresh new lines of faith to trace.  
May we learn the art of sharing,  
Side by side and friend with friend,  
Equal partners in our caring  
To fulfill God's chosen end.
  
2. Christ's example, Christ's inspiring,  
Christ's clear call to work and worth,  
Let us follow, never faltering,  
Reconciling folk on earth.  
Men and women, richer, poorer,  
All God's people, young and old,  
Blending human skills together  
Gracious gifts from God unfold.
  
3. Thus new patterns for Christ's mission,  
In a small or global sense,  
Help us bear each other's burdens,  
Breaking down each wall or fence.  
Words of comfort, words of vision,  
Words of challenge, said with care,  
Bring new power and strength for action,  
Make us colleagues, free and fair.
  
4. So God grant us for tomorrow  
Ways to order human life  
That surround each person's sorrow  
With a calm that conquers strife.  
Make us partners in our living,  
Our compassion to increase,  
Messengers of faith, thus giving  
Hope and confidence and peace.

*(Jane Parker Huber)*

**Reading:** John 15:9-17

**“Love God and do what we like”** Is this some radical new doctrine? No. St Augustine said it first. The temptation is to focus on the do-what-you-like part and miss the really difficult challenge – surrendering to the love of God. All great faiths have this one principle in common – surrender ourselves into the heart of God. Sounds a bit careless doesn't it, but only then can we really do 'what we like' and find genuine satisfaction. Such surrender to the love of God is not blind faith or some form of predetermined. The story of creation tells us that God saw all that was made as being 'very good'. In Ephesians we read, "We are God's work of art" (Eph 2.10). We were created in the image of God – with intelligence and free will. Blind obedience is not what being created in God's image is about. A trusting and single-minded focus on God's love is at the very centre of being a Christian. In that sense surrender brings freedom. Jesus gave us a new commandment – love one another in the same way that I have loved you. His relationship with God, his surrender into the heart of God allowed him, enabled him to live life to the full. How do we know all this? **Firstly**, Jesus hated hypocrisy – much of his teaching is about being authentic, being genuine. He had an intolerance for those religious leaders who preached one thing and did another, who loaded others up with rules and regulations, obedience to which were indicators of a relationship with God. He called them vipers and likened them to white washed tombs, nice on the outside but full of corruption inside.

Jesus singles out hypocrites seven times in Mt. 23 alone. He tells a marvellous story of the Pharisee who focuses on himself, on obeying the rules, on the externals. "God, I thank you that I am not like other people," he says. I'm not like those people who are sinners because they break the moral code. "Instead, I do all these good things," and he ticks off his check list. He pretends to be offering thanks to God, but it is thanks for what he has made of himself, for what he himself has done. It has nothing much to do with Jesus' teaching that 'blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see the face of God' (Matthew 5, 8) but rather than praying, opening himself up to God, he really speaks to himself, for he is the centre of his world. It is a story of self-satisfaction, self-righteousness, the sense of being a self-made person. In contrast Jesus' passion was for authenticity in people's lives. Being God focused, as it were, means being concerned with relationship - relationship with God, and as a consequence with other people and with God's creation.

Jesus' life showed us that true satisfaction in life, which we all crave, is to be found in our relationship with God and thus in the genuine service of others. That's why he urges us to love others in the way that he has loved us. That also included the uniquely Christian values of loving one's enemies and turning the other cheek.

Love of God and love of neighbour are inseparable, they form a single commandment. Christian faith is about trying to provide an experience of God so that living our faith is no longer a question of a 'commandment' imposed from without or calling for the impossible, but rather of a freely-embedded experience of love from within, a love which by its very nature must then be shared with others. Loving our neighbour as proclaimed by Jesus, even the person whom I do not like or even know, can only take place on the basis of an intimate encounter with God. Then we learn to look on this other person not simply with my eyes and my feelings, but from the perspective of Jesus Christ. His friend is my friend. Going beyond exterior appearances, I perceive in others an interior desire for a sign of love, of concern. Seeing with the eyes of Christ, I can give to others much more than their outward necessities; I can give them the look of love which they crave.... If I have no contact whatsoever with God in my life, then I cannot see in the other anything more than the other, and I am incapable of seeing in him the image of God. But if in my life I fail completely to heed others, solely out of a desire to be 'devout' and to perform my 'religious duties', then my relationship with God will also grow arid. It becomes merely 'proper', but loveless." Only my readiness to encounter my neighbour and to show him love makes me sensitive to God as well. Only if I serve my neighbour can my eyes be opened to what God does for me and how much God loves me.

Love God and do what we like – when we come to realise that we are so loved, when we come to 'surrender' to that love, then we come to know God's vision for the world and for us. As John reminds us; Dear friends, if this is the way God loved us, we must also love each other. (1 Jn 4:11). We have come to believe in God's love: in these words, the Christian can express the fundamental decision of our life. Being Christian ... gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction. That decisive direction becomes doing what we like, doing what brings us meaning, satisfaction and genuine freedom and happiness - building the reign of God.

**Hymn: [We Are Many, We Are One](#) - 67 Faith Forever Singing**

We are many, we are one,  
and the work of Christ is done  
when we learn to live in true community  
as the stars that fill the night,  
as a flock of birds in flight,  
as the cluster of the grapes upon the vine;  
as the branches of a tree,  
as the waves upon the sea,  
as the cluster of the grapes upon the vine.

All division is made whole  
when we honour ev'ry soul,  
find the life of God in ev'ry you and me  
as the fingers of a hand,  
as the grains that from the sand,  
as the cluster of the grapes upon the vine;  
as the threads upon a loom,  
as a field of flowers in bloom,  
as the cluster of the grapes upon the vine.

We will join creation's song,  
make a world where all belong,  
build as one in peace and loving harmony.  
as the voices of a choir,  
as the flames within a fire,  
as the cluster of the grapes upon the vine;  
as the snowflakes in the snow,  
as the colours of a bow,  
as the cluster of the grape upon the vine.

*(© Colin Gibson (1998))*

**Prayers of the People & Intercessory Prayers:  
Lord's Prayer**

**Offertory Prayer:**

**Hymn: [Now To Your Table Spread](#) – 100 AA**

Now to your table spread  
we come, each one, in faith  
that you alone provide the words  
of life and death:  
in wine and bread, in promised food  
we find your loving heart, O God.

Hands of the world stretch out,  
your mystery to touch  
in longing to believe a truth  
beyond our reach,  
to sing in joy, to cry in grief,  
to know your meaning for our life.

Here is our common wealth  
in sharing what is good,  
as though all humankind  
around one table stood,  
this bread to break, this wine to taste –  
one people in the name of Christ.

(© Shirley Murray)

### **Greeting of Peace:**

Lord Jesus Christ, in your tenderness, bind us with bonds of love that cannot be broken.

My brothers and sisters, the peace of Christ be with you.

### **And with you also.**

Let us greet one another with a sign of peace.

## **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

(The People Stand)

The risen Lord is here.

### **His Spirit is with us.**

Salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers;

### **Let us lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light.**

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

### **Therefore, let us keep the feast.**

Yours is the glory, O God, for raising Jesus from the darkness of death. Yours is the glory, O Christ, for being prepared, through your love and your sacrifice, to conquer death and give us the gift of eternal life. And, as if that were not enough, you greet us by name, as you greeted Mary in the garden, and transform our lives forever with your Easter life.

Risen Lord, we worship and adore you; and we pray that your life in us, will conform us to your image, that we radiate your glory, through our witness, rejoicing and praise, and in all the places where people's lives are still affected by the powers of death and cross.



**Yours is the glory, O God, for showing us the human face of your love in Jesus, your Son, our risen Lord.**

**Yours is the glory, risen Lord Jesus, and we rejoice that 'endless is the victory that you over death have won'.**

All glory and thanksgiving to you, Lord God, creator and ruler of the universe, because you gave your beloved Son Jesus Christ, who on the same night he was betrayed, took bread, and after giving thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying, "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way he took the cup after supper and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me."

**Glory to you Lord Christ; Your death we show forth; Your resurrection we proclaim; Your coming we await. Come risen Lord Jesus come.**

(People may sit)

**Breaking of the Bread:**

As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

**We eat and drink with thanksgiving, remembering all that Jesus has done for us.**

**The Communion:**

**Prayer after Communion:**

**This has been no ordinary meal. It has been one in which we have been fed and nourished with the life of Jesus, our crucified and risen Lord.**

**May we go from here, refreshed and eager, to share that life with others. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ the risen saviour. Amen.**

**Hymn: [Lord, I Would Be Much More Fruitful](#)**

*(Jan Chamberlin, Tune: Blaenwern)*

Lord, I would be much more fruitful  
Keep me planted deep in you:  
Strong in faith, in love and caring,  
Ready to do something new.

When I let the world's distractions  
waste my time from day to day,  
help me weed them out in earnest;  
send me back upon your way.

If my life should need some pruning,  
give me grace the pain to bear;  
for I know your plan is perfect:  
shape me with your loving care.

Grant me patience when the harvest  
seems so sparse and workers few.  
Give me faith that in my lifetime  
I will bear much fruits for you.

**Benediction & Grace:**

Beloved of God, go now into the vast universe to be the people of God:

Resist temptations that lead to destruction:

**We'll create more beauty.**

Resist temptations that lead to isolation:

**We'll reach out more to a world in need.**

Resist temptations based on false promises:

**We'll rest in the hope of God.**

Love creation:

**We'll rejoice in its balance and harmonies!**

And in all these things, let the Spirit of Christ fill and inspire all your deeds,  
as you seek to be a faithful part of Christ's reconciling ministry.

Go out into the world to Love and serve Christ.

**We go in the name of Christ.**

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all.**

**Amen, Amen, Amen.**