



ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
TOORAK
EST. 1859



The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

27th of September, 2020

Welcome

On behalf of everyone at St. John's, Toorak, a very warm welcome to this church and faith community. St. John's welcomes everyone to all services and events, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, race or background.

This is a wonderful and historic church, founded in 1859, a faithful Christian presence for over 160 years. We are part of the Anglican Church of Australia and a member of the global Anglican Communion, comprised of 80 million people.

During this pandemic our services of worship are as follows:

Sundays at 10am, via Zoom

Wednesdays at 12noon, via Zoom

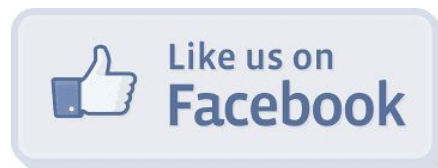
Links for these services are in the notices below

This church actively follows Jesus' command to love God, love one's neighbour and to care for all people. Normally, our clergy and parishioners regularly visit the sick, home-bound, and the dying; however, during the pandemic pastoral care will necessarily take place via phone. We care for the poor and needy through service and charitable giving, through our Opportunity Shop run in partnership with the local Catholic and Uniting churches, and by supporting the work of Anglicare, The Brotherhood of St. Laurence and The Anglican Board of Mission. Our clergy regularly baptise new members of the church, preside at weddings and care for the grieving through our funeral ministry. We look forward to resuming weddings and baptisms as soon as possible. If we can be of service to you or your family, please do not hesitate to get in touch. When the church reopens, if you would like to give of your time and talents in the service of others, please also contact the church.

When we resume services, if you're visiting for the first time please introduce yourself to a welcomer or member of the clergy, and fill out the blue 'Welcome' card found at the end of every pew so we can stay in touch with you.



@stjohnstoorak



Cover Image

Giovanni Ellini, *Blessing Christ* c. 1460

Tempera on wood, 58 x 44 cm

Musée du Louvre, Paris

A video recording of this service, including the sermon by the Vicar, The Revd Dr. Peter French, can be found on the St. John's [YouTube channel](#) on Sunday afternoon. An audio-only recording of the service can be found on the St. John's [website](#). A music recording by our Director of Music can be heard [here](#) and notes on this are on pp 10 & 11.

THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Opening Acclamation

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

Sentence for The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

'Come, let us return to the Lord, that we may live before him.' (Hosea 6: 1,2)

Prayer of Preparation

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Collect for The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

O God, you declare your almighty power chiefly in showing mercy and pity: mercifully grant us such a measure of your grace that, running in the way of your commandments, we may obtain your gracious promises, and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading Exodus 17.1-7

¹From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ²The people quarrelled with Moses, and said, 'Give us water to drink.' Moses said to them, 'Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?' ³But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, 'Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?' ⁴So Moses cried out to the Lord, 'What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.' ⁵The Lord said to

Moses, 'Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. ⁶I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink.' Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarrelled and tested the Lord, saying, 'Is the Lord among us or not?'

Hear the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalter Psalm 78.1-4, 11-16

- ¹ Give heed to my teaching, O my people:
 incline your ears to the words of my mouth;
- ² For I will open my mouth in a parable:
 and expound the mysteries of former times.
- ³ What we have heard and known:
 what our forebears have told us,
- ⁴ We will not hide from their children,
 but declare to a generation yet to come:
 the praiseworthy acts of the Lord,
 his mighty and wonderful works.
- ¹¹ For he did marvellous things
 in the sight of their ancestors:
 in the land of Egypt, in the country of Zoan.
- ¹² He divided the sea and let them pass through:
 he made the waters stand up in a heap.
- ¹³ In the daytime he led them with a cloud:
 and all night long with the light of fire.
- ¹⁴ He cleft rocks in the wilderness:
 and gave them drink in abundance
 as from springs of water.
- ¹⁵ He brought streams out of the rock:
 and caused the waters to flow down like rivers.
- ¹⁶ But for all this they sinned yet more against him:
 and rebelled against the Most High in the desert.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Second Reading Philippians 2.1-13

¹If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ²make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, ⁷but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. ¹²Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Hear the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Gospel Matthew 21.23-32

²³When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?' ²⁴Jesus said to them, 'I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?' And they argued with one another, 'If we say, "From heaven", he will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him?"' ²⁶But if we say, "Of human origin", we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.' ²⁷So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know.' And he said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. ²⁸What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." ²⁹He answered, "I will not"; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰The father went to the second and said the same; and he

answered, "I go, sir"; but he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

For the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

A Prayer for after Holy Scripture is Read

Almighty God, we thank you for your holy word. May it be a lantern to our feet, a light to our paths, and strength to our lives, in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Sermon The Vicar, The Revd Dr. Peter French

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People (from 'A Prayer Book for Australia')

Specific prayers may be added at appropriate places in each petition, or instead of silence

Let us pray for the preservation of the earth.

Silence

We give thanks for the beauty and abundance of the earth. Give us and all peoples grace to live in harmony with your creation, wisdom and generosity in our use of its bounty.

Let us pray for peace and shared prosperity.

Silence

We give thanks for leaders who serve the common good. Give wisdom to those who have responsibility and authority in every land, that we may share with justice the resources of the world, and work together in trust.

Let us pray for our nation.

Silence

We give thanks for this land and the diversity of its peoples. We pray for our Prime Minister Scott and our Premier Daniel and all those who govern. Grant that we may so honour one another that all may be enriched by our common heritage and freed from despair, poverty and exclusion.

Let us pray for the Church and its mission.

Silence

We give thanks for the good news of salvation for all people. Strengthen us for our work in the world, empower your Church to proclaim the gospel in service, word and sacrament. Unite in the truth all who confess your name, that we may live together in love to your glory.

Let us pray for ourselves and our community.

Silence

We give thanks for the fellowship of the communities in which we live and work. We commend to your keeping ourselves and each other, our families, those with whom we work and learn, our neighbours and our friends. Enable us by your Spirit to live in love for you and for one another.

Let us pray for those in need.

Silence

We give thanks that you are the God who brings mercy and wholeness. Comfort and heal, we pray, all who are in sorrow, need, sickness, or any other trouble. Give to those who care for them wisdom, patience and gentleness and, to us all, especially in these challenging times, your peace.

Let us give thanks for the faithful departed.

Silence

We give you thanks for your servants in every age. Grant that we, with all your saints, may be brought to a joyful resurrection and the fulfilment of your kingdom.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Blessing & Dismissal

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Order of Service from *A Prayer Book for Australia* 1995. Broughton Books by E.J.Dwyer (Australia) Pty Ltd, Unit 13, Perry Park, 33 Maddox Street, Alexandria, NSW 2015. © 1995, The Anglican Church of Australia Trust Corporation. With the Liturgical Psalter, Inclusive Language Version English text © 1995 by David L Frost, John A. Emerton, Andrew A. Macintosh. Hymns from *Together in Song Australian Hymn Book II*. © The Australian Hymn Book Pty Ltd 2006. Registered Office 14 Martin Place (Level 17) Sydney 2000. All readings from scripture are taken from The Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

PARISH NOTICES

Sunday Services now on Zoom!

Our main service of worship on Sunday morning takes place on Zoom, at 10am.

To Zoom in to the Sunday morning worship service click [here](#).

Meeting ID: 968 6970 4876

Passcode: 079462

Please note the following courtesies:

- Be in the Waiting Room by 9.55am (once the service begins at 10am, it is difficult to admit people)
- Wait until you are admitted to the Zoom Service
- Put yourself on 'mute' throughout the Service, not least because the service is being recorded on another device for uploading to YouTube.

After the Service, there will be the opportunity to make a cup of tea or coffee and return to Zoom for a chat and catch-up. There will be a 10 minute break between the Service and the coffee catch-up. Please turn off your mic and camera in this ten minute break; it will protect your privacy. When returning to the catch-up, turn your camera and mic back on. If numbers are quite large, smaller groups will be formed in breakout rooms so that everyone has a better chance to enjoy each other's company.

Recorded Services Continue

Our weekly service of worship will also continue to be offered online. Sunday morning services are recorded and uploaded to the St. John's [YouTube channel](#) on Sunday afternoon. An audio-only recording of the service is also uploaded on Sunday afternoon and can be found on the St. John's [website](#) (under 'Sermons').

Prayer Service, Wednesdays at Midday

Our Wednesday midday prayer service continues each Wednesday via Zoom. The service is 12.00pm-12.15pm, with time for fellowship following. There are two scripture readings (a psalm and a reading from the New Testament), set prayers, and time for participants to pray for themselves and others.

To Zoom in to the Wednesday prayer service click [here](#).

Meeting ID: 812 0748 1776

Passcode: 136058

If you would like to be a **reader** for one of the services, please email [here](#) with the day you are available. You are also welcome, as always, to email prayer requests to prayers@saintjohnstoorak.org

Ongoing COVID-19 restrictions

We thank God for the continued reduction of people testing positive for COVID-19 and pray for the bereaved who have lost loved ones due to the virus. On Sunday 6 September, the Premier announced that Stage 4 restrictions will continue until tomorrow, 28 September, with minor modifications. The 'roadmap' out of Stage 4 can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services website. In line with these restrictions and following directions from the Diocese of Melbourne, St. John's church will remain closed for the foreseeable future. The clergy and Parish Council are considering the best possible steps to take to safely open St. John's when permitted to do so. Clergy and staff continue to work from home.

Staying in Touch with St. John's

Keep up to date with what is happening via email, our [website](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and [Instagram](#). If you are unable to access any of these a printed pewsheet can be mailed to you. If you are aware of someone who is not receiving information from the church and wishes to do so, please advise the Parish Office on 9826 1765 or enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org

Pew Sheet by Postal Mail

Last week the pew sheet was printed for the first time in some weeks because of restrictions which prevented anyone from entering the church office. We hope to continue a limited print run each week and send copies of the pew sheet to those who do not have access to the internet or our website.

Puzzle and Activity sheets for children

Can now be accessed [here](#).

Funerals, Memorial Services and Weddings

Funeral and Memorial services are permitted, with a maximum of five people present. Weddings are not permitted unless for compassionate reasons, principally where either the bride or groom is critically ill.

Music for Pentecost 17 Marcel Dupré (1886-1971) *Antiphon I*, 'Dum esset Rex' 'While the king sits at his table, my spikenard sends forth the smell thereof.' (The Song of Solomon 1:12)

There are as widely diverse interpretations of this passage as you'd expect criticism to derive from the evocatively wonderful poetry of The Song of Solomon. One, more tame, interpretation is of the King presiding at the Eucharist, and the resulting fragrance of Grace emanating from the faithful communicant! Being the Song of Solomon, I suspect this is a little anachronistic, and also avoiding the context of the writing. Suffice it to say that Spikenard is the Nard used in the New Testament at the occasion of Mary Magdalene's literal and figurative devotion to the Jesus, the Anointed One. Not to leave things so uninformative however, let me

quote Tristram, in *The Natural History of the Bible* who writes: “Spikenard or nard is exclusively an Indian product, procured from the *Nardostachys jatamansi*, a plant of the order *Valerianaceae*, growing in the Himalaya mountains, in Nepal and Bhotan. It has many hairy spikes shooting from one root. It is from this part of the plant that the perfume is procured, and prepared simply by drying it.” (p. 485)

The pungent, harmonic and often angular writing of Marcel Dupré, one of the most outstanding virtuoso players of the previous Century, is thoroughly logical but needing some considered listening. Last week was milk: this is meat. The majestic *marcato* chords which comprise this entire work would be indeed well-suited to accompany a triumphal scene from a Cecil B. DeMille extravaganza. A first listening may need a follow-up; this isn't fast [food] music, so don't be worried about needing a second experience, [and don't let this apologetic put you off]!

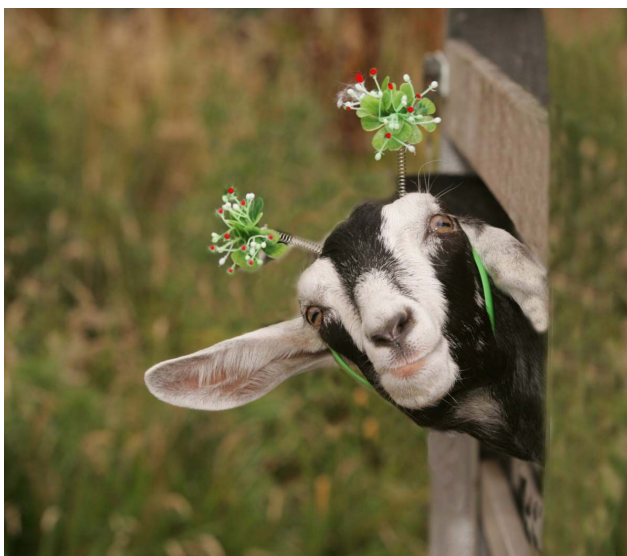
Mr. Christopher Cook, Director of Music.

Pastoral Support

Without doubt, this second lockdown has challenged us all deeply, most especially those who live on their own or have limited opportunity to speak with family or friends. This isolation has been very difficult indeed. The clergy, along with the pastoral care team, are making every effort to stay in touch with parishioners, usually by phone but also by email, cards or letters. If you would like to chat with one of us, please do contact us during office hours. If you are in a position to offer comfort or lend a hand to a parishioner or neighbour (within current restrictions), please reach out. We're called even more to care for each other and our community through prayer and also support where possible.

Blessing of the Pets, Sunday 4 October: Feast of St Francis of Assisi

To celebrate the Feast of St Francis of Assisi, on Sunday 4 October at our 10am online worship service there will be a Blessing of the Pets! After the official worship service has concluded, you are warmly invited to fetch your dog, cat, snake, rabbit, gerbil, budgie, pet spider or any other beloved creature (maybe not your horse!) and bring them in front of your screen for a blessing. Bring them all!



Conversations with the Vicar

On Monday 28 September, metropolitan Melbourne is likely to move to a slight easing of Stage 4 restrictions, which include allowing for up to five people to gather outside church, not for services of any kind but for small, socially distanced, informal gatherings. Even though this seems a very small step forward, I would like to make the most of the opportunity to catch up with people again. My thoughts are to provide a number of mornings where parishioners who have been the most socially isolated are invited to meet safely at St. John's (outside) for an hour's chat. These will take place on Thursday mornings from 10.30am throughout October. Whilst it would be delightful to catch up with everyone – and I very much look forward to doing that at the earliest possible opportunity – I will be extending this invitation first to those whom I know have experienced the greatest isolation over the last six months. I know you will appreciate that it is impossible for an invitation to be extended to everyone as a limit of five people per gathering restricts what we can feasibly do. Hopefully in early December we will be able to meet in larger numbers for worship services and, where permitted, social gatherings. What a great day that will be! *Peter*

Confirmation Service

Please note that the above service scheduled for Sunday 1 November has been postponed until Sunday 1 August, 2021. However, our regional bishop, The Right Revd Genieve Blackwell, will be in attendance for the 10am Zoom service.

Annual Meeting, 11am, 29 November, 2020

The Annual Meeting of Parishioners will be held on Sunday 29 November, 2020 at 11am. Further details will be included in the pew sheet over the next few weeks as we determine how best to hold this meeting under the relevant restrictions.

Electoral Roll Review

The Electoral Roll is being revised in advance of the Annual Meeting, in line with Diocesan legislative requirements. The review of the roll will be an opportunity for all parishioners to ensure their names appear on the Electoral Roll. Forms for new enrolments are available by emailing enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org. A copy of the Electoral Roll will be made available in the coming weeks, for members to check.

Annual Meeting Reports

Those responsible for producing reports please submit them to the Parish Office by Monday 12 October.

The Melbourne Anglican (TMA)

The link to the latest edition of TMA is [here](#). The link to this week's Newstand is [here](#). The link to the September Prayer Diary and prayer resources is [here](#).

The Book of Memory

Even though the church is currently closed, the Book of Memory is faithfully tended.

Anglicare: Homeless Support Services Update

Recently St John's received a letter from Anglicare Victoria, the purpose of which was to explain how their services are assisting vulnerable people during the current COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, and to thank Anglican Parishes for their on-going aid. St John's supports Anglicare, plus the breakfast program at The Lazarus Centre. To support them, the link to donate is [here](#). Go to the donate link which is located at the top right hand side of the home page. By typing 'St Mark's Community Centre' in the comments this will ensure the funds will come through to the program.

Clergy Days Off

Our clergy have one regular day off per week. Our Vicar Peter has Friday and our Assistant Curate Keiron Monday. Please respect their time away from work and unless in an emergency, please refrain from telephoning, texting, visiting the Vicarage, or emailing them on these days. Thank you.

THIS WEEK'S SUNDAY READINGS

Commentary for The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost, September 27, 2020.

These comments present one interpretation of today's readings; other interpretations may be possible. Comments are best read with the readings.

Exodus 17:1-7 NRSV

The Israelites travel "by stages" towards the Promised Land. As God showed his power during their slavery, winning their freedom by inflicting ten plagues on the Egyptians, he now tests the Israelites' faith in him, as provider and ruler, ten times. If they trust in him, he will save them. This reading is about one of the tests, but who tests whom? (vv. 2, 7). Earlier, at Marah, the people had water but it was bitter; here, at "Rephidim" (v. 1, an oasis in the Negev or Sinai) there is no water at all; the well has run dry. The Israelites are serious: the Hebrew translated "quarrelled" (v. 2) is a legal term. They bring a case against Moses, but to him, their charge is against God: they doubt that he can feed them, be their god, in this hostile desert environment. As in other tests, God simply grants the people's request, without rebuking them. He orders Moses to take representatives of the people, "some of the elders" (v. 5) to the "rock at Horeb" (v. 6). The elders see his show of power. The parallel with Egypt continues: the "staff" (v. 5) is the same one Moses used to poison the Nile. ("Massah and Meribah", v. 7, come from words for test and quarrel.) In giving manna, bread from heaven, earlier, and now water (from an earthly rock), God shows his mastery over creation.

Psalms 78:1-4,12-16 NRSV

This psalm, used at major festivals, tells the story of the people of Israel from the Exodus to the reign of David – as a way of teaching that God has continued his

saving acts in history in spite of the unfaithfulness of his people. The Hebrew word translated “parable” (v. 2) has a wide meaning; here it means wise instruction – based not only on knowledge but also on long experience, of God’s ways. It is important that coming generations know about God and his marvellous interventions in human affairs (his military “might”, v. 4, and “wonders”); may his deeds of the past not be forgotten (v. 7); may all live by his Law. “Zoan” (v. 12) is Ramases, the city from which the Exodus began. V. 14 recalls God’s presence in the wilderness: a pillar of “cloud” by day and one of fire (“fiery light”) at night, and vv. 15-16 the event described in today’s Old Testament reading. May future generations not be like their “stubborn and rebellious” (v. 8) ancestors, who were “not faithful to God”

Philippians 2:1-13 NRSV

There is of course “encouragement in Christ”, so Paul urges the Christians at Philippi: through it, and moved by God’s love for them, may they to “be of the same mind[set], having the same love, being in full accord ...” (v. 2). May they “regard others as better than ... [themselves]” (v. 3), freely adopting a lowly, unassertive stance before others, replacing self-interest with concern for others. Vv. 5-11 are an early Christian hymn to which Paul has added v. 8b. He exhorts his readers to be of the same mindset as Jesus – one that is appropriate for them, given their existence “in Christ” (v. 5). Christ was “in the form of God” (v. 6): he was already like God; he had a God-like way of being, e.g. he was not subject to death. He shared in God’s very nature. Even so, he did not “regard” being like God “as something to be exploited”, i.e. to be used for his own purposes. Rather, he “emptied himself” (v. 7), made himself powerless and ineffective – as a slave is powerless, without rights. He took on the likeness of a human being, with all which that entails (except sin), including death. As a man, he lowered (“humbled”, v. 8) himself, and throughout his life in the world, was fully human and totally obedient to God, even to dying. (Paul now adds: even to the most debasing way of dying, crucifixion – reserved for slaves and the worst criminals.)

God actively responded to this total denial of self, his complete living and dying for others, by placing him above all other godly people (“highly exalted him”, v. 9), and bestowing on him the name, title and authority of “Lord” (v. 11) over the whole universe (“heaven”, v. 10, “earth”, “under the earth”). This authority, before Christ came to us, the Father reserved for himself. Paul recalls God’s words spoken through Isaiah: “From every corner of the earth [all are to] turn to me and be saved; for I am God ... to me every knee shall bow ... to me every tongue shall swear, saying ‘In the Lord alone are victory and might ... all Israel’s descendants will be victorious and will glory in the Lord’”; the Philippians shall worship him; confessing that “Jesus Christ is Lord” (v. 11) is proclaiming the victory and might of God. The ultimate goal is the “glory of God the Father”, the reclamation of God’s sovereignty, his power over, and presence in, the universe. So (v. 12) may they, using Christ’s example of obedience and lowliness (“fear and trembling”), continue to “work out” their “salvation” with God’s help in what they intend (“will”, v. 13) and what they do (“work”).

Matthew 21:23-32 NRSV

In the final week of his earthly life, Jesus has just shown the importance of faith in understanding God's ways. Now, as he teaches in the Temple, representatives of the Sanhedrin ("chief priests and the elders") ask who has given him the power and "authority" to do all that he has done in his ministry. But he will only answer them if they first answer his question (v. 25), one which will show whether they have the requisite faith to understand his answer. His questioners are skilled in the Law, but it is of little help in deciding whether a prophet (in this case John the Baptist) is genuinely from God. If they say that John was from God, they should have repented as he urged; if they say he was not, they will lose face and status with the many who have come to Jesus (v. 26). The Sanhedrin judged such issues, so their answer (v. 27) shows their incompetence. Jesus tells them a parable about admission to the kingdom (vv. 28-30). People known for their evil ways ("tax collectors ...", v. 31) have turned to God (like the first son), while the authorities, (like the second son), have observed the rules (note "sir", v. 30) but have not acted on them. But they can still come to faith; even if they do, people considered to be disreputable will enter the Kingdom "ahead of you" (v. 31).

OFFERTORY GIVING WHILST ST. JOHN'S CHURCH IS CLOSED

St. John's is a busy, active parish. Even - perhaps especially - in unusual times, we have a number of significant financial obligations, including additional costs to keep the church clean and safe. The church is enormously grateful for each and every person's contributions. As a member of this church family, each of us is encouraged to keep giving as normal, whether it is through:

- a. ADF (Anglican Development Fund)
- b. Electronic transfer of funds to:
St. John's Anglican Church General Account
Westpac, 509 Toorak Road, Toorak, Victoria, 3142, Australia
Account Name: St. John's Anglican Church
BSB: 033 086. Account No: 871931
(For international transfers please include SWIFT code
WPACAU2S)
- c. Cash / envelope offertory: If you normally make an offertory contribution via the collection plate on Sundays, please do consider contributing through the ADF. Details can be found at <https://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/agencies-anglican-development-fund/>.

Every person's offering contributes to the fabric and wellbeing of St. John's. When we recommence services, let us be in a strong position to get on with the mission of sharing God's love in Christ to each other and to the wider community.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

From the Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Pray for the Province of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (Abp Ezekiel Kumir Kondo); Diocese of Gippsland (Bp Richard Treloar, Clergy & People); Firbank Grammar School (Jenny Williams, Principal; Christine Croft, chaplain); All Saints' Kooyong (Kuncoro Rusman, Lachlan Thompson, Daniel Abraham).

For all those who lead us in the Anglican Church, especially: Our Primate The Most Revd Geoffrey Smith, Our Archbishop The Most Revd Philip Freier, and our Bishop, The Right Revd Genieve Blackwell.

For those who lead us in Government: Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II; Governor General David Hurley AC; Prime Minister Scott Morrison; Federal Member of Parliament for Division of Higgins, Dr. Katie Allen; Premier of Victoria Daniel Andrews; Member for Malvern and Leader of the Opposition, Michael O'Brien.

For Reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians: For Aboriginal Anglican clergy and lay-leaders around Australia, their spiritual health and physical well-being, and the people they care for. For Aboriginal and Government leaders and their work together.

The Toorak Ecumenical Movement: Our partner churches, St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Toorak Uniting Church, and The Swedish Church.

For The Anglican Board of Mission, The Brotherhood of St. Laurence, and Anglicare

For those celebrating birthdays: Jane Anderson on Thursday; Claire Beecher on Saturday.

For schools in our parish: Geelong Grammar School Toorak Campus, Head of Campus Rachel George; St Catherine's School, Principal Michelle Carroll; and Toorak Primary School, Principal Julie Manallack.

For the sick and all in need: Rosemary Griffith; Maggie Perkins; Rosie Creswell; Gwen; Sohaib; Audrey Leeton; Jean James; Lachie Sullivan; James Griffith; Philip and Becky Newman; Mary.

For those in aged care and those who are housebound: Teri Lawrence; Janet Field; Beverley Joyce; Val Hurst; Marcia Larsson; Gordon Kennett; Anne Myers; Billee Edwards; Elizabeth Johnson.

Give thanks for those whose Anniversary of Death is this week: Betty Steele; Anne Isaacson; William Stokes; Brian Blundell; Michael Hamson; Rosemary Ironside; Karen Spry.

The prayer petitions above closely follow the daily prayer regimen of the Anglican Church of Australia, which you can follow everyday [here](#).

PRAYER REQUESTS

Prayer requests can be sent to prayers@saintjohnstoorak.org. The clergy check emails for prayer requests daily, and pray in solidarity with anyone who would like prayers said for them.



ST. JOHN'S
ANGLICAN
CHURCH
TOORAK
EST. 1859

86 Clendon Rd, Toorak 3142

Vicar The Reverend Dr Peter French
vicar@saintjohnstoorak.org

Wardens Ms Helen Ballantyne, Mrs Amanda Bagot, Mr Anthony Mannering

Parish Council

Mr Dougal Colhoun, Ms Vivienne Crompton, Ms Diana Dunlop, Ms Jessica Hall,
Mrs Claire Morgan, Mr Harrison Young

Assistant Curate The Revd Keiron Jones
curate@saintjohnstoorak.org

Director of Music/Organist
Mr Christopher Cook
accook2001@yahoo.com.au

Parish Administrator/Child Safe Compliance Mrs Sally Robertson
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Child Safe Officer Ms Vivienne Crompton

Family Safety Officer Dr Esther Schroeder Goh, esther.schroedergoh@gmail.com

Covid-Safe Officer Mr Dougal Colhoun

Sunday School Teachers Mr Clive Wright, Ms Shierly & Miss Jo-Jo Patterson

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