



ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH  
TOORAK  
EST. 1859



# The Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost

25<sup>th</sup> of October, 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

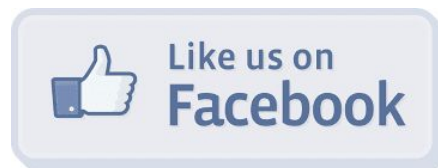
*Links for these services are in the notices below*

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**

Duccio di Buoninsegna, *Christ Accused by the Pharisees* (detail) 1308-11  
Tempera on wood, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena.

The following service is live at 10am via Zoom. All are welcome to attend by clicking the Zoom link [here](#) (Meeting ID: 968 6970 4876, Passcode: 079462). A video recording of this service 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 12 & 13.

## **THE TWENTY FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

### *Opening Acclamation*

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

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

### *Greeting*

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

### *Sentence for the Twenty First Sunday after Pentecost*

'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.' (Matthew 22.37-40)

### *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 Twenty First Sunday after Pentecost*

Almighty and everlasting God, give to us the increase of faith, hope and love; and, that we may obtain what you promise, make us to love what you command; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### *First Reading Deuteronomy 34.1-12*

<sup>1</sup>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, <sup>2</sup>all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea, <sup>3</sup>the Negeb, and



the Plain – that is, the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees – as far as Zoar. <sup>4</sup>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.’ <sup>5</sup>Then Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, at the Lord’s command. <sup>6</sup>He was buried in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor, but no one knows his burial place to this day. <sup>7</sup>Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died; his sight was unimpaired and his vigour had not abated. <sup>8</sup>The Israelites wept for Moses in the plains of Moab for thirty days; then the period of mourning for Moses was ended. <sup>9</sup>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. <sup>10</sup>Never since has there arisen a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face. <sup>11</sup>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, <sup>12</sup>and for all the mighty deeds and all the terrifying displays of power that Moses performed in the sight of all Israel. Hear the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*Psalter* Psalm 90.1-6, 13-17

- <sup>1</sup> Lord, you have been our refuge:  
from one generation to another.
- <sup>2</sup> Before the mountains were born  
or the earth and the world were brought to be:  
from eternity to eternity you are God.
- <sup>3</sup> You turn us back into dust:  
saying ‘Return to dust, O children of Adam.’
- <sup>4</sup> For a thousand years in your sight  
are like yesterday passing:  
or like one watch of the night.
- <sup>5</sup> You cut them short like a dream:  
like the fresh grass of the morning;
- <sup>6</sup> In the morning it is green and flourishes:  
at evening it is withered and dried up.
- <sup>13</sup> Relent, O Lord; how long will you be angry?:  
take pity on your servants.
- <sup>14</sup> O satisfy us early with your mercy:

that all our days we may rejoice and sing.

<sup>15</sup> Give us joy for all the days you have afflicted us:  
for the years we have suffered adversity.

<sup>16</sup> Show your servants your work:  
and let their children see your glory.

<sup>17</sup> May the gracious favour of the Lord our God be upon us:  
prosper the work of our hands,  
O prosper the work of our hands!

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* 1 Thessalonians 2.1-8

<sup>1</sup>You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, <sup>2</sup>but though we had already suffered and been shamefully maltreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. <sup>3</sup>For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, <sup>4</sup>but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals, but to please God who tests our hearts. <sup>5</sup>As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed; <sup>6</sup>nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, <sup>7</sup>though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. <sup>8</sup>So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us. Hear the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*The Gospel* Matthew 22.34-46

<sup>34</sup>When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, <sup>35</sup>and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. <sup>36</sup>'Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?' <sup>37</sup>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." <sup>38</sup>This is the greatest and first commandment. <sup>39</sup>And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." <sup>40</sup>On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.' <sup>41</sup>Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: <sup>42</sup>'What do you think of the Messiah?

Whose son is he?' They said to him, 'The son of David.'<sup>43</sup> He said to them, 'How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying,<sup>44</sup> "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet' " ?<sup>45</sup> If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?'<sup>46</sup> No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

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

*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*)

We pray for the peace of the world, the leaders of the nations, and for all in authority. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the welfare of your holy Church, our Bishop Genieve, and for all the clergy and people. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for seasonable weather, and for an abundance of the fruits of the earth. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray that we may share with justice the resources of the earth, and live in trust and goodwill with one another. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the aged and the infirm, for the bereaved and the lonely, and for the sick and suffering. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the poor and the oppressed, for prisoners and captives, and for all who care for them. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for ourselves and for each other.

*Here we pray for those known to us, silently, or aloud*

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We praise you, Lord God, for the communion of saints and for the glorious hope of the resurrection to eternal life.

*Here we pray for those known to us, silently, or aloud*

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, you have promised to hear our prayers.

**Grant that what we have asked in faith we may by your grace receive, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, confident in God's forgiveness.

**Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent, and are sorry for all our sins. Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*Absolution*

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to God in faith: pardon you and set you free from all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### *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 partly 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. *The Book of Common Prayer*, The Episcopal Church of the USA. All readings from scripture are taken from The Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

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## **PARISH NOTICES**

### **It's Time to Pledge your Support to St. John's**

As we set our budget for 2020/21, it is time for you to play your part in supporting our church, its life, mission and ministry. Please see the letter below "Money Matters" from Warden Helen Ballantyne and Parish Recorder (of pledges) Anne Bottomley.

### **MONEY MATTERS** *from a Warden and the Parish Recorder*

For most of this year we have received daily updates and statistics on the COVID-19 outbreaks: how many new cases, where the clusters are and Premier Andrews' 'road ahead.' We could equally apply this same principle to our church and parish: what are our statistics, how do we shape up and what is our road ahead? Our outcome is dependent on all parishioners and friends of St John's.

To put you in the picture we currently have 300 names on our parish contact list, all of whom receive our weekly pew bulletin and regular correspondence. Of this 300, 120 parishioners are on our electoral roll, which means that by regular attendance they have input into church matters and decisions and are entitled to vote at our Annual Meeting.



Of these 120 regular parishioners, 59 'pledge' annually to give a certain amount of money to support our church's ministry and life. Pledging is essential to our life at the church and essential to our budgeting process for the coming year. The more people who pledge the greater resources we have for ministry and mission. As it stands that 59 is just 50% of our total electoral roll and only 20% of those people on our contact list for whom St. John's would be considered 'their church.'

Based on data from last year, we are anticipating pledges for this year (1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021) to be \$153,000. Now, let us look at the break-up of those numbers:

4 parishioners give \$10,000+ p.a.  
4 parishioners give \$ 5,000+ p.a.  
36 parishioners give \$ 1,000+ p.a.  
15 parishioners give less than \$500 p.a.

From these figures you can assume that approximately 50% of our pledged giving comes from just 8 parishioners. While currently financial circumstances for most - and not forgetting St. John's - are challenging, we can do better than this. This year let's aim to increase our pledges firstly by the number of parishioners who pledge and, secondly, by an increase in giving. After all, pledging is the basis for our budget and the huge expenses of running and maintaining our beautiful church and its ministry.

Please carefully consider your financial commitment to God and our church. Information on pledging and ADF forms will be forwarded to you in the coming week.

For 'our road ahead' let us pray the church is open for Christmas - and that next year sees all the doors of the church open to all once more.

*Anne Bottomley, Parish Recorder, and Helen Ballantyne, Warden*

## **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.

### **Sunday Services 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

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, 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](mailto:prayers@saintjohnstoorak.org)

## Update on COVID-19 Restrictions

On 18 October, the Premier announced a number of eased restrictions for metropolitan Melbourne; however for places of worship there are no changes just yet. Up to five people may meet in an outdoor space at the church with a member of clergy (socially distanced and with a number of other constraints). I will be inviting those who may be experiencing significant isolation, and who live within 5km of the church, to meet on Thursday morning on the south lawn at 10.30am.

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*

## Pew Sheet by Postal Mail

A limited print run of the pew sheet continues for those who do not have access to email or our website.

## 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 pew sheet 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](mailto:enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org)

**Puzzle and Activity sheets for children** can now be accessed at <https://sermons4kids.com/>.





## **New Solar Panels for our Church Hall**

Our latest project is complete, our solar panels are up and running on the Hall roof! We're doing all we can to be good stewards of what God gives us, including the sun. With a grant from the Commonwealth Government of \$13,750 this was a cost neutral project with plenty of upsides, not least reduced annual electricity bills to the church of an estimated \$3,500. With special thanks to Warden Anthony Mannering for his work on securing and managing this project.

## **Music for Pentecost 21** *The Old Hundredth*

Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry, Baronet [1848 -1918] is well known for many a stirring melody which have remained in the English-speaking mind when the idea of singing has gone from the public perception. The Three Chorale Fantasias were first published in London by Novello in 1915. I've supplied two verses [and an Amen!] at the conclusion, so if you'd like to sing here are the full set of verses, from which you may chose. The words are those written by paraphraser/author, William Kethe. They're left in the original, as that is what many associate with this tune. [Who recalls the Amen at the end of every hymn, and the Gathering Note at the beginning of each verse?!]

1 All people that on earth do dwell,  
sing to the LORD with cheerful voice;  
Him serve with fear, his praise forth tell,  
come ye before him and rejoice.

2 Know that the LORD is God indeed;  
Without our aid He did us make;  
We are His folk, He doth us feed,  
And for His sheep He doth us take.

3 O enter then his gates with praise;  
Approach with joy His courts unto;  
Praise, laud, and bless His Name always,  
For it is seemly so to do.

4 For why? the LORD our God is good,  
his mercy is for ever sure;  
His truth at all times firmly stood,  
and shall from age to age endure.

Amen.

Authors: A Psalmist & William Kethe

"Kethe helped translate the Geneva Bible in 1560 and contributed twenty-five psalms to the 1561 Anglo-Genevan Psalter. Only ten of these were retained in the 1562 English Psalter, while the 1564 Scottish Psalter retained all 25. Most of his Psalms were translations from French sources.[citation needed] His version of Psalm 100, The Old Hundredth, is universally known by its first line ("All People That on

Earth Do Dwell").

“During the reign of Elizabeth I, Kethe served as Rector to the parish of Child Okeford in Dorset, (1561–1593). After retiring he remained in the village but he died within a year. Whilst serving as Vicar, he had also had two spells as a military chaplain under Ambrose Dudley, 3rd Earl of Warwick at Le Havre in 1563 and 1569.” [Wiki]

*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.

### **Further Support**

Other support services are available for anyone who would like to speak with someone anonymously, including: Beyond Blue: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/> or Lifeline: <https://www.lifeline.org.au/>

### **All Souls' Day, Thursday 29 October 2020, 7pm (via Zoom)**

A special service will be held on Thursday 29 October at 7pm to remember the faithful departed. This will also be a prayerful opportunity to remember those in Australia and around the world who have died from COVID-19 and the families who mourn their passing. If you have loved ones who have passed away and would like them remembered, please email [prayers@saintjohnstoorak.org](mailto:prayers@saintjohnstoorak.org).

The Zoom link to the Service is [here](#).

Meeting ID: 853 5635 2705 Passcode: 912338

### **Bishop's Visit, All Saints' Day, Sunday 1 November, 2020**

Please note that the Confirmation Service scheduled for Sunday 1 November has been postponed until Sunday 1 August, 2021. However, we are still fortunate to have our bishop, The Right Revd Genieve Blackwell, attending our 10am Zoom service. Bishop Genieve will be preaching on this day.

### **Annual Meeting, 11am, Sunday 29 November, 2020 VIA ZOOM**

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



Please note that this meeting will be held via Zoom and it is most important that as many on the electoral roll attend this meeting.

The Zoom link is the same as the 10am Sunday Service link found on page 8. The link will be placed in the pew sheet each week until 29 November. If you are unable to attend the service but would like to attend the Annual Meeting, please use the same link and you will be admitted to the meeting.

### **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](mailto: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 26 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 October 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.

### **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 Twenty First Sunday after Pentecost, October 25, 2020.*

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

### **Deuteronomy 34:1-12 NRSV**

Today's reading is the final chapter of Deuteronomy and of the Pentateuch, the Law, the *Torah*, the first five books of the Bible. The wandering is over; the people of Israel look forward to the future; they are about to enter the Promised Land. Moses has prepared them for this new life. In 32:48-52, God has told him that he will die outside the Land because Moses "broke faith" with him when the people demanded water and God provided (see Numbers 20:1-13). God shows him the whole Land from a mountain near the northern end of the Dead Sea: from the Sea of Galilee region ("Dan ... Manasseh", vv. 1-2) in the north to the "Negeb" (v. 3) desert

in the south and from the “Western Sea” (v. 2, the Mediterranean) in the west to the Jordan in the east. “Judah” (v. 2) is in the centre of the country. (“Zoar”, v. 3, was at the south end of the Dead Sea.) Moses, an old man, dies suddenly in “Moab” (v. 6, now Jordan), across the Jordan from Israel; he dies as he lived: “at the LORD’s command” (v. 5). The “burial place” (v. 6) may be unknown to avoid worship of the dead, an Egyptian practice. The story of Moses *laying hands* (v. 9) on Joshua, his successor, is in Numbers. The “spirit” is passed on to him; he is commissioned; he receives authority – as Elisha did later from Elijah. Vv. 10-12 eulogize Moses. For “terrifying displays of power” (v. 12) a scholar offers *awe-inspiring acts*.

### **Psalm 90:1-6,13-17 NRSV**

Vv. 1-6 contrast God’s eternity with the short and troubled span of human life. God pre-existed creation (v. 2a) and he continues to live for ever (“from everlasting to everlasting you are God”). In the Garden of Eden creation story, “the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground” (Genesis 2:7); here (v. 3), the writer laments that in death this process is reversed. A human lifetime is infinitesimally short compared to God’s (v. 4). The Hebrew of v. 5 is unclear; it too speaks of the brevity of life, as does v. 6. To the psalmist, human life simply ends. Vv. 13-17 are more hopeful; they seek God’s intervention. “Have compassion”, Lord; after the *night* of suffering, be merciful to us “in the morning” (v. 14), so we may rejoice. V. 15 probably speaks of the value of discipline. In v. 16, the writer recognizes that God is active in creation: he intervenes on behalf of people: “your work” may well be “your glorious power”. May God give us grace so that our efforts may be productive.

### **1 Thessalonians 2:1-8 NRSV**

Paul picks up on 1:5, read last Sunday: “... you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake.” The Christians at Thessalonica are well aware that Paul’s founding visit there was very fruitful (“was not in vain”, 2:1); “we” (v. 2, perhaps including Silvanus and Timothy), in spite of physical and moral *mistreatment* at Philippi, and in spite of “opposition”, had the “courage”, confidence, to preach the good news. This was possible, he says (v. 3) because “we” (v. 4) were authorized by God (“approved”) to preach the gospel, in accord with God’s will rather than seeking popularity, i.e. motivated (as popular philosophers and charlatans were) by “deceit” (v. 3, erroneous thinking) or “impure motives” (including deviant sexual practices) or “trickery” (cunning extraction of money from people); *our* objective was not to give people short-term pleasure. Further (v. 5), “we” did not resort to making people feel self-important (“flattery”) nor to the kind of egotism that seeks to turn everything to our own advantage (“pretext for greed”) – God, who alone is able to detect such deceits, is “our witness”. Then v. 7: as “apostles” (messengers or emissaries) of Christ, “we” could have insisted on the dignity and authority due to our office, but rather we were “gentle”, as your equals, like a “nurse” (or *nursing mother*) giving of her self without expectation of repayment, and not coercing you. Our care went even further (v. 8): we shared everything we had and are, not just the good news. Religious and philosophical charlatans were common in the city. Paul may be defending himself

against a whispering campaign by such people; perhaps they claimed he was a quack. His conduct among the Thessalonians clearly shows that he is genuine.

### **Matthew 22:34-46 NRSV**

Some Sadducees (who believed that life ended with physical death) have argued with Jesus; they have tried to show him, by quoting from the Pentateuch, the absurdity of belief in resurrection. He has told them that they neither understand the “power of God” (v. 29, to transform us into a new way of being alive when risen) nor the purpose of the Scriptures. The Pharisees now “test” (v. 35) Jesus by asking him a question often debated (v. 36): of the 613 laws in the *Torah*, which is most important? Jesus’ answer would not have surprised them, but his “second” (v. 39) of equal weight (“like it”) would, for it was considered unimportant. Developing a right relationship of actively loving God and fellow humans is the key to the Scriptures. Now Jesus asks the Pharisees (who considered themselves experts in biblical interpretation) some questions (v. 42). People expected a political “Messiah” descended from David, “the son of David”. In vv. 43-44 Jesus asks: “How is ... that David” (inspired “by the Spirit” to write Psalms – as was then thought) refers to “him” (the Messiah) as “Lord” (overlord), in writing “The Lord” God (Yahweh) “said to my Lord” (i.e. David’s overlord, whom Jesus takes to be the Messiah) “sit ...” So (v. 45) how can the Messiah be both David’s son and his overlord? (While in English and Greek, “Lord”, *kurios*, occurs twice, Jesus would have quoted Psalm 110:1 in Hebrew; there the words are different. He was probably not unique in taking “my lord” there to be the Messiah, for a political Messiah would defeat his “enemies”.) The Pharisees too do not understand the Scriptures.

## **FOR YOUR PRAYERS**

**From the Anglican Cycle of Prayer:** Pray for the Church in Wales (Abp John Davies); Diocese of Brisbane (Abp Phillip Aspinall, Regional Bps Jeremy Greaves, Cameron Venables, John Roundhill, Clergy & People); Ministries to Youth; Parish of St Peter's, Murrumbidgee w. Holy Nativity, Hughesdale (Lawrence Anbalagan).

**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:** Debra Moore on Tuesday.

**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, Rainer Schnelle.

**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:** Valda Hunting; James Winter; Roger Henry; John Wall; Leith Richards; Rosemary Rossi; Adrian Sanders; William Rudd; Sally Chancellor; Joan Morley.

*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](mailto: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

enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org

**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

**Archivist** Prof Geoff Quail OAM geoffrey.quail@monash.edu