



ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
TOORAK
EST. 1859



Fourth Sunday in Lent

19th of March, 2023

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.

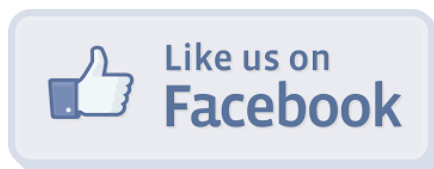
This is a wonderful and historic church, founded in 1859, a faithful Christian presence for over 160 years. We are part of the Anglican Church of Australia and a member of the global Anglican Communion.

This church actively follows Jesus' command to love God, love one's neighbour and to care for all people. Our clergy and parishioners regularly visit the sick, home-bound, and the dying. 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. If we can be of service to you or your family, please do not hesitate to get in touch. If you would like to give of your time and talents in the service of others, please also contact the church.

If you're visiting for the first time please introduce yourself to a welcomer or member of the clergy.



@stjohnstoorak



Cover Image

Joos de Momper *Christ Healing the Blind Man*

-

Oil on canvas, 138 x 205 cm

Private collection

INTRODUCTORY RITE

THE INVOCATION


Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins
Whose mercy endures for ever.

THE GREETING

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

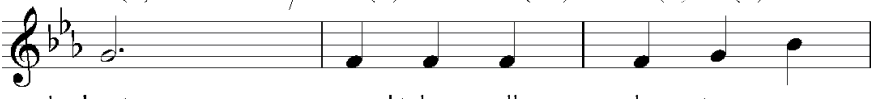
HYMN 'Be thou my vision' *verses 1, 2 & 5 for both services*

Gtr. Capo 1 Eb(D) Cm(Bm) Ab(G) Bb(A)




1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, be thou my true
 3 Be thou my arm - our, my sword for the
 4 Rich - es I scorn and the world's emp - ty
 5 High King of hea - ven, af - ter vic - to - ry

Ab(D) / Bb(A) Fm(Em) Bb(A) Eb(D)




1 heart, naught be all else to me,
 2 word; I ev - er with thee and
 3 fight, be thou my dig - ni - ty,
 4 praise, thou my in - he - ri - tance,
 5 won, may I reach hea - ven's joys,

Cm(Bm) Bb(A) / Ab(G)




1 save that thou art thou my best
 2 thou with me, Lord; thou my great
 3 thou my de - light; thou my soul's
 4 now and al - ways: thou and thou
 5 O bright heaven's Sun! Heart of my

Ab(D) Gm(F#m) Ab(G) Bb(A) Eb(D)



1 thought, by day or by night, wa - king or
 2 Fa - ther, thy child let me be; thou in me
 3 shel - ter and thou my high tower; raise thou me
 4 on - ly the first in my heart; high King of
 5 own heart, what - e - ver be - fall, still be my

Cm(Bm) Ab(G) Eb(D)



1 sleep - ing, thy pre - sence my light.
 2 dwell - ing, and I one with thee.
 3 heaven - ward, O Power of my power.
 4 hea - ven, my trea - sure thou art.
 5 vi - sion, O ru - ler of all.

1. Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,
naught be all else to me, save that thou art
thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.
2. Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;
thou my great Father, thy child let me be;
thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.
3. Be thou my armour, my sword for the fight,
be thou my dignity, thou my delight;
thou my soul's shelter and thou my high tower;
raise thou me heaven ward, O Power of my power.
4. Riches I scorn and the world's empty praise,
thou my inheritance, now and always:
thou and thou only the first in my heart;
high King of heaven, my treasure thou art.
5. High King of heaven, after victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O ruler of all.

Gaelic *c.*8th cent. *tr.* Mary Elizabeth Byrne
1880–1931 versified by Eleanor Henrietta
Hull 1860–1935 *alt.*

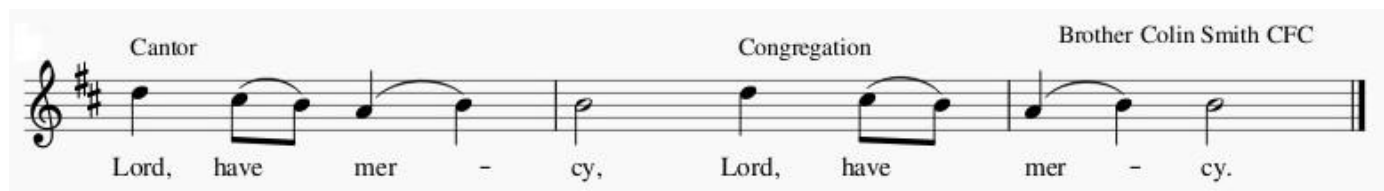
Words from *The Poem Book of the Gael*

THE COLLECT FOR PURITY *said together*

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 your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

KYRIE ELEISON *said at 8am, sung at 10am*

The musical notation is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four measures. The first and third measures are for the Cantor, and the second and fourth are for the Congregation. The lyrics are: Lord, have mer - cy, Lord, have - mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy.



CONFESSION

Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God, though we have rebelled and wandered far off. Let us then ask for mercy, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

A moment of silence

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 *Here absolution is pronounced by the celebrant*

THE COLLECT

Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and one another: call forth our penitence and acts of love, and strengthen us to face our mortality, so that we may look with confidence for your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

THE FIRST READING [1 Samuel 16.1-13] *Read at 8am by Molly Bull; at 10am by Nick Cree*

A reading from the First book of Samuel

The Lord said to Samuel, 'How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.' Samuel said, 'How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me.' And the Lord said, 'Take a heifer with you, and say,

"I have come to sacrifice to the Lord ." Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you.' Samuel did what the Lord commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, 'Do you come peaceably?' He said, 'Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord ; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.' And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord 's anointed is now before the Lord .' But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.' Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, 'Neither has the Lord chosen this one.' Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, 'Neither has the Lord chosen this one.' Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen any of these.' Samuel said to Jesse, 'Are all your sons here?' And he said, 'There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.' And Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.' He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The Lord said, 'Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.' Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

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

PSALM Psalm 23 *said together at 8am, and sung by the choir at 10am*

The Lord is my shepherd:

therefore can I lack nothing.

He will make me lie down in green pastures:

and lead me beside still waters.

He will refresh my soul:

and guide me in right pathways for his name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil:

for you are with me, your rod and your staff comfort me.

You spread a table before me
in the face of those who trouble me:
you have anointed my head with oil,
and my cup shall be full.
Surely your goodness and loving-kindness
will follow me all the days of my life:
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

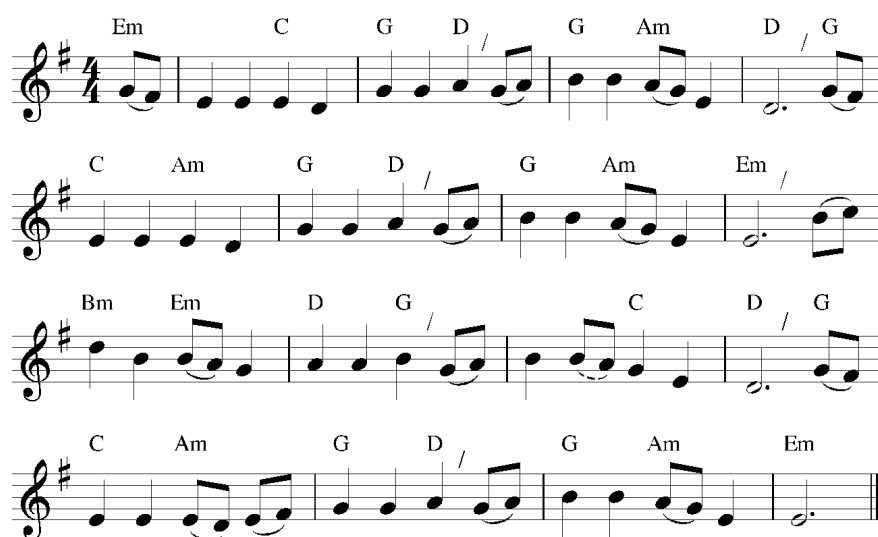
THE SECOND READING [Ephesians 5.8-14] *Read at 8am by Lindsay Hosking; and at 10am by Anthony Mannering*

A reading from the book of Ephesians

For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, 'Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.'

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

GRADUAL HYMN 'I heard the voice of Jesus' At 10am only



1. I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'Come unto me and rest;
lay down, O weary one, lay
down
your head upon my breast.'
I came to Jesus as I was,
weary and worn and sad;
I found in him a resting-place,
and he has made me glad.

3. I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'I am this dark world's light;
look unto me, your morn shall
rise,
and all your day be bright.'
I looked to Jesus, and I found
in him my star, my sun;
and in that light of life I'll walk
till travelling days are done.

2. I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'Behold, I freely give
the living water; thirsty one,
stoop down and drink and live.'
I came to Jesus, and I drank
of that life-giving stream;
my thirst was quenched, my soul
revived,
and now I live in him.

Horatius Bonar 1808-89 *alt.*

Please stand, or remain standing, and turn and face the Gospel as it is read

THE GOSPEL John 9.1-41

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

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. John.
Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbours and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, 'Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?' Some were saying, 'It is he.' Others were saying, 'No, but it is someone like

him.' He kept saying, 'I am the man.' But they kept asking him, 'Then how were your eyes opened?' He answered, 'The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, "Go to Siloam and wash." Then I went and washed and received my sight.' They said to him, 'Where is he?' He said, 'I do not know.' They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, 'He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.' Some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.' But others said, 'How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?' And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, 'What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.' He said, 'He is a prophet.' The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, 'Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?' His parents answered, 'We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.' His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, 'He is of age; ask him.' So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, 'Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.' He answered, 'I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.' They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He answered them, 'I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?' Then they reviled him, saying, 'You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.' The man answered, 'Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.' They answered him, 'You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach

us?’ And they drove him out. Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, ‘Do you believe in the Son of Man?’ He answered, ‘And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.’ Jesus said to him, ‘You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.’ He said, ‘Lord, I believe.’ And he worshipped him. Jesus said, ‘I came into this world for judgement so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.’ Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, ‘Surely we are not blind, are we?’ Jesus said to them, ‘If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, “We see”, your sin remains.

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

THE SERMON The Assistant Priest, The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch

THE ANTHEM *The Lord is my Shepherd* Howard Goodall (b 1958)

THE NICENE CREED *said together, standing*

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 *at 8 am led by Lindsay Hosking; at 10 am led by John Horan*

The Prayers end with the following

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.

PARISH NOTICES by the Assistant Priest/Locum Vicar

THE GREETING OF PEACE *standing*

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us access to his grace.

We are the body of Christ

His Spirit is with us.

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

All share with each other a 'COVIDsafe' sign of peace

OFFERTORY *A monetary collection for the life and ministry of St. John's is taken here. You may give by contributing to the brass collection plate, or at the paypoint at the rear of the church*

OFFERTORY HYMN 'Christ, Be Our Light'

Refrain G C G / Em Bm

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.

Em Am D / G C

Shine through the dark - ness. Christ, be our

Em / G C D

light! Shine in your church gath - ered to -

G C 1.2.3.4. 5. G

day.

Words and music © 1993, Bernadette Farrell, published by OCP. 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.

1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

2. Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.

*Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.*

3. Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.

*Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.*

4. Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building,
sheltering others,
walls made of living stone.

*Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.*

5. Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.

*Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.*

Bernadette Farrell 1957

PRAYER FOR RECEIVING THE OFFERTORY

God of mercy and compassion, your Word calls us home to faith and love.
Accept all we offer you this day; in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.
Blessed be God for ever.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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

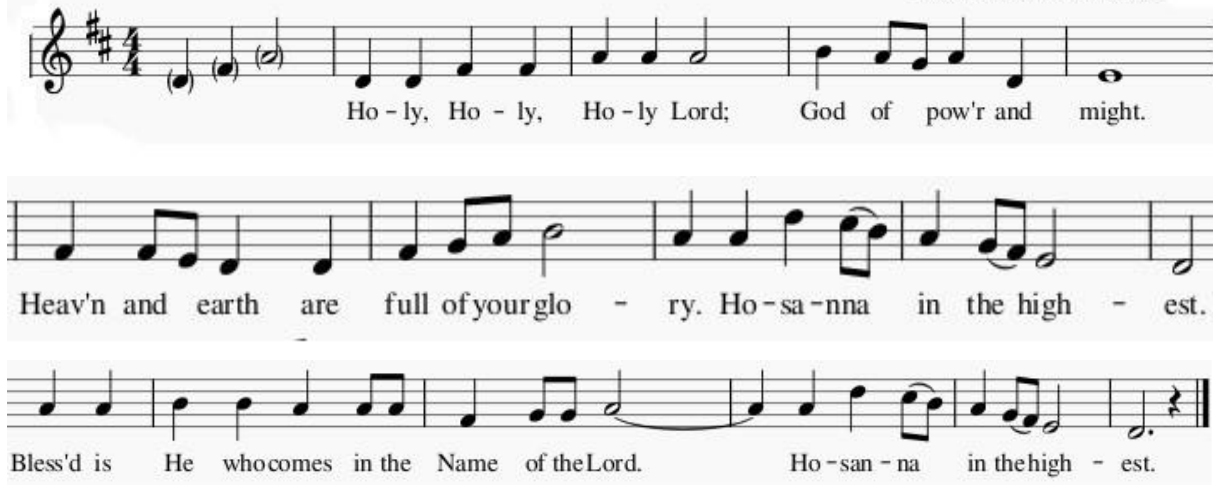
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The celebrant continues, concluding with

Therefore, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and singing:

Brother Colin Smith CFC



The Great Thanksgiving Prayer continues until the following

...Let us proclaim the mystery of faith



The Great Thanksgiving Prayer ends with the following

... songs of never ending praise. or ... now and for ever.



THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray:
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 from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

We who are many are one body, **for we all share in the one bread.**

AGNUS DEI

The musical score for Agnus Dei is presented in three systems. Each system has two staves: the top staff is for the Choir and the bottom staff is for the Congregation. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world; have mercy on us. have mercy on us." The first system shows the beginning of the piece. The second system continues the melody. The third system concludes with the words "Grant us your peace. Grant us your peace."

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Blessed are those who are called to his supper. **Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

ADMINISTRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Please note update below

All baptised Christians are welcome to receive Holy Communion. Communion is available as consecrated bread, which is given to each person, and wine which may be drunk from the chalice. A separate chalice for intinction (dipped) is also provided. If you would prefer a blessing, please come forward and indicate this by keeping your arms behind your back. Gluten free wafers are available on request.

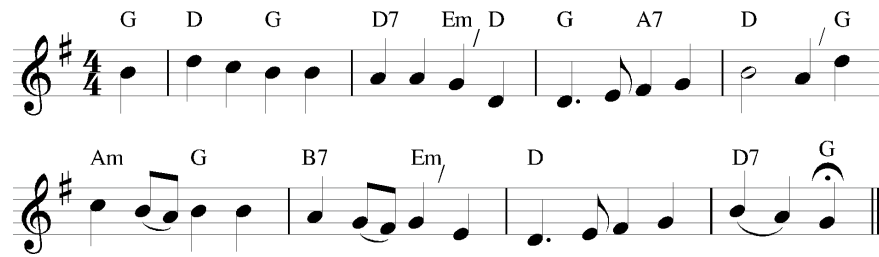
THE ANTHEM *My shepherd is the living Lord* Thomas Tomkins (1572 – 1656)

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

God of mercy, may we who have shared in this holy meal know your forgiveness in our lives, bring your reconciliation to others, and be a sign of your wholeness in this broken world.

Father, we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Lord. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory.

HYMN 'The King of Love'



1. The king of love my shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am his
and he is mine for ever.
2. Where streams of living water
flow
my ransomed soul he leadeth,
and where the verdant pastures
grow
with food celestial feedeth.
3. Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
but yet in love he sought me,
and on his shoulder gently laid,
and home rejoicing brought me.
4. In death's dark vale I fear no ill
with thee, dear Lord, beside me;
thy rod and staff my comfort still,
thy cross before to guide me.
5. Thou spread'st a table in my
sight;
thy unction grace bestoweth;
and O what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!
6. And so through all the length of
days
thy goodness faileth never:
good Shepherd, may I sing thy
praise
within thy house for ever.

Henry Williams Baker 1821–77
based on Psalm 23

BLESSING

The Lord be with you
And also with you.

Grant, merciful Lord,
to your faithful people pardon and peace,
that they may be cleansed from all their sins
and serve you with a quiet mind;
through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

And the blessing

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE Prelude in c [BWV 537]

JS Bach (1685 – 1750)

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. Used with permission. C.C.L.I Licence number 669476.

All readings from scripture are taken from The Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

A PRAYER FOR LENT

Loving God, I commit this season of Lent to you, and ask you to show me what I need to turn away from, and what I need to turn towards. Shine your loving light into those dark parts of my heart, and bring new life, new hope, and new possibilities. Help me to walk closely with Jesus, to know that I am deeply loved, and to share his love with others. *Archbishop Justin Welby*

NOTICES

Communion Instructions

All are welcome at the altar. Please note that the manner in which we now serve Holy Communion will include a chalice from which to drink or a separate chalice into which the bread may be intincted (dipped). This is a return to the longstanding practice of St. John's. If you wish to simply receive the bread only that is perfectly appropriate. If you wish for a blessing only that is also fine.

Covid Safety Measures and Zoom Link

It is recommended that we continue to wear masks when appropriate, and to physically distance when necessary. Our regular 10am Sunday service is streamed via Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89214863985?pwd=YmhHYmlsczRUa1RmWG84SGJUeG8zdz09> Meeting ID: 892 1486 3985 Passcode: 945749

Baptism

The Easter Sunday service (9th April this year) is a particularly significant day to be baptised, the day we celebrate the resurrection of Christ. Please speak to one of the clergy if you would like to consider this, and explore it further. Two baptism preparation sessions have been held and the third is today at 1.30-2.30 pm in the Vicar's Office. It is not too late to join. *Please pray* for those who are preparing to be baptised and for those who are considering it.

Pastoral Care

Clergy and members of the St John's Pastoral Care Team offer pastoral care on a regular basis to parishioners as well as to those who specifically request it. This may include Home Communion. They also visit local hospitals at the request of patients, family, friends or staff with the consent of the recipient. Clergy and Lay Pastoral Carers visit a number of local Aged Care facilities on a regular, usually monthly, basis. Parishioners and others are welcome to phone the church office to arrange a home visit by the clergy or a lay pastoral carer. Those who are no longer able to attend usual services at the church are visited on a regular basis at time intervals that suit them.

Mission trip to Cambodia Talk- TODAY

Lydia, our Assistant Curate will give a short talk on her recent mission trip to Cambodia on the 19th of March 2023 (**Today**) between 11:45am - 12:15pm in the Church Hall. She will be sharing her hands-on experience of the field trip visiting the provinces of Siem Reap and the capital city Phnom Penh. All are welcome.

Lent Study Series 2023 (see leaflet below and flyer in narthex for venues and times).

These studies based on Jane Williams' wonderful book *The Merciful Humility of God* have now commenced and the fourth session will be held at Toorak Uniting Church Toorak on Thursday March 23rd at 10.30am-11.45am. For those who do not have a copy of the book, there will be resources available. There is an option of a zoom meeting on a Tuesday evening at 6pm for those not able to attend on a Thursday morning. Please contact Toorak Uniting church on 03 9829 0300 or office@toorakuc.org.au for the zoom link.

54th Synod General Election of Lay Representatives

Archbishop Philip Freier has now issued to each parish a General Election mandate for election of lay synod representatives and an alternate lay representative for the 54th Melbourne synod in October. An election for these representatives from St John's will be held on Sunday 26th March immediately following the 10am service. This parish is to elect three representatives and one alternate representative. Nominations will close immediately before the 8am service this Sunday- TODAY- 19th March. Nomination papers are available from the Acting Vicar. Please note that all representatives are expected to attend all four sessions of the October synod. This is a critical year in the life of our Diocese as we strive to keep it as an open, diverse and broad diocese that values mainstream Anglicanism and our liturgical tradition. This new 3 year Synod will also be a crucial moment for our church, as it will elect a new Archbishop for Melbourne, on or before 9 February 2025. NB: If anyone wishes to participate in the election and is not currently on the electoral roll, please obtain an electoral roll application form from St John's parish administrator. *Wendy Crouch*

SAVE THE DATES

Holy Week and Easter services: See attached flyer.

Wednesday May 10th, 5-6.30pm.

Ageing and wellbeing: Enhancing our resilience. Do we want to thrive rather than just survive, as we age? As well as the provision of information and resources there will opportunity for questions and discussion on key issues raised. All welcome, including carers. *For further information speak to Rev'd Wendy.*

Sunday 16th July 12pm.

Winter warmer lunch following 10am service. Fully catered. Further details to come.

Contribute to Worship Services

All our ministries at St John's are supported by our wonderful volunteers. The rosters for March and April are [here](#). And you will note that volunteering for morning tea has now been added to the list of duties. There are a number of dates which require volunteers to provide, set-up, serve and pack away the morning tea. If you are able to provide more than one date that you would be available we would be very grateful, and please let the parish office know so that the rosters can be updated.

The Melbourne Anglican (TMA)

The link to the latest edition of TMA is [here](#). The link to the March Prayer Diary is [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.

Clergy Days Off

Our clergy have one regular day off per week. Our Assistant Curate Lydia has Monday and Vicar Peter has Friday. Wendy usually works Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday only. 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.

ART COMMENTARY

Joos de Momper set the New Testament story in his native countryside at a large placid lake on the shores of which lie traditional gabled houses and a church. The painting is a collaborative work with Hans Jordaens III who painted the staffage for the present picture. Joos de Momper's picturesque landscape provides an ideal setting for Hans Jordaens III's animated figures.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

For Turkiye, Syria and New Zealand, in the aftermath of devastating earthquakes, cyclones and floods. For the suffering, grieving, and displaced people. For leaders and aid workers. We also continue to pray for Ukraine, Russia and their peoples.

From the Anglican Cycle of Prayer: St Paul's Geelong (Nigel Pope); The Diocese of Riverina (Bp Donald Kirk, Clergy & People); Defence Force Chaplains; National Bishop's Conference.

For those who lead us in Government: His Majesty King Charles III; Governor General David Hurley AC; Prime Minister Anthony Albanese; Federal Member of Parliament for Division of Higgins, Dr. Michelle Ananda-Rajah; Premier of Victoria, Daniel Andrews.

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.

For 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 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: Gwen; Bruce Fordham; Sam Shepherd; Margaret Jones; Nichole Garnaut; Joanna; Sam; Ivan and John.

For those in aged care and those who are housebound: Rosie Creswell; Beverley Joyce; Val Hurst; Rosalind Scott; Anne Myers; Elizabeth Johnson; and, Claire Beecher.

Give thanks for those whose Anniversary of Death is this week: Margaret Howes (2019); Sandra Scotis (2016); Peter Kincaid (2012); Barry King (2017); Meredith Hunt (2017); Gayla Brett (2013).

Recently died: Bernard Tuck.

Support St John's

Your support of St John's is greatly appreciated. Donations can be made directly to: St. John's Anglican Church General Account, Westpac, 509 Toorak Road, Toorak, Victoria, 3142, Australia. Account Name is St John's Anglican Church. BSB is 033 086. Account No. is 871931. For international transfers please include SWIFT code WPACAU2S.

Holy Week & Easter Services

Palm Sunday

2 April 10am

Celebrate Jesus Christ entering Jerusalem

Holy Wednesday

5 April 7pm

Reflections on Jesus' path to the cross

Maundy Thursday

6 April 7pm

Remember the Last Supper and Washing of Disciples' feet

Good Friday

7 April 10am followed by

Ecumenical Walk of Witness at 11.30am

Recall the Crucifixion

Easter Day

9 April 8am & 10am

Christ is risen. Alleluia!

Join us for an Easter Egg Hunt and Games after the 10am service

www.saintjohnstoorak.org

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

This commentary presents one interpretation; others may be possible. Comments are best read with the readings. Text from New Revised Standard Version of the Bible (NRSV).

1 Samuel 16:1-13

After his anointing by Samuel, David is mentioned as a lyre-player at the court of King Saul, ruler of an area north and east of Jerusalem (then called Jebus). David left his court to become a warlord to the south, in the Bethlehem area. Saul has enjoyed God's favour, but has lost it by disobeying the prophet Samuel's instructions. God now orders Samuel, his agent, to anoint a new king, a son of "Jesse". Samuel's route to Bethlehem is through Saul's territory, so he asks God how he is to make the trip (v. 2). God tells him to say that he comes to "sacrifice to the Lord": this is part of his purpose. "Eliab" (v. 6) is Jesse's eldest son. Surely a tall first-born is God's choice for king (vv. 6-7). But God's choice is not humankind's choice. (Jesse's second and third sons are "Abinadab", v. 8, and "Shammah", v. 9). David's complexion is "ruddy" (v. 12); he is God's choice. When Samuel anoints him (with olive oil), the "spirit of the Lord" (v. 13) comes upon him. His brothers are witnesses. Samuel returns to "Ramah", his seat of judgement. Saul persecutes David relentlessly but upon Saul's death in battle, David unifies the north and the south and ascends to the throne.

Psalms 23

In the ancient Near East, the king was seen as shepherd (vv. 1-4) and as host (vv. 5-6). God faithfully provides for his sheep, and constantly cares for them. He revives our very lives ("soul", v. 3), and guides us in godly ways ("right paths"). Even when beset by evil ("darkest valley", v. 4), we have nothing to fear. God's "rod" (a defence against wolves and lions) protects us; his "staff" (v. 4, for rescuing sheep from thickets) guides us. The feast (v. 5) is even more impressive, for it is in the presence of his foes. Kings were plenteously anointed with oil (a symbol of power and dedication to a holy purpose). May God's "goodness and mercy" (v. 6, steadfast love) follow (or *pursue*) him (as do his enemies) throughout his life. He will continue to worship ("dwell ...") in the Temple as long as he lives.

Ephesians 5:8-14

The author has exhorted his readers to conduct themselves ethically as befits those who have adopted the way of Christ. Having "put away your former way of life" (4:22) and being *clothed with the new self* (4:24) when they were "marked with a seal" (4:30) in baptism, they are now to lead moral lives for, being members of a body in which the Holy Spirit dwells, an offence against a member is an offence against God. They are to "share with the needy" (4:28), emphasize the good in others (4:29) and imitate "God" (5:1) and Christ. They must obey God (5:6). Now, in terminology also found at Qumran and in Matthew, the author contrasts unbelievers (who live in "darkness", 5:8, and disobey God) with those who are in "light" (5:8), "in the Lord". Christians should "expose" (5:11)

deviations from God's ways. Evil deeds are known to God (5:13). 5:14b may be a quote from an early baptismal hymn. Seek the "light", what God would have you do (5:10).

John 9:1-41

Perhaps Jesus encounters the blind man in the precincts of the Temple, where beggars habitually gathered. Illness and physical disability were attributed to sin: in this case, either of the man (prenatally) or of "his parents" (v. 2). Jesus dismisses the link between sin and illness, at least in this case; rather he says that this man's impairment provides him with opportunities to do (and show) the works of God. Jesus and his followers ("we", v. 4) must do his mission while they can. A time is coming (from his crucifixion to his resurrection) when he, "the light of the world" (v. 5) will not be in the world, so he will be unable to "work" (v. 4, and the disciples will desert him). Jesus takes earth (the substance from which *human*, Adam, was made), makes a "mud" (v. 6) poultice, and applies it to the man's eyes. If he has trust enough to go to the "pool" (v. 7) and wash it off, he will have sight. He does; thus Jesus completes one of "God's works" (v. 3). John draws attention to "Siloam" (v. 7) as meaning "Sent", thereby alluding to Jesus as *sent* for the salvation of humankind – so washing symbolizes baptism.

Despite the man's claim to be the one who was a beggar, those who know him are divided: some say "it is he" (v. 9) but others doubt: he only looks like the beggar. In vv. 10-22, the man confirms his cure as genuine. The Pharisees consider making mud on the sabbath as breaking the Law (v. 14) so they examine the man. They too are divided (v. 16): between those who say Jesus can't be from God (for he breaks the Law) and those who wonder how a sabbath-breaker can perform miracles (which only one approved by God can do). So they question the man further, hoping that the dilemma can be resolved by discrediting the cure (v. 17). They ask: *What do you say about his opening of your eyes?* He insists that Jesus' power is from God ("a prophet"). The man's parents swear that their son was blind from birth but say no more, for fear of being cast out of the community (vv. 18-23). The Pharisees invite the man to confess that he has deceived them in claiming to be cured (v. 24). ("Give glory to God" is an Old Testament formula inviting confession.) The man boldly asserts the fact of the cure and adds, ironically: if you listen to my story you may admit that Jesus is right! (v. 27) They question Jesus' authority: "we know" (v. 29) that the Law is from God, but Jesus is an upstart! The man ridicules their expert opinion (v. 30). God only listens to sinners who are penitent (v. 31). Jesus must be "from God" (v. 33) for no one has ever before performed such a cure (v. 32). For trying to teach the Pharisees a lesson, the man is evicted from the synagogue ("drove him out", v. 34). Jesus invites him to express his faith shown by his conduct (vv. 35-38). He says he took on human form for two purposes: to give understanding, sight, of ultimate reality, and to punish those who think they "see" (v. 39) but don't. The Pharisees are incredulous (v. 40). Jesus says: if you were ignorant of God's ways ("blind", v. 41) you would be considered sin-less, but you make the unfounded assumption that you do "see", so you are liable to be punished.

This Week

SUNDAY, 19 March 2023

Fourth Sunday in Lent

8am Said Eucharist

10am Sung Eucharist

11.45am Mission trip to Cambodia talk, Buxton Hall

1.30-2.30pm Baptism preparation class

MONDAY, 20 March, 2023

11am Funeral of Bernard Tuck

TUESDAY, 21 March, 2023

5.30pm Toorak Op Shop Committee followed by A.G.M., Toorak Services Club.

WEDNESDAY, 22 March, 2023

7pm Eucharist service

THURSDAY, 16 March, 2023

10.30am - 11.45am Lent Study 4, Toorak Uniting Church

Next Sunday, 26 March Fifth Sunday in Lent

8am Said Eucharist

First Reading: Ezekiel 37.1-14, Sam Hartley

Second Reading: Romans 8.6-11, Vivienne Randall

Gospel Reading: John 11.1-45

Intercessor: Sam Hartley

Preacher: The Revd Lydia Thangadurai

Celebrant: The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch

10am Sung Eucharist

First Reading: Ezekiel 37.1-14, Keith Beecher

Second Reading: Romans 8.6-11, Jenny Smith

Gospel Reading: John 11.1-45

Intercessor: Jenny Smith

Preacher: The Revd Lydia Thangadurai

Celebrant: The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch

Morning Tea: Monica & Tim Victorsen; Stella Jongebreur.



ST. JOHN'S
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TOORAK
EST. 1859

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