



ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH  
TOORAK  
EST. 1859



# The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

17 September, 2023  
*8am Service*

# 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. We are part of the Anglican Church of Australia and a member of the global Anglican Communion, comprised of 80 million people.

## Worship

Regular services of worship are held each Sunday at 8am and 10am, and Wednesday at 7pm. All are welcome. Services are followed by times of fellowship over food and drinks to which everyone is also welcome.

## Mission

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.

## Visitors

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.

## The Church

The church is decorated in green, the liturgical colour of the season of Pentecost.

## Cover Image

Cosimo Roselli, *Crossing of the Red Sea*  
(1481-82) Fresco, 350 x 572 cm  
Cappella Sistina, Vatican

## Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge we meet on the Traditional Lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples of the East Kulin Nations and pay our respect to their Elders past and present.



@stjohnstoorak



Like us on  
**Facebook**

*Please ensure your telephone is switched off or to silent. Please also use the time before the service for prayer and quiet reflection and allow others to do the same.*

## INTRODUCTORY RITE *please stand*

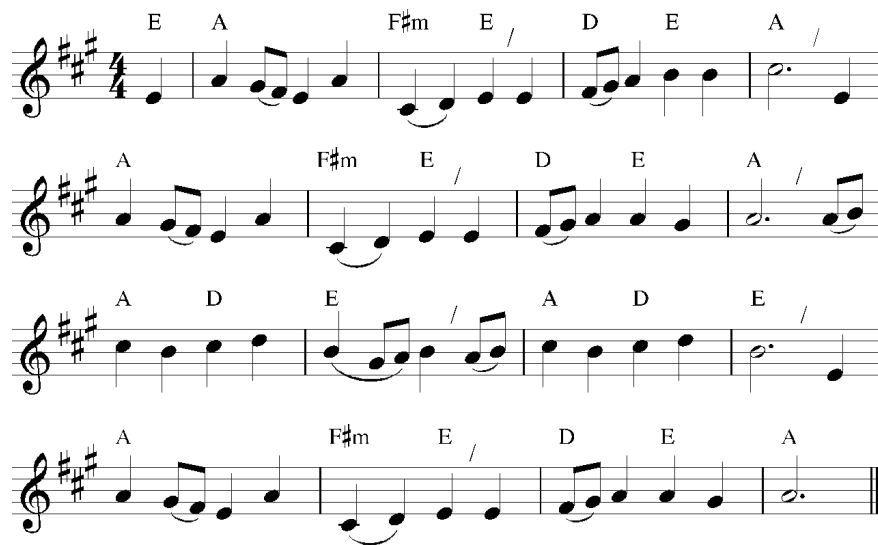
### THE INVOCATION

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
**Blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever.**

### THE GREETING

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

### HYMN "The day of resurrection!"



1. The day of resurrection!  
earth, tell it out abroad;  
the passover of gladness,  
the passover of God:  
from death to life eternal,  
from earth up to the sky,  
our Christ has brought us over  
with hymns of victory.

2. Now let the heav'ns be joyful  
and earth her song repeat,  
the whole world shout in  
triumph  
her living Lord to greet;  
let all things seen and unseen  
their notes of gladness blend,  
for Christ the Lord has risen,  
our joy that has no end.

John of Damascus c.675–749 *tr.* John Mason  
Neale 1818–66 *alt.*

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

THE TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS

**'Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.'** Jesus said: **'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself.'**

KYRIE ELEISON

**Lord, have mercy, Lord have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy, Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy, Lord have mercy.**

CONFESSION

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

*Silence is kept*

**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

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

**Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the Glory of God the Father. Amen.**

COLLECT FOR THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

O God, you call your church to witness that in Christ we are reconciled to you: help us to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may turn to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

THE FIRST READING Exodus 14.19-31 *read by Lindsay Hosking*

The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night. Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, 'Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt.' Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers.' So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

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



THE PSALM Psalm 114 *said*

When Israel came out of Egypt:  
and the house of Jacob from among a people  
of an alien tongue,

Judah became his sanctuary:  
and Israel his dominion.

The sea saw that, and fled:  
Jordan was driven back.

The mountains skipped like rams:  
and the little hills like young sheep.

What ailed you, O sea, that you fled:  
O Jordan, that you were driven back?

You mountains, that you skipped like rams:  
and you little hills like young sheep?

Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord:  
at the presence of the God of Jacob,

Who turned the rock into a pool of water:  
and the flint-stone into a welling spring.

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.

THE SECOND READING Romans 14.1-14 *read by Angus McLeay*

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarrelling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgement on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgement on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honour of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honour of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honour of the Lord and give thanks to God. We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why do you pass

judgement on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God. For it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.' So then, each of us will be accountable to God. Let us therefore no longer pass judgement on one another, but resolve instead never to put a stumbling-block or hindrance in the way of another. I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean.

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

*We stand or remain standing and face the Gospel as it is read*

THE GOSPEL Matthew 18.21-35

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

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to St. Matthew.  
**Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

'Then Peter came and said to him, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. 'For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything." And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, "Pay what you owe." Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you." But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you

pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?" And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

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

THE SERMON The Assistant Priest, Revd Dr Wendy Crouch

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

*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.**

THE PARISH NOTICES

THE GREETING OF PEACE *standing*



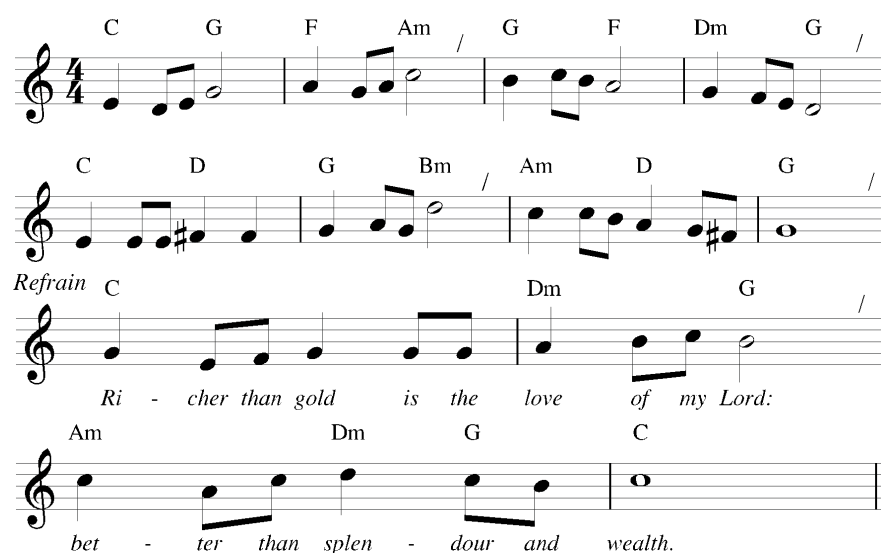
We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

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

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

OFFERTORY As the gifts of bread and wine are brought forward, a monetary collection for the life of St. John's is taken. Please give by contributing to the collection plate, or at the paypoint at the rear of the church

### OFFERTORY HYMN 'Love is his word'



1. Love is his word, love is his way,  
feasting with friends, fasting  
alone,  
living and dying, rising again,  
love, only love, is his way.

*Richer than gold is the love of  
my Lord:  
better than splendour and  
wealth.*

2. Love is his way, love is his mark,  
sharing his last Passover feast,  
Christ at his table, host to the  
twelve,  
love, only love, is his mark.

*Refrain*

3. Love is his mark, love is his sign,  
bread for our strength, wine for  
our joy,  
'This is my body, this is my

blood',  
love, only love, is his sign.  
*Refrain*

4. Love is his name, love is his law.  
Hear his command, all who are  
his:  
'Love one another, I have loved  
you.'

Love, only love, is his law.  
*Refrain*

5. Love is his law, love is his word:  
love of the Lord, Father and  
Word,  
love of the Spirit, God ever one.  
Love, only love, is his word.

*Refrain*

Luke Connaughton 1917-79 alt.

PRAYER FOR RECEIVING THE OFFERTORY

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have these gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom. **Blessed be God forever.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

*All remain standing*

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 Great Thanksgiving Prayer continues to the following*

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

SANCTUS

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the highest.**

BENEDICTUS

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

*The Great Thanksgiving Prayer continues to the following*

...Let us proclaim the mystery of faith  
**Christ has died, Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

*The Great Thanksgiving Prayer ends with the following*

... now and for ever.

**Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

#### 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 for ever. 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

**Jesus Lamb of God, have mercy on us.  
Jesus bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.  
Jesus redeemer of the world, grant us your peace.**

#### INVITATION TO COMMUNION *kneeling or standing*

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.**

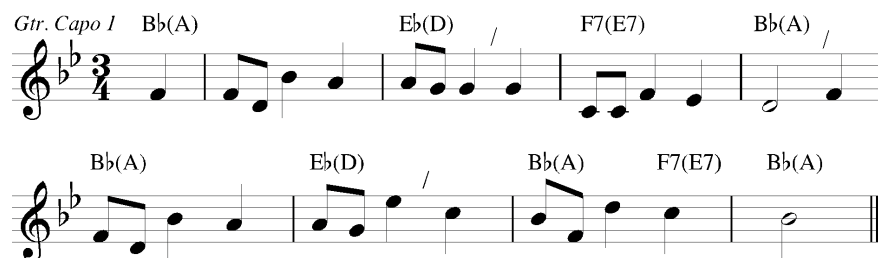
#### ADMINISTRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

*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.*

#### POST COMMUNION PRAYER *Please stand. The prayer ends with the following*

**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.**

## FINAL HYMN 'Before you, God we dare to sing'



1. Before you, God, we dare to sing,  
Your grace gives us a voice.  
When on your mercy we reflect  
we cannot but rejoice.

3. The Spirit works the miracle, by  
word and sign it's done,  
And we engrafted to the church  
Are family with your Son.

2. Christ's robe of righteousness we  
wear  
To clothe our nakedness,  
So we can stand before your  
throne  
Secure in your own grace.

Words Rodney Bloomfield 1943

BLESSING

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE *from Toccata in E [566a]*

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750)

*As the postlude is played please remain seated or leave quietly*



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)

## **Baptism and Confirmation Service, November 26, at 10am**

Our bishop, The Rt. Revd. Genieve Blackwell, will preside and preach at the annual service of Confirmation on 26 November, 2023, at the 10am service. If you or someone you know is considering Baptism, Confirmation, or Reception into the Anglican church from another denomination, please contact the clergy or the church office so as to enrol in the four week preparatory course, commencing Sunday, October 15, 12 - 1pm, after the 10am service.

## **CURRENT NOTICES**

### **Happy 100th Birthday to Trevor Craddock!**

Longstanding member of St. John's, Trevor Craddock, turns 100 today! The parish congratulates Trevor on this milestone and sends him our warmest good wishes, congratulations and prayerful thanksgiving. Happy Birthday 100th Trevor!

### **Church Office CLOSED 18 - 22 September**

Please note the church office will be closed for the period 18 - 22 September. Only urgent telephone calls and emails will be attended to.

### **September 28, 10am, Prayers for Christian Unity**

Join our fellow Christians in prayer and fellowship at our monthly Prayer for Christian Unity service, this month held at St. Peter's Catholic Church, Toorak.

### **October 15, 4 - 6pm, Blessing of the Pets**

A favourite afternoon in the St. John's calendar is the annual blessing of the pets service, held in honour of St. Francis (the patron saint of animals). All are welcome - with their pets! - to gather on the South Lawn for a service of prayer and blessing and for time together with our animals. Refreshments will be served.

### **November 2, 7pm All Souls' Day Service**

### **November 5, 10am Guest Preacher, Bishop Grant Dibden, followed by Rededication of Parishioner's War Memorial in this its Hundredth Year**

Join us for a visit from the Anglican Bishop to the Australian Defence Force, The Rt. Revd. Grant Dibden who will be our guest preacher and will rededicate our War Memorial immediately following the 10am service.

### **November 11, 10am Remembrance Day Service**

With current members of our Defence Forces and of the RSL, join us for our Annual Remembrance Day Service as we remember those who serve - and continue to serve - in our Defence Forces.

**November 19, 11.30am Annual Meeting**

The annual meeting of the Parish, following the 10am Service.

**November 26, Service of Baptism and Confirmation, 10am**

Celebrate with those being baptised and confirmed at this service with our Bishop,  
The Rt. Revd Genieve Blackwell preaching and presiding.

**December 3, 7pm**

Ecumenical Advent Service, Toorak Uniting Church. All are welcome.



## **REGULAR NOTICES**

### **Safeguarding and Wellbeing**

St. John's is committed to safeguarding all people and protecting their wellbeing, including young and vulnerable people, especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children with diverse needs. All relevant staff and volunteers are trained in child safety and have appropriate clearance for service or clearance for ministry. If you have any concerns about the wellbeing of children in this parish, contact Kooyoora on 1800 135 246 or [www.kooyoora.org.au](http://www.kooyoora.org.au) If you have concerns about your wellbeing or that of another churchgoer please contact the clergy.

### **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.

### **The Melbourne Anglican (TMA) and Prayer Diary**

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

### **Contribute to Worship Services**

All our ministries at St John's are supported by our wonderful volunteers. The rosters for September and October are available [here](#). And you will note that volunteering for morning tea has now been added to the list of duties. If you can help fill any of the gaps please contact the parish office. Thanks in advance.

### **Communion Instructions**

All are welcome at the altar and those baptised are welcome to receive Communion. Holy Communion is distributed via a chalice from which to sip or, a separate chalice into which the bread may be intincted (dipped). If you wish to simply receive the bread only that is perfectly appropriate. A blessing only is also available.

### **Covid Safety Measures and Zoom Link**

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87520014330?pwd=VFNaRGFaSzAzSmcrSEZuK1lkVzFDOT09>

Meeting ID: 875 2001 4330 Passcode: 670339

### **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.

### **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.

## **FOR YOUR PRAYERS**

**For the suffering, grieving, and displaced people, particularly of Morocco and Libya at this time. And all those suffering drought, famine and war, in Syria, Somali, the Sudan and Afghanistan. We remember the people of Hawaii following the recent devastating bushfires. For all nations' leaders and aid workers we pray. We continue to pray for Ukraine, Russia, and their leaders and peoples.**

**From the Anglican Cycle of Prayer:** St Columb's Anglican Church Hawthorn (Mark McDonald, Paul Hughes); The Church of the Province of the Indian Ocean; The Diocese of Canberra & Goulburn (Bp Mark Short, Asst Bp Carol Wagner, Clergy & People); Department of Theological Education (Bp Kate Prowd, Assistant Bishop, Monomeeth Episcopate); Confirmations at St John the Evangelist Epping (Bp Brad Billings); St Paul's Cathedral – pastoral visit (Bp Kate Prowd); St Andrew's Aberfeldie – pastoral visit (Abp Philip Freier); Health Chaplains Service – St Paul's Cathedral (Abp Philip Freier);

**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 Nicole Ginnane; St Catherine's School, Principal Michelle Carroll; and Toorak Primary School, Principal Julie Manallack.

**For those celebrating birthdays:** Trevor Craddock

**For the sick and all in need:** Gwen; Bruce Fordham; Sam Shepherd; Margaret Jones; Nichole Garnaut; Joanna; Sam; Ivan; Anthea; David; John; Tim Morris; Joan Heywood; James; Bob Plunkett.

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

**Give thanks for those whose Anniversary of Death is this week:** Irene McDonald (2016); Ron Richards (2013); Anne Faulkner (2016); Audrey Leeton (2021);.

**For those who have died and their families who mourn them:** Kelvin Griffiths

### **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.

## **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).*

### **Exodus 14:19-31**

After suffering from plagues sent by God, the Pharaoh has allowed the Israelites to leave Egypt. While the direct route to Canaan is along the coast of the Red Sea, God has led them towards the Sea of Reeds (13:17-18), out of concern that they may abort their mission if beset by enemies. Finding the Egyptian frontier forts too strong, they have turned back at God's behest. He has fooled the Egyptians into thinking that the Israelites were trapped, and then pursuing them. His plan will show Israel's God to be victor over Egypt and her gods.

The Pharaoh has had his chariots prepared for battle (14:6). The appearance of the Egyptian army has struck fear in the Israelites – they have complained (14:11, for the first of many times in the Exodus saga) about Moses' leadership (and God's): they prefer slavery to certain death. But Moses has calmed his people, by assuring them of rescue – with God fighting with them – if they do not panic. God has commanded Moses to divide the sea.

The “pillar of fire and cloud” (v. 24) may have their origins as markers carried at the head of an army or caravan, but from this event on they become symbols of God's presence. The “angel of God” (v. 19) comes between the Israelites and the Egyptians protecting God's people and confusing the Egyptians, as does the “pillar of cloud”.

The Sea of Reeds (“the sea”, v. 21) is shallow and surrounded with marshy land. God uses a natural phenomenon to achieve his purpose: *east winds* strong enough to blow away the water do occur. The battle turns when the Egyptian chariots bog down in the soft earth (v. 25). The story was handed down orally from one generation to the next; that “the waters” (vv. 22, 29) form a “wall” suggest that it grew in the telling. Vv. 30-31 are probably a later editorial comment: God saves; subjugation to the Egyptians is over; the Israelites have seen the marvel which God has done for them, so they hold him in awe and trust in him. We do not know precisely what happened at the Sea of Reeds, but we see the result: God sets his people on his way, led by Moses.

### **Psalm 114**

Vv. 1-3 speak of the Exodus in the briefest of terms, stating its initial and final events: the people saw the Sea of Reeds and the “Jordan” divided. Perhaps v. 4 speaks of the earth tremors which accompanied God's appearance on Mount Sinai. Why, ask vv. 5-6, did these remarkable phenomena occur? Because the lord of all creation was present. He even commanded the “rock” (v. 8) at Meribah to gush forth water, thus relieving the thirst of the Israelites during the Exodus. As the physical earth responded to God's command then, do so now!

## **Romans 14:1-12**

Paul writes about two kinds of Christians: (1) those who being “weak in faith” concern themselves with details and added practices (rather than the main objective) and (2) the strong who concentrate on God’s purposes. The “weak” are to be welcomed as full members of the community “for God has welcomed them” (v. 3). The particular practices (of piety) mentioned are not eating meat (“eat only vegetables”, v. 2), fasting regularly (vv. 5-6) and abstaining from “wine” (v. 21).

In Roman society, it was considered ill-mannered to “pass judgement” (v. 4) on the conduct of another master’s servant; he was answerable to his “own lord” or master. Similarly, each Christian is answerable to “the Lord” and should not be criticised. One’s own conviction (v. 5) before God is what matters. Living (and dying) for God is our objective (v. 8); we should not judge; God will judge our conduct at the end of time: “each of us will be accountable to God” (v. 12).

In 14:13-15:6, Paul writes to the strong, those who see the purpose of life clearly. They should refrain from causing others to lose their faith; and not let their ideas and practices, however good, be misconstrued as evil. Rather they are to “pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding” (v. 19). It is through living in a manner consistent with one’s conscience that one achieves a right relationship with God (v. 22). One’s actions must be founded in faith (v. 23).

## **Matthew 18:21-35**

Jesus has told the disciples how the community is to discipline those who disrupt its harmony by going against God’s ways. If such a person fails to respond to private counselling, he or she is to be judged by two of the disciples. What they decide, God will ratify. But they should realise that God forgives many times; however there are limits – as Jesus explains in a parable.

The story-line of the parable is straight-forward. There are three episodes: (1) a king decides to “settle accounts with his slaves” (v. 23, or possibly with court officials or even with finance ministers or tax gatherers); one of them owes “ten thousand talents” (v. 24), i.e. millions of dollars (to Jesus’ audience, as much as the fabled riches of Egyptian and Persian kings); he, of course, is unable to pay, so (as Mosaic law permitted) he and his family are to be sold; when he seeks forgiveness of the loan, the king grants it. (v. 27); (2) But this slave then demands payment of a loan of three month’s wages (“a hundred denarii”, v. 28) from a fellow slave, and when forgiveness is sought, refuses to grant it (v. 30); (3) When the king hears about this, he retracts his forgiveness and has the first slave tortured – probably for ever (v. 34).

In v. 35, Jesus identifies the figures in the parable: the king is God, the first slave, any Christian, and the second slave, any other person. Jesus makes a point in each of the episodes: (1) God loves us so much that he will forgive any sin, however grievous; (2) it is absurd to live in a way contrary to God’s love and mercy; and (3) those who accept forgiveness from God but fail to forgive others likewise will be punished eternally.

## ART COMMENTARY

*Crossing of the Red Sea* is a fresco from the cycle of the life of Moses in the Sistine Chapel. It is located on the third compartment on the south wall. The episodes from the life of Moses were conceived of as typological scenes prefiguring significant episodes in the life of Christ.

In the painting we see the people of Israel passing through the Red Sea. The sequence begins in the background to the right, where Moses and Aaron are pleading with Pharaoh to release the people of Israel. After God sends plagues on Egypt, Pharaoh finally relents, but then pursues the departing foreigners with his army. Moses parts the waters of the sea with his staff so that the Israelites can pass through them. When he raises the staff a second time the waters close up behind them, and their pursuers, Pharaoh in the lead, are drowned. Rising above the flood is the pillar of fire with which God struck fear in the army of the Egyptians. On the left-hand shore Moses stands, staff in hand, with the people of Israel. The kneeling woman in the foreground is the prophetess Miriam, who has taken up a drum to thank the Lord for their rescue.



ST. JOHN'S  
ANGLICAN  
CHURCH  
TOORAK  
EST. 1859

## This Week

SUNDAY, 17 September, 2023  
**The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost**  
8am Said Eucharist  
10am Sung Eucharist

WEDNESDAY, 20 September, 2023  
12pm Interment of Ashes, Ian Carnegie,  
Memorial Garden  
7pm Eucharist, Angel Chapel

THURSDAY, 21 September, 2023  
2.30pm Funeral Service for Kelvin Griffiths



## Next Sunday, 24 September The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

### 8am Said Eucharist

First Reading: *Exodus 16:2-15*, Brenda Mouritz  
Second Reading: *Philippians 1*, Anthony Rose  
Gospel Reading: *Matthew 20:1-16*  
Intercessor: Brenda Mouritz  
Preacher: The Revd Dr Peter French  
Celebrant: The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch

### 10am Sung Eucharist

First Reading: *Exodus 16:2-15*, Leanne  
Blanckenberg  
Second Reading: *Philippians 1*, Barbara Brown  
Gospel Reading: *Matthew 20:1-16*  
Intercessor: Keith Beecher  
Preacher: The Revd Dr Peter French  
Celebrant: The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch

Morning tea: Celia Langford & Fiona Singleton

**Parish Office, Open 9.30am - 4.30pm,  
Monday to Friday**  
9826 1765 or 9826 1434  
[enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org](mailto:enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org)

**Wardens** Mrs Amanda Bagot,  
Mr Adriaan den Dulk,  
Mr Anthony Mannering

**Parish Council**  
Mr Keith Beecher OAM,  
Mr Dougal Colhoun, Mr Craig Cooper,  
Ms Diana Dunlop,  
Dr Jessica Hall, Mr Michael Kirwan,  
Mr Adriaan Den Dulk, Mr Harrison Young

**Vicar** The Revd Dr Peter French  
[vicar@saintjohnstoorak.org](mailto:vicar@saintjohnstoorak.org)

**Assistant Priest**  
The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch  
[assistantpriest@saintjohnstoorak.org](mailto:assistantpriest@saintjohnstoorak.org)

**Assistant Curate**  
The Revd Lydia Thangadurai  
[curate@saintjohnstoorak.org](mailto:curate@saintjohnstoorak.org)

**Director of Music and Organist**  
Mr Christopher Cook  
[acccook2001@yahoo.com.au](mailto:acccook2001@yahoo.com.au)

**Parish Administrator and Child Safe  
Compliance** Ms Alicia Groves  
[enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org](mailto:enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org)

**Child Safe Officer** Mr Clive Wright

**Archivist** Professor Geoff Quail OAM  
[geoffrey.quail@monash.edu](mailto:geoffrey.quail@monash.edu)