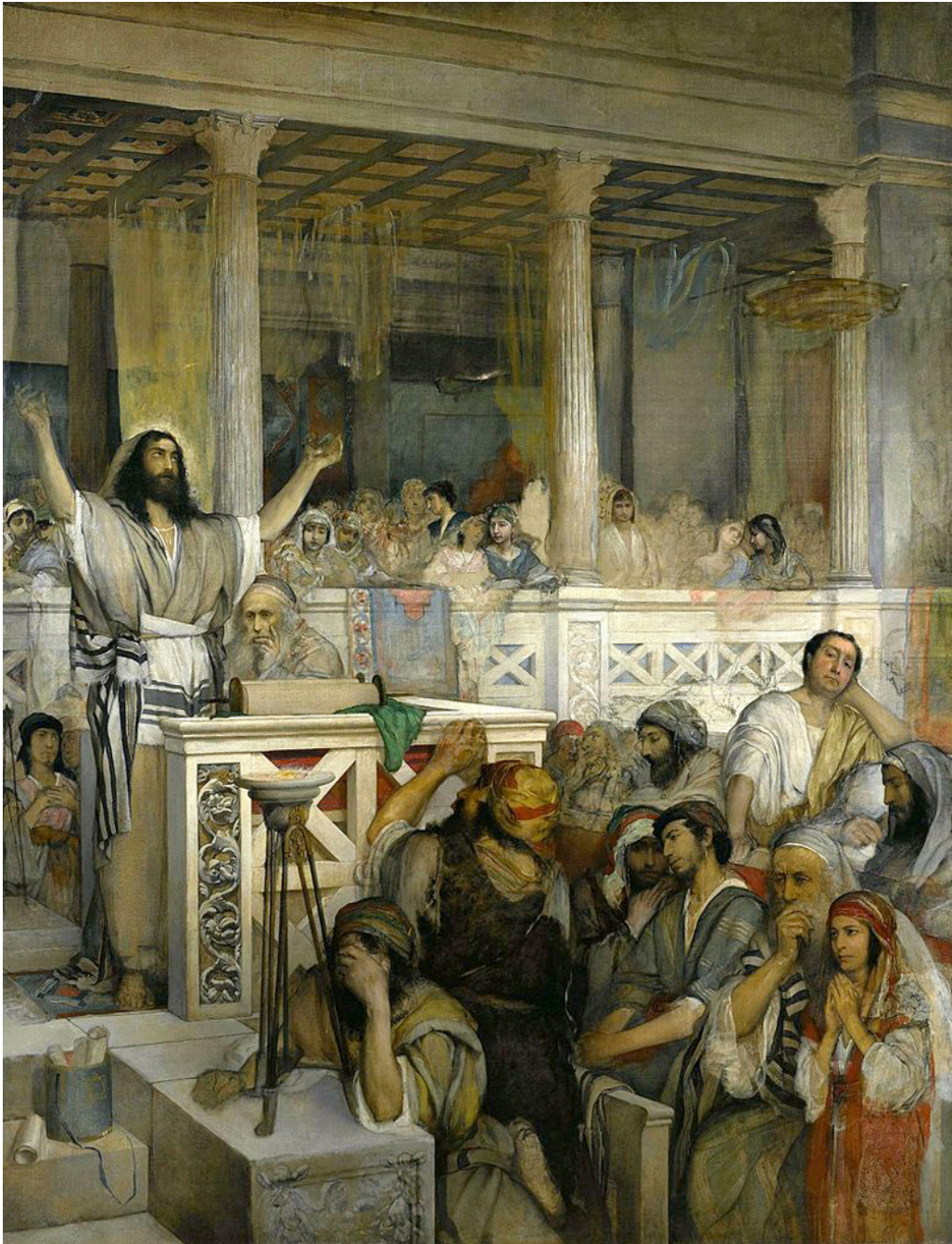




ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
TOORAK
EST. 1859



Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

28 January, 2024

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 colour of Ordinary Time, the colour of vestments and altars outside of particular periods of time, such as Lent.

Cover Image

Maurycy Gottlieb (1856-1879), *Christ Preaching at Capernaum*
ca. 1878-1879, oil on canvas
National Museum, Warsaw

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

As you enter the church, please ensure your phone 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 as the procession enters the church*

THE INVOCATION

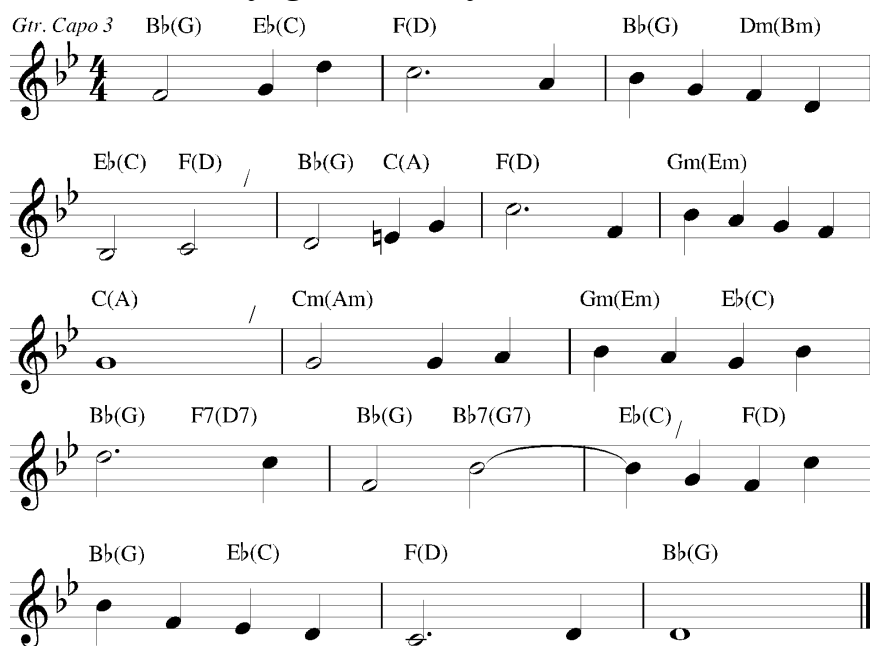
Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

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

THE GREETING

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

HYMN 'O Jesus Christ, may grateful hymns'



1. O Jesus Christ, may grateful hymns be rising
in every city for your love and care;
inspire our worship, grant the glad surprising
that your blest Spirit rouses everywhere.
2. Grant us new courage,
sacrificial, humble,
strong in your strength to venture and to dare,
to lift the fallen, guide the feet that stumble,
seek out the lonely and God's mercy share.
3. Show us your Spirit, brooding o'er each city,
as once you wept above Jerusalem,
seeking to gather all in love and pity,
and healing those who touch your garment's hem.

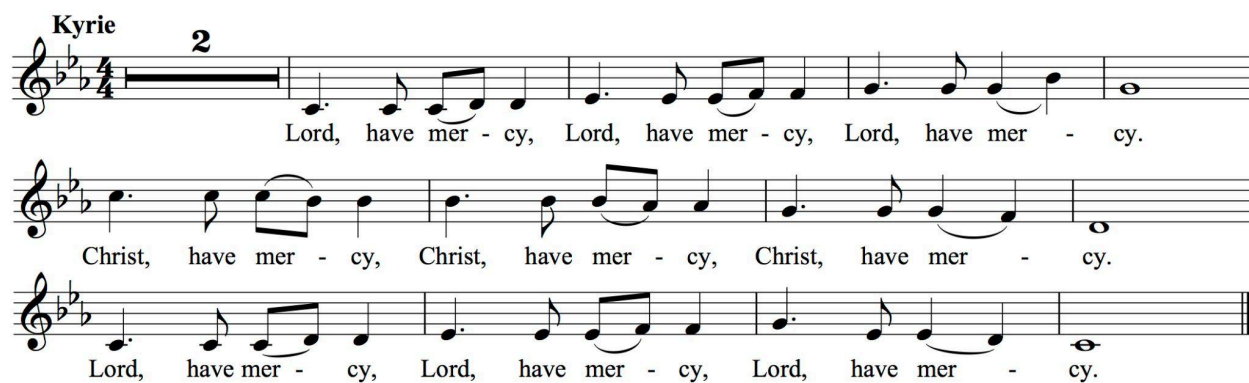
Bradford Gray Webster 1898–1991
(Tis 620)

COLLECT FOR PURITY

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

Kyrie **2**



Lord, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy.

Christ, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy.

Lord, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy.

From Parish Eucharist - Michael Dudman (1938-1994)

CONFESSION

Christ the Son of God has been revealed as a light to the nations. Let us bring our darkness to his light, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

A moment of silence may be 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

Gloria



Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

Lord God, hea - ven-ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we

give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry. Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the

Fa - ther, Lord God, _ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on

us; you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer. For

you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord, _ you a - lone are the Most High,

Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spi - rit, in the _ glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

From *Parish Eucharist* - Michael Dudman (1938-1994)

THE COLLECT FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

God of compassion, you have shown us in Christ that your love is never ending: enable us both to love you with all our heart and to love one another as Christ loved us. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Please be seated

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

THE FIRST READING Deuteronomy 18.15-20 *read by Andrew Milne*

The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: 'If I hear the voice of the Lord my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die.' Then the Lord replied to me: 'They are right in what they have said. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak –

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

THE PSALM Psalm 111 *said*

O praise the Lord. I will praise the Lord
with my whole heart:
in the company of the upright
and among the congregation.

The works of the Lord are great:
and studied by all who take delight in them.

His deeds are majestic and glorious:
and his righteousness stands for ever.

His marvellous acts have won him a name
to be remembered:
the Lord is gracious and merciful.

He gives food to those that fear him:
he remembers his covenant for ever.

He showed his people the power of his acts:
in giving them the heritage of the heathen.

The works of his hands are faithful and just:
and all his commandments are sure;

They stand firm for ever and ever:
they are done in faithfulness and in truth.

He sent redemption to his people,
he ordained his covenant for ever:
holy is his name and worthy to be feared.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,
and of good understanding are those
that keep his commandments:
his praise shall endure for ever.

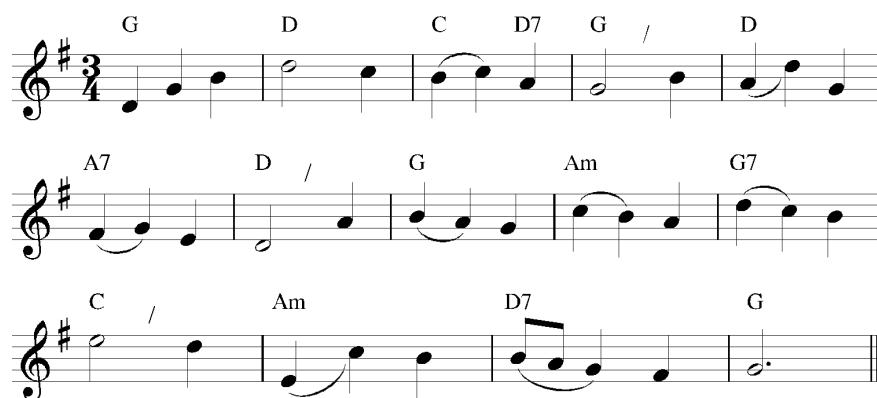
Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

THE SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 8.1-13 *read by Barbara Brown*

Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that 'all of us possess knowledge.' Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; but anyone who loves God is known by him. Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that 'no idol in the world really exists', and that 'there is no God but one.' Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth — as in fact there are many gods and many lords — yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. 'Food will not bring us close to God.' We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling-block to the weak. For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

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

THE GRADUAL HYMN 'O for a thousand tongues to sing' *please stand and sing*



- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. O for a thousand tongues to sing
my great Redeemer's praise,
the glories of our God and King,
the triumphs of his grace!</p> <p>2. Jesus! the name that charms our fears,
that bids our sorrows cease;
such music in the sinner's ears
is life, and health, and peace.</p> <p>3. He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
he sets the prisoner free;
his blood can make the foulest clean,
his blood availed for me.</p> <p>4. He speaks, and listening to his voice
new life the dead receive,</p> | <p>the mournful, broken hearts
rejoice,
the humble poor believe.</p> <p>5. Hear him, you deaf; his praise,
you dumb,
your loosened tongues employ;
you blind, behold your Saviour
come;
and leap, you lame, for joy!</p> <p>6. My gracious Master and my God,
assist me to proclaim,
to spread through all the earth
abroad
the honours of your name.</p> |
|--|---|

Charles Wesley 1707-88 *alt.*
(TIS 596)

We remain standing and face the Gospel as it is read

THE GOSPEL Mark 1.21-28

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

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

They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, 'What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.' But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be silent, and come out of him!' And the unclean spirit, throwing him into convulsions and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, 'What is this? A new teaching – with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.' At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

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

THE SERMON The Assistant Curate, The Revd Lydia Thangadurai

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 *led by Keith Beecher*

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

THE GREETING OF PEACE *standing*

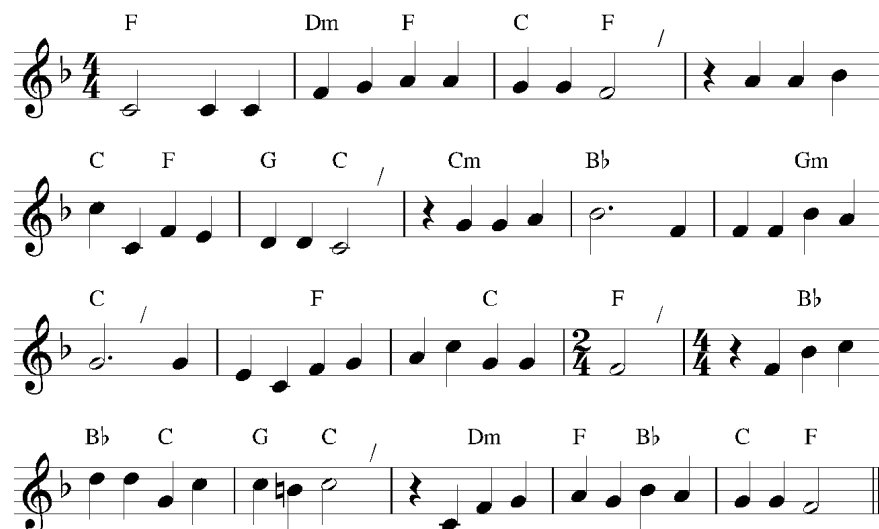
We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

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 'Lord Christ, at your first eucharist'



- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Lord Christ, at your first eucharist you prayed
that all your church might be
for ever one;
may at each eucharist this
prayer be made
with longing heart and soul,
'Your will be done.'
O may we all one bread, one
body be,
through this blest sacrament of
unity. | 2. For all your church, O Lord, we
intercede;
make all our sad divisions soon
to cease;
draw us the nearer each to each,
we plead,
by drawing all to you, O Prince
of Peace:
thus may we all one bread, one
body be,
through this blest sacrament of
unity. |
|--|--|

3. We also pray for wanderers
from your fold;
O bring them back, Good
Shepherd of the sheep,
back to the faith which saints
believed of old,
back to your church which still
one faith must keep:
soon may we all one bread, one
body be,
through this blest sacrament of
unity.

4. So, Lord, at length when
sacraments shall cease
may we be one with all your
church above,
one with your saints in one
unbroken peace,
one with your saints in one
unbounded love;
more blessed still, in peace and
love to be
one with the Trinity in Unity.

William Henry Turton 1856–1938 *alt.*
(TiS 521)

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 for ever.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

All remain standing

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

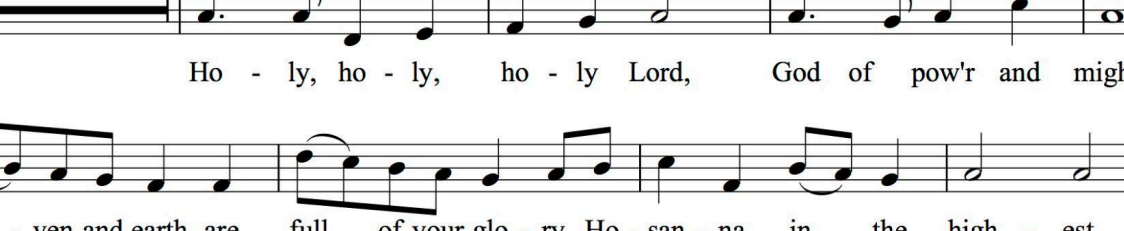
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

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

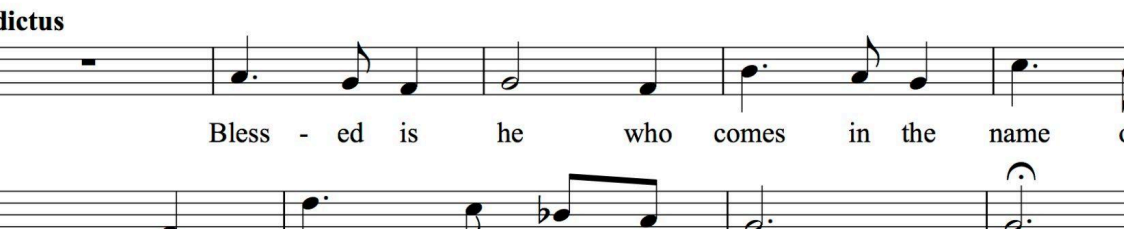
Therefore, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and singing:

Sanctus 2



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
Hea - ven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Benedictus



Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - - est.

From *Parish Eucharist* - Michael Dudman (1938-1994)

The Great Thanksgiving Prayer continues to the following

...Let us proclaim the mystery of faith

Acclamation

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

The Great Thanksgiving Prayer ends with the following

... songs of never ending praise.

Acclamation

Bless - ing and hon - our and glo - ry and power are yours for
ev - er and ev - er. A _____ men. _____

From *Parish Eucharist* - Michael Dudman (1938-1994)

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

Agnus Dei

Je - sus, Lamb of God, have mer - cy on us. Je - sus, bear - er of our
sins, have mer - cy on us. Je - sus, re - deem - er of the world, grant us your peace.

From Parish Eucharist - Michael Dudman (1938-1994)

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.**

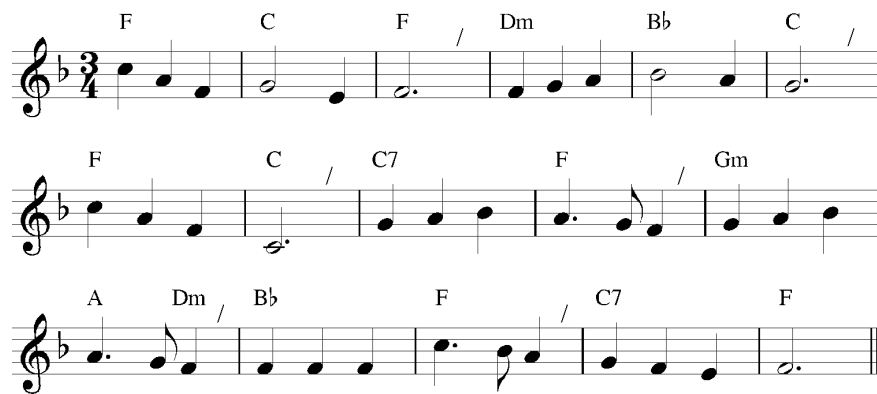
ADMINISTRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

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 'Lord, your almighty word'



- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Lord, your almighty word
chaos and darkness heard,
and took their flight:
hear us, we humbly pray,
and where the gospel day
sheds not its glorious ray,
let there be light.</p> | <p>3. Spirit of truth and love,
life-giving holy dove,
speed forth your flight;
move on the waters' face,
bearing the lamp of grace,
and in earth's darkest place
let there be light.</p> |
| <p>2. Saviour, who came to give
those who in darkness live
healing and sight,
health to the sick in mind,
sight to the inly blind,
now to all humankind
let there be light.</p> | <p>4. Holy and blessed Three,
glorious Trinity,
Wisdom, Love, Might,
boundless as ocean's tide
rolling in fullest pride,
through the earth far and wide,
let there be light.</p> |

John Marriott 1780–1825 *alt.*
(TiS 447)

BLESSING

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE *Festive Trumpet Tune*

David German (b 1954)

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)



Support St John's Toorak

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, VIC 3142, Australia.

Account Name: St John's Anglican Church | BSB: 033 086 | Account: 871931.

International transfers please include SWIFT code **WPACAU2S**.

CURRENT NOTICES

February

Please note, Sunday 8am service and Wednesday 7pm service will resume from Sunday 4 February.

Vicar On Leave

Our Vicar Peter will be on leave from 27 January - 10 February.

Ash Wednesday, 14 February

Lent will soon be upon us, commencing with the Service of Ash Wednesday at 7pm on 14 February. The service will be held in the main body of the church and include a service of eucharist with the anointing of ashes on participants' foreheads. Pop it in the calendar - and start thinking and praying about what Lenten disciplines you will take on this coming Lent.

Lent Quiet Day Saturday, 9th March

This will be held at the lovely St Joseph's By the Sea, Williamstown, where we held our September Quiet Day. More details will follow next week but if you are interested put it in your diary now!

Lenten Studies 2024, 'The Love that is God'

This year our Lenten Study will be based on 'The Love that is God: An Invitation to Christian Faith,' by F. C. Bauerschmidt, a wonderful and thoughtful book. The book is available for purchase [here](#) and available as a paperback or kindle book.

[The Love That Is God: An Invitation to Christian Faith : Bauerschmidt, Frederick Christian, Coakley, Sarah: Amazon.com.au: Books](#)

There are **two** opportunities to attend a study:

Sundays: 18 February, 25 February, 3 March and 10 March, 11.30am in the Hall OR
Thursdays: 22 February, 29 February, 7 March and 14 March at 10.30am, location TBA.

The Parish Office *does not have copies of the book* but photocopies of relevant chapters will be available upon request the week before each study. A sign-up sheet is available in the Narthex or online ([click here](#)).

Supporting the suffering in the Holy Land through our Anglican Agencies

Donations can be made here:

- ✦ www.abmission.org/appeals/emergency-appeals/al-ahli-hospital-emergency-appeal/
- ✦ anglicanoverseasaid.org.au/our-work/occupied-palestinian-territories/

The Silent Minute Prayer for Peace

At our November, 2023, Toorak Ecumenical Council meeting it was decided that the daily Silent Minute Prayer for Peace would be encouraged in our churches. This practice was started in WWII when at 9pm each evening people would pause for a minute's silent prayer for peace to prevail - prayed according to one's own beliefs. This practice has been reinstated at various times of conflict since WWII. Bishop Genieve has sent us a request from the Franciscans in Australia that our parishes promote this practice at this time of violence and war in so many places. We encourage you to find a time each day for a minute's prayer for peace across the world. You can set your phone alarm as a reminder - as some in our parish have already done.

"There is no power on earth that can withstand the united cooperation on spiritual levels of men and women of goodwill everywhere. It is for this reason that the continued and widespread observance of the Silent Minute is of such vital importance in the interest of human welfare." Major Wellesley Tudor-Pole (1940)

Toorak Ecumenical Council: Food for Friends - Christmas Appeal 2023

Sincere thanks to all our wonderfully generous parishioners who contributed once again to our Christmas Food for Friends Appeal. In all we raised \$19050 for which we, and all the agencies we assist are truly grateful. These funds will now be used to purchase food items for the nominated agencies of St Peter's, St. John's and Toorak Uniting Churches. As these agencies continue to face increasing demand for their services, we would like to invite anyone who missed the opportunity to contribute before Christmas and would now like to do so.

The Toorak Ecumenical Fund (CBA Toorak Branch) BSB 063 177 Acc. No. 1002 6147.

Thank you again for your continued support. *Deirdre Heffernan, secretary.*

From Christopher Cook

Thank you, all, for such a wonderful farewell morning tea last Sunday. I do appreciate the kind words and thoughtful gift. It is wise to know when you need to move, and maybe have done what you could; but it is also essential for fresh brains to tackle issues in a distinct and individual way, establishing new patterns of doing things. Some folk will like the previous, and some the more recent -- that's life!

Thank you for your encouragement and help over the past nine years. I trust I have made some inspiring sounds, beefed up tone and overall quality, and taken the parish music along a path not inconsistent with its recent traditions, while also enabling a style of choral work to which others can join and find satisfaction and artistic worth.

With my best wishes for the coming years.

Christopher Cook

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 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 January Prayer Diary is [here](#).

Contribute to Worship Services

All our ministries at St John's are supported by our wonderful volunteers. The rosters for January and February 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. Gluten free wafers are available on request. A blessing only is also available.

Zoom Link

Our 10am Sunday service is streamed here:

us02web.zoom.us/j/87520014330?pwd=VFENadGFaSzAzSmcrSEZuK1lkVzFDQT09

Meeting ID: 875 2001 4330 Passcode: 670339

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.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

A Prayer for the Holy Land

O God of all justice and peace, we cry out to you in the midst of the pain and trauma of violence and fear which prevails in the Holy Land. Be with those who need you in these days of suffering; we pray for people of all faiths – Jews, Muslims and Christians and for all people of the land. While we pray to you, O Lord, for an end to violence and the establishment of peace, we also call for you to bring justice and equity to the peoples. Guide us into your kingdom where all people are treated with dignity and honour as your children – for to all of us you are our Heavenly Father. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

From the Anglican Cycle of Prayer: St Alfred's Anglican Church Blackburn North (Peter MacPherson, Mark Simon, Elizabeth Bolton, Nicolas Curtis, Rene Pfitzner); The Diocese of North West Australia (Bp Darrell Parker, Clergy & People); Aged Care Ministry; Church of the Province of South East Asia (Revd Melter Jiki Tais); St David's Anglican Church Moorabbin – pastoral visit (Bp Kate Prowd).

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; and Premier of Victoria, Jacinta Allan.

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 the sick and all in need: Gwen; Bruce; Sam; Margaret; Nichole; Joanna; Ivan; Anthea; David; John; Tim; Joan; James; Karen; Trisha and Garry.

For those in aged care and those who are housebound: Rosie; Beverley; Val; Rosalind; Anne; Elizabeth; Trevor, and Sue.

For those who have died and their families who mourn them: Alan Mackay & Christine Horan

Give thanks for those whose Anniversary of Death is this week: Ian George (2019); John Roysmith (2023); John Morgan (2016); and Joyce Woodroffe (2021).

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

This book claims to be Moses' final words to the Israelites, as they prepare to enter the Promised Land. He has told them that they are not to indulge in magic as the Canaanites do; it is to end such "abhorrent practices" (v. 9) that God, through the Israelites, is driving out the native people. God demands complete loyalty (v.13); he does not permit occult practices (v. 14). Now recall the Israelites' request after God gave Moses the Ten Commandments at Sinai ("Horeb", v. 16): while they have learnt that "God may speak to someone [i.e. to Moses] and still live" (5:24), they have feared that too much direct contact with God may lead to their deaths: that "this great fire will consume us" (5:25). God has agreed to Moses being a prophet, a channel of communication between him and his people.

Now God, through Moses, promises: to help them remain loyal, he will "raise up a prophet [or line of prophets] like me [Moses] from among" (v. 15) them. God will speak through him, and he will repeat God's words to the Israelites (v. 18). Anyone failing to heed God's commands will be held "accountable" (v. 19), i.e. God will condemn them. God will also deal with false prophets: any prophet who falsely claims to speak in God's name, or speaks contrary to God's will, will die (v. 18). If what a prophet predicts does not happen, he is not God's messenger (v.22). In later Judaism, v. 18 was seen as referring to a future prophetic figure from heaven. Recall that, after Jesus feeds the five thousand, the people say "'This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world'" (John 6:14).

Psalms 111

This is a hymn of praise to God for his great deeds, especially for making and keeping his covenant with Israel. The psalmist is a wise person, for whom holding the Lord in awe is the beginning of knowing him (v. 10a) and for whom wisdom comes from increasing knowledge of God. He speaks from his innermost being, his "whole heart" (v. 1), in the select group ("company of the upright") and in "the congregation". He praises God for his "works" (v. 2) or "deeds" (v. 4). V. 4b is from

Exodus 34:6, part of God's proclamation after he replaced the stones bearing the Commandments – a symbol of renewal of the covenant. He nourishes those who hold him in awe. His works include the gift of Palestine (v. 6b), his interventions in the world (v. 6a) and his commandments. What he does lasts forever (v.8a). His deeds show him to be "holy and awesome" (v. 9). Living by his commandments is the start of understanding of him.

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

In 7:1, Paul says: "Now concerning the matters about which you wrote ..." In today's reading, he continues to answer the Christians at Corinth, with advice. Much of the meat sold in markets was left over from pagan festivals. Some members of the community had scruples about eating such meat, but others considered such scruples to be irrelevant, even to the point of showing contempt towards these "weak believers" (v. 11). Such an attitude seems to have been disrupting the community. Paul is on the side of liberalism, but not at all costs.

The quotes are from the strong, those smart people who have thought through the theology. In v. 1, Paul warns against being headstrong with knowledge: knowledge can be dangerous; what really matters is "love": it builds the community. Real knowledge of God (v. 2), the "necessary knowledge", is realising that being known by God, in love, is what really counts. Smart people know that the Greco-Roman gods don't exist (v. 4), that only God exists, so sacrificing to gods is meaningless, and should not concern us. In speaking about God as the source and destination of all that is, we should not forget Christ's role as mediator in creation (v. 6). The weak, he says, have not yet matured in their thinking as Christians: they have not yet shed their cultural attachments to idols; they feel that eating sacrificial meat is disloyal to Christ.

Then vv. 8-9: in arguing that what one eats is irrelevant, the strong should be careful that their libertarian attitude does not impede the progress of "the weak" towards God. Then v. 10-11: if they see strong people joining in festive meals (often held in temples) where such meat is served, might they be tempted back into idolatry? So in joining in such meals you weaken the faith of fellow Christians: this offends Christ. Finally v. 13: in spite of his liberalism, if eating this meat might cause anyone to falter in the Way of God, he will abstain from all meat.

Mark 1:21-28

Mark has just told us about the calling of Peter (“Simon”, v. 16), Andrew, and the sons of Zebedee. Our passage tells us of the recognition of Jesus’ authority, both in word and deed. He and his disciples go to Capernaum, a prosperous town on the Sea of Galilee. A synagogue was where Jews met to gain a fuller understanding of their tradition through study and worship. (At the time, it was probably not a building set apart for study and worship.) Anyone with sufficient knowledge could teach. The “scribes” (v. 22) were specialists in the interpretation and application of Mosaic law to daily life. They frequently quoted scripture and tradition, but Jesus (on this occasion) does not: he speaks directly, confident of his “authority”, of his very essence. The Greek word is like the one in the Nicene Creed which is translated as being or substance.

The “man with an unclean spirit” (v. 23) was, in our terms, possessed: he was under the influence of evil forces. In Jewish terms, he was under Satan’s direction, separated from God. The devil, speaking through this man (v. 24), asks what Jesus is doing meddling in the domain of evil; he recognizes who Jesus is and that his coming spells the end of the devil’s power. He understands the significance of the coming Kingdom. Wonder-workers of the day healed using ritual or magic, but Jesus exorcises simply through verbal command (v. 25), so clearly he is divine. V.27, on the lips of the crowd, acknowledges Jesus’ “authority” in word and deed.

ART COMMENTARY

Christ Preaching at Capernaum is a work by Maurycy Gottlieb. He is considered the spiritual father of Jewish painting in Central Europe, and a key figure in Polish-Jewish artistic relations. The artist left behind an abundance of excellent works despite dying at the very young age of 23.

He grew up in an affluent Jewish household in the town of Drohobycz and maintained strong emotional ties with Orthodox Judaism while also being fascinated with Polish history and art. He considered himself equally a Jew and a Pole, which he expressed in the famous words '*I am a Pole and a Jew and, God willing, I want to serve both*'. This attitude was manifest in the artist's eagerness to portray themes that identified and demonstrated honourable moments in Polish-Jewish co-existence and the common roots of Judaism and Christianity.

The main link between the two religions and cultures became the figure of Jesus Christ, whom Gottlieb strove to inscribe into Jewish tradition. In this painting, as he gives the sermon in Capernaum, Christ is shown wearing a *tallith*, a shawl worn by Jews during prayer. He addresses the synagogue looking like an Orthodox Jew, though, out of respect for Christianity, the artist placed a halo above Christ's head. The indifferent expressions worn by many of the listeners and the artist's self-portrait in the crowd with his arms hanging low in a gesture of powerlessness seem to imply that most of the artist's religious peers remained unconvinced by any suggestion of Jewish-Christian unity.

Gottlieb began work on the painting in Rome in 1878, not long before he returned to Poland on the invitation of the great painter Jan Matejko. Sadly, the painting remained unfinished as the artist died a mere six months later, in July 1879, in Krakow of complications following a throat illness.



This Week

SUNDAY, 28 January, 2024

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

8am Said Eucharist

10am Sung Eucharist

THURSDAY, 1 February, 2024

11am Funeral for Christine Horan

Wake to follow in Buxton Hall

FRIDAY, 2 February, 2024

2pm Interment of Ashes of Debra Moore

3.30pm Wedding Blessing for

Natalie & Sam Nolan



Next Sunday, 4 February

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

8am Eucharist

First Reading: *Isaiah 40:21-31*, Ted Mouritz

Second Reading: *1 Corinthians 9:16-23*, Lindsay

Hosking

Gospel Reading: *Mark 1:29-39*

Intercessor: Brenda Mouritz

Preacher: The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch

10am Eucharist

First Reading: *Isaiah 40:21-31*, Anthony

Mannering

Second Reading: *1 Corinthians 9:16-23*, Kim

Collins

Gospel Reading: *Mark 1:29-39*

Intercessor: Anthony Mannering

Preacher: The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch



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