



ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
TOORAK
EST. 1859



First Sunday of Advent

1 December, 2024

8am

Welcome

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. Services are followed by times of fellowship over food and drinks. All are welcome.

Mission

Our mission is to know and love Christ and neighbour. We actively follow Jesus' command to love God, love one's neighbour and to care for all people. We 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 purple for Advent, and shall thus remain so until Christmas. Flowers are removed and bare Christmas trees and wreaths decorate the church. They remain bare until Christmas Eve when, with the help of volunteers, we dress them for the grand celebrations of Christmas.

Cover Image

Christ in Glory, Mattia Preti (1613-1699)
c. 1660, Oil on canvas, Museo del Prado - Madrid

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 on silent and use the time before the service for prayer or quiet reflection, allowing others to do the same

INTRODUCTORY RITE

Please stand as the procession enters the church

PRELUDE 'The Holy Boy' (A Carol of the Nativity) *John Ireland (1879-1962)*

The First Candle on the Advent Wreath is lit, and the following prayer prayed

God of Abraham and Sarah, and all the patriarchs and matriarchs of old, you are our God too. Your love is revealed to us in Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of David. Help us in preparing to celebrate his birth, to make our hearts ready for your Holy Spirit and to make his home among us. We ask this through Jesus Christ, the light who is coming into the world. **Amen.**

GREETING

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

HYMN 'Lo! he comes with clouds descending'



1. Lo! he comes with clouds
descending,
once for favoured sinners slain;
thousand thousand saints
attending
swell the sound of this refrain:
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
hallelujah!
God appears on earth to reign.

2. Sing amen! let all adore you,
high on your eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory,
claim the kingdom for your own;
O come quickly, O come quickly,
O come quickly;
hallelujah! Come, Lord, come.

Charles Wesley 1707-88 *alt.* (TiS 273)

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.

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 *said*

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

CONFESSION

The Lord comes, bringing to light things now hidden in darkness, and disclosing the purposes of the heart.

Silence is kept

Let us open our hearts and prepare for his coming, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

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

TRISAGION *said together*

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

COLLECT FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Eternal God, you have taught us that the night is far spent and the day is at hand: keep us awake and alert, watching for your kingdom, and make us strong in faith, so that when Christ comes in glory to judge the earth, we may go out joyfully to greet him; and, with all your saints, may worship you for ever; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Please be seated

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

THE FIRST READING Jeremiah 33.14-16 *read by Ted Mouritz*

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfil the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'

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

THE PSALM Psalm 25.1-10 *said*

In you, O Lord my God, have I put my hope:
in you have I trusted, let me not be ashamed,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.
Let none who wait for you be put to shame:
but let those that break faith
be confounded and gain nothing.
Show me your ways, O Lord:
and teach me your paths.
Lead me in the ways of your truth, and teach me:
for you are the God of my salvation.
In you have I hoped all the day long:
because of your goodness, O Lord.
Call to mind your compassion and your loving-kindness:
for they are from of old.

Remember not the sins of my youth,
nor my transgressions:
but according to your mercy think on me.
Good and upright is the Lord:
therefore will he direct sinners in the way.
The meek he will guide in the path of justice:
and teach the humble his ways.
All the paths of the Lord are faithful and true:
for those who keep his covenant and his commandments.
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 Thessalonians 3.9-13 *read by Brenda Mouritz*

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith. Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

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

Please stand for the reading of the Gospel

THE GOSPEL Luke 21.25-38

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

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to St. Luke.

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

‘There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see “the Son of Man coming in a cloud” with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.’

Then he told them a parable: 'Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. 'Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.' Every day he was teaching in the temple, and at night he would go out and spend the night on the Mount of Olives, as it was called. And all the people would get up early in the morning to listen to him in the temple.

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

THE SERMON The Assistant Priest, The 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 *led by Brenda Mouritz*

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
Feel free to come and share peace with those people joining us on Zoom*

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, at the paypoint at the rear of the church or by scanning the QR code.



OFFERTORY HYMN 'The voice of God goes out to all the world'



1. The voice of God goes out to all the world;
his glory speaks across the universe.
The great King's herald cries from star to star:
'With power, with justice, he will walk his way.'
2. Anointed with the Spirit and with power,
he comes to crown with comfort all the weak,
to show the face of justice to the poor:
with power, with justice, he will walk his way.

3. His touch will bless the eyes that
darkness held,
the lame shall run, the halting
tongue shall sing,
and prisoners laugh in light and
liberty:
with power, with justice, he will
walk his way.

Luke Connaughton 1917-79 (TiS 282)

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 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

... songs of never ending praise *or* ... 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

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

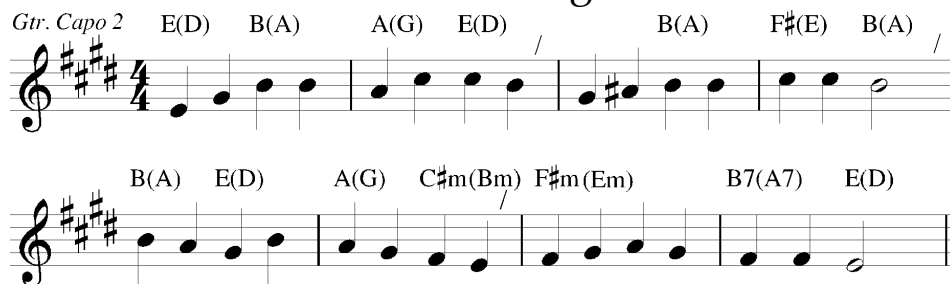
All baptised Christians are welcome to receive Holy Communion. Communion is available as consecrated bread, which is given to each person, and wine which may be drunk from the chalice. A separate chalice for intinction (dipped) is also provided. If you would prefer a blessing, please come forward and 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 'Hark! a herald voice is calling'



1. Hark! a herald voice is calling:
'Christ is near,' it seems to say,
'cast away the dreams of darkness,
waken, children of the day!'

2. So when love comes forth in
judgment,
debts and doubts and wrongs to
clear,
faithful may he find his servants
watching till the dawn appear.

Anon., Latin ?6th cent. *tr.* Edward Caswall 1814–78
and others (TiS 264)

BLESSING

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE 'Recessional on *I Saw Three Ships*' Douglas E. Wagner (1952-)

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

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

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



CURRENT NOTICES

A Statement on the Resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury by the Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia:

anglican.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Primate-Statement-Re-Archbishop-of-Canterbury-13112024.pdf

Here is a prayer for us to pray at this difficult time:

God of compassion, pour out your grace and healing, for victims and survivors of abuse in the church, all around the world, in the Church of England, and in our own communities. Give our leaders and members the courage and wisdom to make the changes that are needed so that your children may never again suffer such harm, either by our actions, or by our failure to act. Show us how to do our best for them today and every day, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Advent Working Bee THANK YOU!

Thank you to those who came to help prepare the church for the season of Advent yesterday afternoon. The unadorned Christmas trees and wreaths will remain bare until Christmas Eve when, with the help of volunteers, we dress them for the grand celebrations of Christmas.

TODAY Morning Tea in the Vicarage and Gardens, December 1, 11.30am

Robyn and I invite everyone to morning tea in the Vicarage and Gardens to mark the beginning of the new church year today. If weather is inclement, advice on location will be provided Sunday morning.

The Vicar

Advent Quiet Day, Saturday 7 December, 10am -4pm.

The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch is holding an Advent focussed Quiet Day in the picturesque surrounds of St Josephs by the Sea, Williamstown. A sign up sheet is in the narthex. Please register by TODAY. For further information please contact Wendy assistantpriest@saintjohnstoorak.org or the St John's parish office on 9826 1765 or enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org

Christmas Flyer Distribution - Volunteers needed!

We are looking for volunteers to help distribute flyers around Toorak advertising our Christmas services. If you are interested and able, please complete the form [here](#) or contact the parish office, 9826 1765 or enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org.

Lenten Study book for 2025: 'Journeying through Lent with New Daylight'

The reading material for our Lenten studies in 2025 needs to be pre-ordered as it takes several weeks to arrive. St John's will be ordering several copies that can be purchased for \$10 each. If you would like to purchase through St. Johns please complete the form [here](#) or contact the parish office.

Advent Resources in the Narthex

We have a variety of Advent reading materials available in the Narthex, including prayers, reflections and season guides. Please enjoy!

Thursday 5 December, 11.30am - 6pm, Beads & Bags Christmas Exhibition

Local artisans BeadEpic and Johnston & Green will be holding a 'Short & Sweet' Christmas Exhibition in St John's Buxton Hall. It's the perfect opportunity to do some Christmas shopping or just treat yourself! BeadEpic will have a range of one of a kind necklaces and other beaded treasures available for purchase and Johnston & Green will be selling handmade bags and leather accessories.

Food For Friends Update

Today was St John's final major shop and delivery for this year. This went to St Mark's Fitzroy. The Appeal for 2024 is now underway so everyone is encouraged to give a financial donation to be spent in 2025. See flyer for details. The shopping is done through the year and the agencies we support are: *Richmond Churches, St Mark's Fitzroy & Christ Church St Kilda.*

During Advent, St John's is also collecting extra food items for St Mark's Fitzroy. When you are buying goods, keep in mind that St Mark's caters to the marginalised in the community, i.e. the homeless, the mentally ill, LGBTIQ+, Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders. Make sure that tinned food items have ring pulls and dried items can be easily reconstituted with boiling water. Suggested items are small cans of tuna, tinned meals and long-life custard. I will collect from St John's and deliver on 18th December. Please feel happy to speak to me if you have any queries or are willing to help. *Brenda Mouritz*

Giving to St. John's Ministry via the Anglican Development Fund (ADF)



We recommend using ADF to set up regular giving. Simply download and complete the form [here](#) or scan the QR code. You can choose to give through *direct debit* or *credit card*, and at what intervals you would like. It not only makes it easier for you to contribute to the ministry of St. John's, it also helps us to budget for the coming year. For any confidential questions or assistance, email our Parish Recorder, Richard Uglow: giving@saintjohnstoorak.org

Process of Selection of our New Archbishop

Updates on the Selection process are available at www.boardofnominators.org

PRAYER FOR THE SELECTION OF OUR NEW ARCHBISHOP

Eternal God, shepherd and guide, in your mercy give your Church in this diocese a shepherd after your own heart, who will walk in your ways, and with loving care watch over your people. Give us a leader of vision and a teacher of your truth. So may your Church be built up and your name glorified; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer Book for Australia, p. 212.

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 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 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.

The Melbourne Anglican (TMA) and Prayer Diary

The latest edition of TMA is [here](#). The link to the December 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 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:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86212089431?pwd=ZEN2M2xWRHRhMVhxTWWhwcmVwTzFFedz09> Meeting ID: 862 1208 9431 | Passcode: 541347

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 Vicar Peter has Friday and 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

Prayers for Victims of War

Give comfort, O Lord, to all who are torn away from their homes and their loved ones, by war, by famine, or by cruelty; give the world your peace and turn the hearts of those who will to war; grant that we who dwell secure in this insecure world may be generous in caring for our displaced brothers and sisters, of all faiths and none. We ask this in the name of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

From the Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Surfcoast Anglican Parish (Sharon Valentino); The Diocese of Perth (Abp Kay Goldsworthy, Asst Bps David Bassett, Hans Christiansen, Kate Wilmot, Clergy & People); Archdeaconry of Melbourne (Yvonne Poon); Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan (Bp Justin Badi Arama); St Mark's Templestowe – Pastoral service (Bp Kate Prowd); All Saints' Rosebud w St Katherine's McCrae –pastoral service (Bp Paul Barker); Mount Eliza Anglican Parish –Confirmation service (Bp Paul Barker); St Columb's Hawthorn – Confirmation service (Bp Genieve Blackwell); St John's Epping – Confirmation service (Bp Brad Billings);

For those who lead us in Government: His Majesty King Charles III; Governor General Ms Sam Mostyn 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, Interim Principal Robert Marshall; and Toorak Primary School, Principal Julie Manallack.

For those who are celebrating birthdays this week: Rona Hatfield

For the sick and all in need: Gwen, Rex, Sam, Margaret, Nichole, Joanna, Ivan, Anthea, David, John, Tim, Joan, James, Karen, Trisha, Emma, Thomas, Rod, Robyn, Stephen, Stella & Spencer

For those in aged care and those who are housebound: Beverley; Angela; Marg; Val; Rosalind; Elizabeth; Russ & Sue.

Give thanks for those whose Anniversary of Death is this week: Diana Hardy (2014); Lauren West (2018); Keith McMorron (1992); Peg Sargood (1974); Betty Blomfield (2012); Hugo Griffiths (2020); Margaret Schneider (2014); George James Coles (1977); Dacre Henry Deudraeth (2008); John Devine (2019); Lee Gregory (2022); Jan Stawell (1983); Debbie Maplestone (1991); Thomas Frederic Holt (1983); & Evie Pascoe (2023).

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

Jeremiah 33:14-16

Jeremiah ministered around the time when Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians in 586 BC. In bad times, he told of God's love for his people. The restoration of the city is mentioned in vv. 6-9: "... this city shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and a glory ..." Our passage was edited or written centuries later. Now we hear that it is a certainty that a time will come when God will complete his obligations ("fulfil the promise I made", v. 14) under his covenant with the Israelites. Vv. 15-16 are Jeremiah's prophecy in 23:5-6 with a difference: there it is Judah and Israel; here it is "Judah" (v. 16) and "Jerusalem". The "righteous Branch" (v. 15) is a king (or messiah) of David's line; both kings and the messiah were expected to be just and righteous (godly). Judah will be restored to prosperity ("saved", v. 16); Jerusalem will be protected. Per the NRSV, it is the city or the "Branch" that will be called "The Lord is our righteousness", but this may be the name of a king; thus the Revised English Bible. Vv. 17-18 foretell the permanence of the Davidic monarchy, and of priests offering sacrifice. God's covenant with his people is forever, or at least until the end of the age, i.e. to the start of the messianic era. God will never break the pact (even if the people deviate from it).

Psalms 25:1-10

The psalmist seeks deliverance from personal enemies. He trusts in God (vv. 1-4); may God never allow the ungodly (the "treacherous", v. 3) to claim victory over him. Key to maintaining the upper hand is knowing God's ways, being taught by God (v. 4), accepting God's leadership (v. 5), coming to know ultimate "truth" (v. 5): this is the way to being saved from the scheming of his (and God's) adversaries. The psalmist nudges God into remembering his "mercy" (v. 6, compassion) and "love", qualities of God since time immemorial. In youthful *flings*, we deviate from God's ways, but please, Lord, remember my times of fidelity (v. 7). God does teach his ways to those who have strayed and who approach him in awe ("humble", v. 9). "Love and faithfulness" (v. 10) are characteristic of God's covenant relationship with his people.

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

Paul predicted, when he was in Thessalonika, that some Christians there would be persecuted. This has now happened; he has sent Timothy to "strengthen and encourage you for the sake of your faith, so no one would be shaken by these persecutions" (vv. 2-3). Timothy has now returned to Paul in Athens, and has conveyed to him "the good news of your faith and love" (v. 6). Indeed, their faith has encouraged Paul in facing persecution himself. Now he considers their prayer for him to be a debt to be repaid ("in return", v. 9). Even though he lives continually in gratitude to, and dependence on, God ("before our God"; "Night and day", v. 10), "all the joy" (v. 9) their faith brings to him is hard to repay, but he does give thanks. He also prays that he may visit them ("see you face to face", v. 10) to "restore" (or *make good*) lacks in their knowledge of the faith, to give them

further instruction in specific areas (likely what will happen when Jesus comes again: see v. 13). In vv. 11-13, he prays, intercedes with God, on their behalf: (1) that he may visit them again (“direct ...”, v. 11); (2) that they may have a superabundance of love for their fellow Christians and for others (“all”, v. 12), as Paul, Timothy and Silvanus (“we”) have for them; and (3) that their very beings (“hearts”, v. 13) may become so God-like (“holiness”) that they may be totally free of sin (“blameless”) when Christ comes again with all those who belong to God (“his saints”) at the end of time. At that time, says 4:13-17, Christ will bring the faithful dead with him; they will rise to be with God first; then those who are still alive will join them in heaven forever.

Luke 21:25-36

Jesus has foretold the destruction of the Temple (v. 6). Some have asked him when this will occur and what will indicate that it is about to happen (v. 7). Given that “all the people were spellbound by what they heard” (19:48) and that the religious authorities “kept looking for a way to kill him” (19:47), the destruction must have spiritual meaning. Jesus tells of events commonly expected at the end of the era, and adds some which are specifically Christian. First, Christians will be persecuted by religious and civil authorities (v. 12). Then there will be “wars and insurrections” (v. 9), but “the end will not follow immediately” (as people expected). Disastrous natural phenomena, cause for great distress, will occur (v. 11), and when Jerusalem is surrounded by armies (v. 20), the city will soon fall: either physically or spiritually. Again the end will be delayed: the killing and deportation of citizens will continue “until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (v. 24), i.e. until nonJews have had the opportunity to come to Christ. Now Jesus foretells unnatural events (“signs ...”, v. 25) and the resulting confusion among nations and people, not knowing what will happen next. But the “Son of Man” (v. 27), the ideal human, Christ, will come from heaven (“in a cloud”, a symbol of divine presence, as at the Transfiguration) with power to control events. Then “redemption” (v. 28), God’s acts of freeing his chosen people, will be near. Just as the leafing of trees shows that “summer is ... near” (v. 30), so the occurrence of all these events will show that “the kingdom of God is near” (v. 31): this time will be evident to the faithful. The signs will be as striking as is seen in fig trees: in winter, they look dead but in spring they sprout. In spite of the delay, the era will end before all those alive now have died (v. 32). Jesus’ “words” (v. 33) are even more eternal than creation (“heaven and earth”). Finally, he advises vigilance: do not be so “weighed down” (v. 34) with day-to-day earthy matters that you are unprepared for the final call (“that day”). It will be for all those who survive all disasters (v. 35). Pray that God may give you the strength to resist all evils, so that you may “stand before” (v. 36) Christ, be deemed worthy by him.

Need time for prayer? Some quiet space?

The church is open every day from 9am until 5pm for you to come and pray, meditate, or sit quietly. There are prayer books and prayer booklets in the Angel Chapel and the Narthex for use, the latter of which you can also download [here](#).

MUSIC COMMENTARY

PRELUDE 'The Holy Boy' (A Carol of the Nativity)

John Ireland (1879-1962)

Aside from the hymn "My Song is Love Unknown" and the anthem "Greater Love Hath No Man", "The Holy Boy" is commonly regarded as John Ireland's most well-known piece. Originally for solo piano, Ireland arranged it for various other settings over nearly 30 years, including for organ, violin/viola/cello and piano, voice and piano, string quartet, unaccompanied mixed chorus, and plenty others!

POSTLUDE 'Recessional on I Saw Three Ships'

Douglas E. Wagner (1952-)

Douglas E. Wagner, another Chicago native, studied organ at Butler University. With 30 years as a high school music educator and administrator behind him, Doug now devotes all of his time and energy to writing, editing and their allied activities. He is an A.S.C.A.P. award-winning composer, an editor for a major publishing company, and has served several denominations as a church musician.

ART COMMENTARY

The image on the front of today's pewsheets, *Christ in Glory* is by Italian Baroque artist, *Mattia Preti*. Preti was a prolific painter who worked in Rome, Naples and Malta, where he was knighted as a member of the Order of Saint John.

In this painting a triumphant Christ appears to a group of saints among whom are Saints Jerome, Francis and Mary Magdalene. It is not known what church this work was painted for, although it is clear that it was meant to be hung at a quite high.





Toorak Ecumenical Council

FOOD for Friends

2024 Appeal

As we have done for the last three years, with considerable success, we are asking for financial donations once again.

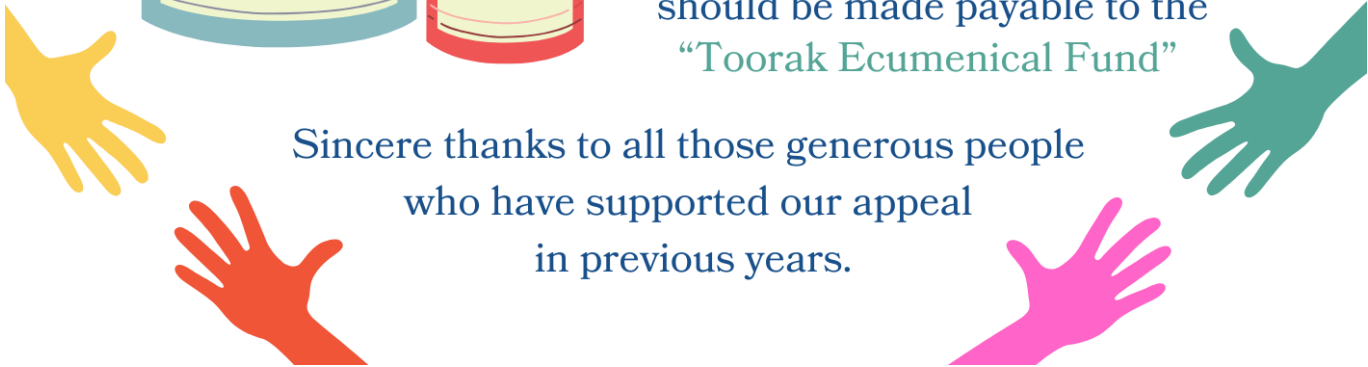
The money raised will be spent during the coming year on food supplies for the various agencies nominated by each Church. This has proved to be very successful in the last three years as all the agencies have been experiencing increasing demand throughout the year, not just at Christmas time, for their services as inflation continues to contribute to the rising cost of living.



Please consider donating to
The Toorak Ecumenical Fund
- CBA Toorak
BSB: 063 177
ACC: 1002 6147

Please mark it **F for Food**

Cheques/cash may be dropped into the parish office. Cheques should be made payable to the "Toorak Ecumenical Fund"



Sincere thanks to all those generous people who have supported our appeal in previous years.

This Week

SUNDAY, 1 December 2024

First Sunday of Advent

8am Eucharist

10am Sung Eucharist

11.30am Morning Tea at the Vicarage

7pm Toorak Ecumenical Advent Service
at St John's

WEDNESDAY, 4 December 2024

2pm Memorial Service for Dorothy Pizzey

7pm Eucharist in the Angel Chapel

THURSDAY, 5 December 2024

1pm Funeral Service for Erica Gregory

SATURDAY, 7 December 2024

10am-4pm Advent Quiet Day

at St Joseph's by the Sea, Williamstown

3pm Wedding of

Nathan Chin & Shona Li



Next Sunday, 1 December Second Sunday of Advent

8am Eucharist

First Reading: *Malachi 3:1-14*, Samuel Hartley

Second Reading: *Philippians 1:1-11*, Anthony Rose

Gospel Reading: *Luke 3:1-6*

Intercessor: Samuel Hartley

Preacher: The Revd Dr Peter French

10am Eucharist

First Reading: *Malachi 3:1-14*, Leanne

Blackenberg

Second Reading: *Philippians 1:1-11*, Adriaan den Dulk

Gospel Reading: *Luke 3:1-6*

Intercessor: Anthony Mannering

Preacher: The Revd Dr Peter French

Morning Tea: Leanne Blanckenberg & Volunteers required



ST. JOHN'S
ANGLICAN
CHURCH
TOORAK
EST. 1859

Parish Office

Open 9am - 5pm | Monday - Friday

9826 1765 or 9826 1434

enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org

Wardens

Mr Keith Beecher OAM,

Mr Adriaan den Dulk

Mr Jason Pennell

Parish Council

Mr Rob Condon,

Mr Craig Cooper, Mr John Horan,

Ms Hsinhui Huang,

Ms Carolyn Mackenzie

Vicar

The Revd Dr Peter French

vicar@saintjohnstoorak.org

Assistant Priest

The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch

assistantpriest@saintjohnstoorak.org

Director of Music & Organist

Mr Zachary Hamilton-Russell

Parish Administrator & Child Safe Compliance

Ms Alicia Groves

enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org

Child Safe Officer

Mr Clive Wright

Archivist

Professor Geoff Quail OAM

geoffrey.quail@monash.edu

