



ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
TOORAK
EST. 1859



Fifth Sunday of Easter
18 May, 2025
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 white symbolising purity, grace, and, ultimately, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which is the joyful celebration of the Easter season.

Cover Image

Let the Little Children come to Me, Carl Christian Vogel von Vogelstein (1788-1868), 1805, oil on canvas
Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Florence, Italy.

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



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 'Second Prelude' from Three Liturgical Preludes

George Oldroyd (1886-1951)

THE INVOCATION

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

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

THE GREETING

Christ is risen. Alleluia! He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

HYMN 'Love is his word, love is his way'

C G F Am / G F Dm G /
C D G Bm / Am D G /
Refrain C Dm G /
Ri - cher than gold is the love of my Lord:
Am Dm G C
bet - ter than splen - dour and wealth.

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 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.
CRESSWELL (TiS 534)*

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.'

CONFESSION

Christ our Passover Lamb has been offered for us, therefore we come to celebrate the festival.

Silence is kept

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, with a sincere and a true heart. **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 the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the Glory of God the Father. Amen.

COLLECT FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

We behold your glory, O God, in the love shown by your Son, lifted up on the cross and exalted on high: be glorified anew in the love we have for one another as disciples of the risen Lord Jesus, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Please be seated

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

THE FIRST READING Acts 11.1-18

Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, saying, 'Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?' Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, 'I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. I also heard a voice saying to me, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat." But I replied, "By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth." But a second time the voice answered from heaven, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane." This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, "Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved." And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, "John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?' When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, 'Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life.'

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

THE PSALM Psalm 148 *sung by the choir*

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord from heaven:

O praise him in the heights.

Praise him, all his angels:

O praise him, all his host.

Praise him, sun and moon:
 praise him, all you stars of light.
Praise him, you highest heaven:
 and you waters that are above the heavens.
Let them praise the name of the Lord:
 for he commanded and they were made.
He established them for ever and ever:
 he made an ordinance which shall not pass away.
O praise the Lord from the earth:
 praise him, you sea-monsters and all deeps;
Fire and hail, mist and snow:
 and storm-wind fulfilling his command;
Mountains and all hills:
 fruit trees and all cedars;
Beasts of the wild, and all cattle:
 creeping things and winged birds;
Kings of the earth, and all peoples:
 princes, and all rulers of the world;
Young men and maidens:
 old folk and children together.
Let them praise the name of the Lord:
 for his name alone is exalted.
His glory is above earth and heaven:
 and he has lifted high the horn of his people.
Therefore he is the praise of all his servants:
 of the children of Israel, a people that is near him. Praise the Lord.
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 Revelation 21.1-6 *read by Vivienne Randall*

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first

things have passed away.' And the one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.' Then he said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.

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

Please stand for the reading of the Gospel

THE GOSPEL John 13.31-34

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

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

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

When he had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, "Where I am going, you cannot come." I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.

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

THE SERMON The Vicar, The Revd Dr Peter French

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

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 'Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour'

Gr. Capo 3 Bb(G) Gm(Em) Cm(Am) F7(D7) Bb(G)

Gm(Em) C(A) F(D) F7(D7) Bb(G) Cm(Am)

F7(D7) Bb(G) F(D) C7(A7) F(D)

Bb(G) Bb7(G7) Eb(C) Bb(G) Cm(Am) F7(D7) Bb(G)

1. Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour,
first-begotten from the dead,
you alone our strong defender,
lifting up your people's head:
alleluia, alleluia,
Jesus, true and living bread.
2. Here our humble homage pay we,
here in loving reverence bow;
here for faith's discernment pray
we,
lest we fail to know you now:
alleluia, alleluia,
you are here, we ask not how.
3. Though the lowliest form now
veils you
as of old in Bethlehem,
here as there your angels hail you,
branch and flower of Jesse's stem;
alleluia, alleluia,
we in worship join with them.
4. Life-imparting heavenly manna,
stricken rock with streaming side,
heaven and earth with loud
hosanna
worship you, the Lamb who died,
alleluia, alleluia,
ris'n, ascended, glorified!

George Hugh Bourne 1840–1925 *alt.*
ST HELEN (TiS 520)

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 'O Jesus, I have promised'

1 O Je - sus, I have pro - mised to
serve you to the end; Lord, be for e - ver
near me, my ma - ster and my friend: I
shall not fear the bat - tle if
you are by my side, nor wan - der from the
path - way if you will be my guide.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. O Jesus, I have promised
to serve you to the end;
Lord, be for ever near me,
my master and my friend:
I shall not fear the battle
if you are by my side,
nor wander from the pathway
if you will be my guide.</p> <p>2. Lord, let me see your footmarks
and in them plant my own;</p> | <p>that I may follow boldly
and in your strength alone;
O guide me, call me, draw me,
uphold me to the end;
and then in heaven receive me,
my Saviour and my friend.</p> |
|---|--|

John Ernest Bode 1816-74 *alt.*
WOLVERCOTE (Tis 595)

BLESSING

DISMISSAL

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord, alleluia, alleluia!
In the name of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia!

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.



Wednesday Night Service

You are invited to join us each week,
Wednesday at 7pm, for Eucharist in the Chapel of
St. Michael and All Angels. The service is usually
followed with supper and fellowship.
All are welcome. We hope to see you there!



CURRENT NOTICES

'Hope25: Hope in An Uncertain World' **A National Anglican Initiative**



Between Easter and Pentecost, we join with every Anglican Church in Australia in especially sharing *hope* in our uncertain world. One way we can do this is by committing to a season of prayer for our Parish of St John's, our community and the world. We invite you to commit to hopeful prayer by signing-up in the Narthex and taking a new parish 'Prayer Commitment Card' as a reminder.

TODAY Sunday 18 May, following the 10am service

There will be a brief review meeting for those who have committed to our Prayer initiative for Hope25, so we can encourage each other. We hope to see you there!

Parish Survey

This week, you may have received a request to complete a Parish Survey, designed to help me and the Parish Council better understand our parish make up and thus ways in which we can continue our ministry and perhaps new ways of doing things! The survey can be accessed [here](#) or hard copies will be available in the Narthex. Those subscribed to our newsletter will also receive an email with the link to complete the survey. It takes approximately 10 minutes to complete, and all responses will be kept confidential. Thank you in advance for your time and valuable input. *The Vicar*

Archbishop Election Synod - UPDATE

As communicated earlier, a Synod to elect our new Archbishop will commence on Friday 23 May at 6.30pm with a Eucharist at St. Paul's Cathedral, followed by the first sitting of Synod from 8.00pm until 10.30pm. The Synod continues on Saturday 24 May from 10am until 5.30pm. If necessary Synod will continue on Monday 26 and Tuesday 27 May, from 7pm. Our Synod representatives are Jenny Smith, Adriaan den Dulk (Warden), Anthony Mannering and our clergy. On Monday 12 May the names of four clergy nominated for the position of Archbishop were confidentially disseminated to all the Synod representatives. No Synod representative may discuss these names with anyone other than Synod representatives. Please respect this process and do not ask. Please do pray for the nomination of the new Archbishop and for our Synod representatives, and all those of the Diocese, as we come to this important Synod in the life of our Diocese. Latest updates are available here: <https://www.boardofnominators.org/> *The Vicar*

Prayers for Christian Unity, Thursday 29 May at 11am, Toorak Uniting Church

Our next Prayers for Christian Unity with our fellow Christians will be on Thursday 29 May at 11am at Toorak Uniting Church. We will celebrate the 'Week of Prayer for Christian Unity' which officially begins on Sunday 1 June. Following the service there will be a light lunch provided.

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 May Prayer Diary is [here](#).

Contribute to Worship Services

All our ministries at St John's are supported by our wonderful volunteers. The rosters for May & June 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.

Parish Council

Parish council meets monthly, and minutes are available on request.

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=ZEN2M2xWRHRhMVhxTWWhwcmVwTzFEZj09> 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: Jika Jika Preston (Michael Hopkins, Chaplain Soma, Fan Zhang); Hope25 outreach in schools and colleges; Korus Connect (Dawn Penney, CEO); The Episcopal Church in Jerusalem & The Middle East (Bp Hosam Naoum); St Thomas' Burwood – Pastoral service (Bp Kate Prowd); St David's Doncaster East – Pastoral service (Bp Alison Taylor); St Thomas' Anglican Church Werribee – Pastoral service (Bp Brad Billings); St John's Flinders with St Mark's Balnarring (Bp Paul Barker);

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 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 Natalie Charles; and Toorak Primary School, Interim Principal Sharon Wildermuth.

For the sick and all in need: Rex, Nichole, Joanna, Ivan, Anthea, John, Tim, Joan, James, Karen, Trisha, Emma, Thomas, Rod, Robyn, Stephen, Stella, Risto, Louis, Bissie & Jane.

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: Brian Ritter (2016); Claire Beecher (2023); Lea Canning (1998); Jenny Groves (2015); Ronald Langford (2016); Iris Nankivell (2020); Elizabeth Caillard (2024); Leila Chenery (1986); Lynette Donohue (1990); Margot Spry (2017); Rosie Creswell (2024) & James Moffat (1991).

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](#).

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

Acts 11:1-18

Peter has been in the coastal area northwest of Jerusalem, an area where there are already believers of Jewish origin. Up the coast, in Caesarea Maritima, Cornelius (an officer in the Roman army, a Gentile) has seen a vision in which a messenger from God has told him to send for Peter (10:1-6). As Peter has approached the town, he too has seen a vision: of “the heaven opened and something like a large sheet coming down, being lowered” (10:11). In the sheet are “all kinds” (10:12) of animals. A voice has said: “Get up, Peter; kill and eat” (10:13), meaning *eat of animals forbidden by Jewish law*. At Cornelius’ house, he has told the assembled company (both Jews and Gentiles): “You ... know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or to visit a Gentile; but God has shown me that I should not call anyone ... [ritually] unclean” (10:28). He has summed up the good news, telling them that “God shows no partiality” (10:34). The Holy Spirit has come on *all who hear the word* (10:44) and many, including Gentiles, have been baptized.

Word of this event has reached Judea, where there are believers of Jewish origin (“circumcised believers”, v. 2), who ask why he has broken Jewish law by visiting and eating with Gentiles. In vv. 5-15, Peter explains: not chronologically but from the viewpoint of God’s plan of salvation. (The word translated “brothers”, v. 12, denotes close kinship, in the Christian community.) Just as the Holy Spirit came on the apostles at Pentecost (“at the beginning”, v. 15) so it “fell upon them”, Cornelius’ household. In a post-resurrection appearance, Jesus predicted Pentecost (v. 16). Peter defends his actions: God gave them the “same gift” (v. 17) when they believed as he gave us when we came to faith. Peter’s critics accept this explanation; God is working in a new way; even Gentiles who turn to God will receive eternal “life” (v. 18).

Psalms 148

The psalter ends with five hallelujah (“Praise the LORD”) psalms, of which this is one. In vv. 1-6 the psalmist invites the heavens to praise God, then in vv. 7-12 he bids all on the earth to do so. Even inanimate objects (e.g. “sun and moon”, v. 3) are to praise him. Ancient cosmology held that the sun, moon and stars travelled on concentric hemispheres above the earth, and above them was God’s storehouse of “waters above the heavens” (v. 4), the source of rain and snow. God commanded that the heavens be created (v. 5). The movement of the celestial bodies are per an everlasting law (v. 6). The heavens shall praise him for creating them and making their existence permanent. In vv. 7-12, the list of created things proceeds from the lowest forms (“sea monsters”) to the highest, humans. The “wind” (v. 8, Hebrew: *ruah*) does God’s will; *ruah* also means *spirit*. In v. 11, “all peoples” are invited to praise the Lord.

Revelation 21:1-6

This book is “the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:1) made known through John. It is prophecy which reveals secrets of heaven and earth. Our reading is from John’s record of his vision of the end-times. He has told of the destruction of the old city, Babylon (code name for Rome) and of the old heaven and earth (20:11); the ungodly have been driven off to punishment (20:15). Only the godly, a remnant, remain. Isaiah 65:17-25 and 66:22 predict that all creation will be renewed, freed from imperfections and transformed by the glory of God. Now John sees the new creation. The “sea” (21:1), a symbol of turbulence, unrest and chaos, is no more. He sees “the new Jerusalem” (21:2), probably not made with bricks and mortar, “holy”, of divine origin, beautiful and lovely as a “bride”. (Marriage is a symbol of the intimate union between the exalted Christ and the godly remnant. Some see the city as the church, set apart for God’s use in the world.) John hears “a loud voice” (21:3) interpreting 21:2: God again comes to “dwell” (be present spiritually) with “his peoples”. Sorrow, death and pain – characteristics that made the old earth appear to be enslaved to sin – will disappear (21:4). God, “seated on the throne”, speaks in 21:5-6: he will do everything described in 21:1-4; he is sovereign over all that happens in human history. (“Alpha” and “Omega” are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, so God encompasses all.) God will give the gift of eternal life (“water”, 21:6b) to all who seek him.

John 13:31-35

Jesus is preparing his followers for his departure. After the Last Supper, he has washed the feet of his disciples, a symbol of servanthood. Peter has misunderstood Jesus’ action; Jesus has told him that to share in Christ requires that Jesus be his servant as well as his master. Peter will understand “later” (v. 7): when Jesus is on the cross. Jesus has said, “you are clean, though not all of you” (v. 10). Then, generalizing, he says that, per his example, each Christian is to be a servant to every other (v. 14). Jesus has predicted his betrayal (vv. 18, 21); he has shown Peter and the disciple “whom Jesus loved” (v. 23) who this will be. Judas (“he”, v. 31) has gone out into the “night” (v. 30) – a symbol of the dark deed he is about to commit. The glorification (revelation of the essence of) the “Son of Man” (v. 31), the ideal human, Jesus, is already in progress; the Father is already being revealed in him. The Father has been revealed (“glorified”, v. 32) in Jesus, so Jesus is a way of seeing God now (“at once”). In John and 1 John, Jesus calls his faithful followers “little children” (v. 33). Jesus tells them that his time on earth with them is very soon to end. They cannot join him in heaven now, but he “will come again and will take you to myself” (14:3). Judaism required one to *love one’s neighbour as oneself* (Leviticus 19:18). Jesus’ commandment is “new” (v. 34) in that, in his self-offering, he is the model of, motive for, and cause for, loving one another. Mutual love will show who follows Christ.

MUSIC COMMENTARY

PRELUDE 'Second prelude' from Three Liturgical Preludes *George Oldroyd (1886-1951)*

Oldroyd was an English organist, composer of organ and choral music, and a teacher of Anglican church music. He was organist of St. Alban's Church, Holborn from 1919 to 1920, and then of St Michael's Church, Croydon from 1920 until his death in 1951. In the 1920s he taught at Trinity College, London, and from 1933-1948 was Director of Music at Whitgift School in Croydon. From 1944 he was Dean of the Faculty of Music at London University, becoming King Edward Professor of Music from 1951, succeeding Stanley Marchant.

POSTLUDE 'Fanfare'

Kenneth Leighton (1929-1988)

A chorister at Wakefield Cathedral, Kenneth Leighton studied with Bernard Rose in Oxford, thereafter holding teaching positions at Leeds, Edinburgh and Oxford. He returned in 1970 to become Reid Professor of Music in Edinburgh, a position he held until his death.

ART COMMENTARY

The artwork on today's pewsheet, *Let the Little Children come to Me*, by Carl Vogel von Vogelstein beautifully captures Christ's invitation to children. Vogel von Vogelstein was a German painter who moved to St Petersburg when he was 20 years old and at the age of 25 he moved to Rome. So these three big influences (German, Russian, Italian) make him a very interesting painter who is hard to categorise. Stylistically he tried to run a middle ground between the Classical and Romantic schools which, at the time, prevailed in Rome. We see Jesus with outstretched arms not only blessing the children, but also protecting them. All five children closest to Christ are depicted in various poses of prayer: folded hands, kneeling, head in arms. The little boy being brought forward in the background, shows Christ is happy to put his loving arms around anyone who is willing to walk up to Him and with Him, with fatherly affection for us all.





PRAYERS FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

29 May 2025, 11am
Toorak Uniting Church

Join us to celebrate the
'World Week of Prayer for Christian Unity'

A light lunch and fellowship with our fellow Christians
from Toorak Uniting Church, St. Peter's Catholic
Church and the Swedish Church will follow



This Week

SUNDAY, 18 May 2025

Fifth Sunday of Easter

8am Said Eucharist

10am Sung Eucharist

12pm Baptism of

Lulu Dungey

WEDNESDAY, 21 May 2025

7pm Eucharist, in the Angel Chapel

SATURDAY, 24 May 2025

3pm Wedding of

Kira Hannah & Jarrod Gretch



Next Sunday, 25 May Sixth Sunday of Easter

8am Eucharist

First Reading: *Acts 16:9-15*, Volunteer Required

Second Reading: *Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5*, Ted Mouritz

Gospel Reading: *John 14:23-29*

Intercessor: Brenda Mouritz

Preacher: The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch

10am Eucharist

First Reading: *Acts 16:9-15*, Kim Collins

Second Reading: *Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5*, Lincoln Li

Gospel Reading: *John 14:23-29*

Intercessor: Anthony Mannering

Preacher: The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch

Morning Tea: Volunteers Required



ST. JOHN'S
ANGLICAN
CHURCH
TOORAK
EST. 1859

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