



ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
TOORAK
EST. 1859



Fourth Sunday of Easter
11 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 culmination of the Easter season.

Cover Image

El Buen Pastor (The Good Shepherd), Cristóbal García Salmerón (1603-1666),
17th Century, Oil on canvas
Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, Spain.

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 'Préambule' from 24 Pièces en style libre, Op. 31 *Louis Vierne (1870-1937)*

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 'The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want'



1. The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.
He makes me down to lie
in pastures green, he leadeth me
the quiet waters by.

2. Goodness and mercy all my life
shall surely follow me:
and in God's house for evermore
my dwelling-place shall be.

Scottish Psalter 1650

CRIMOND (TiS 10)

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 FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Gracious God, you sent Jesus, the good shepherd, to gather us together: may we not wander from his flock, but follow wherever he leads us, listening for his voice and staying near him, until we are safely in your fold, to live with 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 Acts 9.36-43 *read by Brenda Mouritz*

Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, 'Please come to us without delay.' So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, 'Tabitha, get up.' Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. Meanwhile he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.

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

THE PSALM Psalm 23 *said*

The Lord is my shepherd:

therefore can I lack nothing.

He will make me lie down in green pastures:

and lead me beside still waters.

He will refresh my soul:

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

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

I will fear no evil:

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

You spread a table before me

in the face of those who trouble me:

you have anointed my head with oil,

and my cup shall be full.

Surely your goodness and loving-kindness

will follow me all the days of my life:

and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

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 7.9-17

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!' And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, singing, 'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.' Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, 'Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?' I said to him, 'Sir, you are the one that knows.' Then he said to me, 'These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'

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

Please stand for the reading of the Gospel

THE GOSPEL John 10.22-30

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.

At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, 'How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.'

Jesus answered, 'I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me; but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand. The Father and I are one.'

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

THE SERMON The Revd Professor Russell Goulbourne

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 'I will sing the wondrous story'

Dm B \flat C F C F
 B \flat C F Dm B \flat C F
 Refrain Am Dm Gm C7 F
 Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story of the
 Dm Gm C \sharp C F C7 F
 Christ who died for me, sing it with his saints in
 C7 F B \flat C7 F
 glo - ry, ga - thered by the crys - tal sea.

1. I will sing the wondrous story
of the Christ who died for me,
how he left the realms of glory
for the cross on Calvary.

*Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story
of the Christ who died for me,
sing it with his saints in glory,
gathered by the crystal sea.*

2. I was lost: but Jesus found me,
found the sheep that went astray,
raised me up and gently led me
back into the narrow way.

3. He will keep me till the river
rolls its waters at my feet:
then he'll bear me safely over,
where the loved ones I shall meet.

Francis Harold Rowley 1854-1952
HYFRYDOL (TiS 233)

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 'Ye watchers and ye holy ones'

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

Bb(A) Eb(D) Ab(G) Eb(D) F(E) Bb(A) Eb(D)

Eb(D) Ab(G) Eb(D) Bb(A) Eb(D) Ab(G) Eb(D)

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

F(E) Bb(A) Eb(D) Ab(G) C7(B7) Fm(Em) Bb(A) Bb7(A7) Eb(D)

1. Ye watchers and ye holy ones,
bright seraphs, cherubim and
thrones,
raise the glad strain: alleluia!
Cry out, dominions, princedoms,
powers,
virtues, archangels, angels' choirs:
alleluia!
2. O higher than the cherubim,
more glorious than the seraphim,
lead their praises: alleluia!
Thou bearer of the Eternal Word,
most gracious, magnify the Lord,
alleluia!
3. Respond, ye souls in endless rest,
ye patriarchs and prophets blest:
alleluia, alleluia!
Ye holy twelve, ye martyrs strong,
all saints triumphant, raise the
song,
alleluia!
4. O friends, in gladness let us sing,
supernal anthems echoing:
alleluia, alleluia!
To God the Father, God the Son,
and God the Spirit, Three in One,
alleluia!

John Athelstan Laurie Riley 1858–1945
LASST UNS ERFREUEN (TiS 150)

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE 'Menuet gothique' from Suite Gothique, Op. 25

Léon Boëllmann (1862-1897)

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

TODAY Sunday 11 May, Guest Preacher Revd Prof Russell Goulbourne

The Reverend Professor Russell Goulbourne is an Anglican priest, noted French literature scholar and served as Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Melbourne. He was previously Professor of French Literature at King's College London, where he also served as Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities from 2014 to 2018. Prior to this, he taught for more than a decade at the University of Leeds, after education at Keble College, Oxford. It was while he was at Kings College that he put himself into the discernment process of the Church of England, something he had been considering for some time, and was accepted for ordination training. Not long after this occurred Goulbourne was offered a new and exciting position as Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Melbourne. Fortunately, Archbishop Philip Freier approved his transfer into the Diocese of Melbourne as a candidate for ordination and he was able to study a Graduate Diploma of Theology in 2019 at the same time as taking up his role as Dean of Arts. After graduating from his theological studies at Trinity College, Russell was ordained deacon in February 2021 and priest in November 2021. Welcome to St. John's, Russell!



Happy Mothers Day!

Today we take a moment to celebrate the incredible strength, love, and care that mothers bring to the world. Whether you're a mother, daughter, or someone who nurtures others, we honor and appreciate you today and every day. Wishing you a day filled with love, joy, and peace.

'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.

There will be a brief review meeting with parishioners who have committed to this, on **Sunday 18 May** following the 10am service, so we can encourage each other. We hope to see you there!

Now until Sunday 18 May, The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch is away on leave

The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch is currently on leave and will return Sunday 18 May. For any urgent enquiries, please contact the parish office.

Parish Survey

In the coming week I will be asking you 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*

Flowers in the Church Today

The beautiful flowers in the church today are provided by the family of Jon de Fraga, whose funeral was held in the church on Tuesday. The arrangements are by Victoria Whitelaw Florist, South Yarra.

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=ZEN2M2xWRHRhMVhxTWWhwcmVwTzFEEdz09> 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: All Saints' Newtown/Geelong West (Stephen Pollard); Hope25 diocesan events; Victorian Council of Churches (Dr Graeme Blackman, President, Sharon Boyce, Executive Officer); Anglican Church in Japan (Bp David Eisho Uehara); St John's Footscray – Pastoral service (Bp Kate Prowd); Brimbank Anglican Parish – Pastoral service (Bp Brad Billings); St Paul's Caulfield North – Confirmation service (Bp Genieve Blackwell); St James' Dandenong – Pastoral service (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.

For those who have died recently, and those who mourn them: Thomas Bostock

Give thanks for those whose Anniversary of Death is this week: Margaret Reid (2020); Betty Gavin (1995); Helen Faulkner (1988); Janet Frost (2003); Rodney Frost (2015); Alan Owen (2022); Hudson Stanley (1996); David Strike (2022); Joan Carter (2022); Mary-Rose Croyle (2020); David Morley (2021); John Wayne de Gruchy (1985); James Hancock OBE (2018); Betty Rose (2017); Michael Fitzgerald (1994) & Elizabeth Miller (2018).

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 9:36-43

Peter is visiting people who are already Christians (near modern Tel Aviv). In Lydda, he has healed a paralysed man (Aeneas); he has said to him "Jesus Christ heals you" (v. 34). Now he visits Joppa. "Tabitha" (v. 36, an Aramaic name) and "Dorcas" both mean *gazelle*. Luke often emphasizes helping the poor ("acts of charity", v. 36). V. 37 echoes the story of Elijah reviving the widow's son; Peter's action here is in continuity with the Old Testament and with Jesus' acts of healing, especially of Jairus' daughter (Luke 8:40-42, 49-56). Luke calls followers "disciples" (vv. 38, 36). Christian "widows" (v. 39) generally devoted their time to good works. As was the custom, people wept openly when someone died. The widows remember Tabitha's help to many, in sewing inner garments ("tunics") and cloaks for them. As did Jesus, Peter gets *peace and quiet* (here, by sending the mourners outside, v. 40.) With the help of the Holy Spirit, Peter commands Tabitha to rise, be resurrected, be brought back to life. In Aramaic, his command to her sounds like Jesus' words to Jairus' daughter: *talitha koum*[i]. Peter shows members of the Christian community ("saints and widows", v. 41) that Tabitha is alive again; God's action through him leads many to faith (v. 42). We do not know whether "Simon" (v. 43) is a Christian. He is a "tanner", a person Jewish law considered defiled, for he worked with animal carcasses, which were ritually unclean. Peter has begun to disregard Jewish practices.

Psalms 23

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

Revelation 7:9-17

What will happen at the end of time? Will our persecutors be brought to justice? Will God really give us victory over death? These were important questions to early Christians. John is in the midst of a vision of God's throne and the heavenly scene around it. He describes the scene using symbols, only some of which have meanings known to us. Around God's throne are "twenty-four elders" (4:4, perhaps patriarchs and apostles), spirits, and "four living creatures" (4:6, representing creation). These are symbols from the Old Testament. A "Lamb" (Christ) is the only one worthy to open a scroll perfectly sealed with seven seals

(5:4-9), containing God's plans for the end-time. Now, as each seal is opened, we learn of the events of the end-time.

Six seals are opened in 6:1-17, the last in 8:1-5. They reveal images of end-time happenings: (1) a "white horse" (6:2), symbolizing liberation from the Romans by the Parthians; (2) a "bright red" (6:4) horse presenting war; (3) a "black horse" for death by famine, a time when basic foods will be very expensive; (4) a "pale green horse" (6:8) standing for fear and death, a time of wide, but not total, devastation; (5) a vision of the souls of those martyred for the faith, who ask: *Lord, how long will it be before you judge, and render justice, on those who killed us?* (6:10) Each soul receives a "robe" (6:11) of victory and joy, but must wait until all persecutors have been killed; and (6) natural catastrophes on a huge scale (6:12), probably as vengeance for the martyrs' deaths. At that time, the self-centred will seek refuge, for the Lamb will judge them adversely (6:14-17). Chapter 7 contains two visions, telling us that God's people will be safe from these horrors. Vv. 1-8 say that the end-time will be delayed until the godly, both Christians and Jews, have been marked with God's seal, protection from the destruction to come. The second vision, our reading, tells us that Christians will survive the *troubles*.

"Palm branches" (v. 9), a sign of victory and thanksgiving, were strewn on the road during victory parades. In vv. 11-12, the whole court of heaven join the "great multitude" (v. 9), the elect, in praising God, in triumph. Then v. 14: the elect are the members of the Church who have remained faithful through the end-times ("great ordeal"); they have received the gift of Christ, (purity, sinlessness), through his death ("made them white in the blood of the Lamb"). So they ceaselessly celebrate a celestial liturgy in God's presence, protected by him ("shelter them", v. 15.) Vv. 16-17 tell of their happiness, using metaphors from previous books of the Bible. Christians will no longer suffer.

John 10:22-30

Jesus' claim to oneness with God and pre-existence with him (8:58) has aroused some listeners. Some think he is demented but others doubt it, for he heals (vv. 20-21). Later, at Hanukkah ("Dedication", v. 22), Jesus is in a cloister in the Temple grounds ("the portico of Solomon", v. 23). They ask whether he is the "Messiah" (v. 24), the one whom Jews expected to come to establish a godly kingdom. To understand the answers he has given requires faith – which they lack. His Godly actions ("works", v. 25) show who he is. To those who do believe, who are his "sheep" (v. 27), he gives "eternal life" (v. 28) and assurance that they will not be condemned to annihilation ("perish") at the end-time. He will ensure that they remain his. What his Father has given him (v. 29) is a "command" (v. 18): that through his voluntary sacrifice on the cross and return to life he will bring his "sheep" (followers) to oneness with both the Father and the Son (vv. 14-18).

MUSIC COMMENTARY

PRELUDE 'Préambule' from 24 Pièces en style libre, Op. 31 *Louis Vierne (1870-1937)*

Vierne was a French organist, composer, and teacher of the late 19th and early 20th Century. He was organist of Notre-Dame de Paris from 1900 until his death in 1937, and as a composer focused on composing music for organ, including six organ symphonies and a *Messe solennelle* for choir and two organs. He toured Europe and the United States as a concert organist, and as a teacher is well known for teaching Nadia Boulanger and Maurice Duruflé.

POSTLUDE 'Menuet gothique' from Suite Gothique, Op. 25 *Léon Boëllmann (1862-1897)*

Although he managed to amass a catalog of more than 150 compositions before his untimely death, Boëllmann's best known work by far is the four-movement Suite Gothique. The title highlights the work's retrospective musical characteristics but also describes the aura of grandeur evoked by the first, second, and fourth movements. The second movement, *Menuet gothique*, is a grand minuet, complete with contrasting trio section. The occasional modal inflection in the harmonies demonstrates Boëllmann's training in early music.

ART COMMENTARY

Little is known about the artist of the art work on today's pewsheet, *El Buen Pastor* (*The Good Shepherd*). Cristóbal García Salmerón was a Baroque painter who spent much of his career in his hometown of Cuenca. Towards the middle of the 17th century, although at an uncertain date, he moved to Madrid, where he lived until his death.

Sheep are mentioned in the Bible over 500 times, more than any other animal. All throughout Scripture, the close relationship between shepherds and their flocks is praised. The sheep recognise the voice of the shepherd and follow him. The shepherd protects and provides for his flock and even gives his life for them. Here, in *El Buen Pastor*, Christ is pictured carrying a sheep on his shoulders and holding the inscription: *Ego sum pastor bonus: et cognosco meas, et cognoscunt me meae*. 'I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me.' (John 10.14)



This Week

SUNDAY, 11 May 2025

Fourth Sunday of Easter

8am Said Eucharist

10am Sung Eucharist

12pm Baptism of

Amelia Louise Angus

WEDNESDAY, 14 May 2025

7pm Evening Service, in the Angel Chapel

THURSDAY, 15 May 2025

9am Geelong Grammar School Service

2pm Funeral for Thomas Bostock

SATURDAY, 17 May 2025

3pm Wedding of

Bianca Bryson & Tyson Craig



Next Sunday, 18 May

Fifth Sunday of Easter

8am Eucharist

First Reading: *Acts 11:1-18*, Volunteer Required

Second Reading: *Revelation 21:1-6*, Vivienne Randall

Gospel Reading: *John 13:31-35*

Intercessor: Volunteer Required

Preacher: The Revd Dr Peter French

10am Eucharist

First Reading: *Acts 11:1-18*, Thomas Mackenzie

Second Reading: *Revelation 21:1-6*, Carolyn Mackenzie

Gospel Reading: *John 13:31-35*

Intercessor: John Horan

Preacher: The Revd Dr Peter French

Morning Tea: Volunteers Required



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