



ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
TOORAK
EST. 1859



The Fifth Sunday in Lent
22 March, 2026
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

In Lent the church is decorated in purple, representing penance, sacrifice, and preparation.

Cover Image

The Raising of Lazarus, Jean Jouvenet (1644-1717),
c. 1711, oil on canvas,
Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), USA.

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 when the procession enters the church

PRELUDE 'O Mensch, bewein' dein' Sünde groß' BWV 622

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

THE INVOCATION

Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins,
Whose mercy endures for ever.

THE GREETING

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

HYMN 'Rock of Ages, cleft for me' *sung together*

D G D Bm Em A D /
D G D F#m E A /
D G D Bm Em7 A7 D

1. Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
let me hide myself in thee;
let the water and the blood,
from thy riven side which flowed,
be of sin the double cure,
cleansing me from its guilt and
power.
2. While I draw this fleeting breath,
when my eyelids close in death,
when I soar through tracts
unknown,
see thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
let me hide myself in thee.

Augustus Montague Toplady 1740-78
PETRA (TiS 222)

KYRIE ELEISON *said*

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

CONFESSION

Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God, though we have rebelled and wandered far off. Let us then ask for mercy, 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

THE TRISAGION

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

THE COLLECT FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Life-giving God, your Son came into the world to free us all from sin and death: breathe upon us with the power of your Spirit, that we may be raised to new life in Christ, and serve you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Please be seated

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

THE FIRST READING Ezekiel 37.1-14 *read by Brenda Mouritz*

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all round them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, 'Mortal, can these bones live?' I answered, 'O Lord God, you know.' Then he said to me, 'Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord.'

So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, 'Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God : Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.' I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude. Then he said to me, 'Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely." Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.'

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

THE PSALM Psalm 130 *said*

Out of the depths have I called to you, O Lord:

Lord, hear my voice;

O let your ears consider well:

the voice of my supplication.

If you, Lord, should note what we do wrong:

who then, O Lord, could stand?

But there is forgiveness with you:

so that you shall be feared.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits for him:

and in his word is my hope.

My soul looks for the Lord:

more than watchmen for the morning,

more, I say, than watchmen for the morning.

O Israel, trust in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy:

and with him is ample redemption.

He will redeem Israel:

from the multitude of their sins.

THE SECOND READING Romans 8.6-11 *read by Ted Mouritz*

To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law - indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

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

Please stand for the reading of the Gospel

THE GOSPEL John 11.1-45

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.

If you wish to read along, please refer to the Bible located in your pew seat

The Gospel ends with the following

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 'Lord Christ, we praise your sacrifice'

Gr. Capo 3 Bb(G) Eb(C) F(D) Bb(G) Cm(Am) F(D)

1. Lord Christ, we praise your sacrifice,
your life in love so freely given.
For those who took your life away
you prayed: that they might be forgiven;
and there, in helplessness arrayed,
God's power was perfectly displayed.
2. Once helpless in your mother's arms,
dependent on her mercy then;
at last, by choice, in other hands
you were as helpless once again
and, at their mercy, crucified,
you claimed your victory and died.
3. Though helpless and rejected then,
you're now as risen Lord acclaimed;
for ever by your sacrifice
is God's eternal love proclaimed:
the love which, dying, brings to birth
new life and hope for all on earth.
4. So, living Lord, prepare us now
your willing helplessness to share:
to give ourselves in sacrifice
to overcome the world's despair;
in love to give our lives away
and claim your victory today.

Alan Gaunt 1935-
ABINGDON (TiS 251)

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 & BENEDICTUS

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

This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Blessed are those who are called to his supper. Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word, and I shall be healed.

HOLY COMMUNION

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 receive the bread only that is perfectly appropriate. Gluten free wafers are available on request. A blessing only is also available, please simply ask one of the clergy at the altar rail.

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 'God gives us a future'

The musical notation is for a hymn in 4/4 time. It consists of three staves of music. The first staff has notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The second staff has notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The third staff has notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Chord symbols are placed above and below the notes: C, G7, C, F, G7, C, Am, Dm, Em, Eb7, G, D7, G, C, G7, C, C7, F, E7, Am, Dm, G7, C, Dm, C, G7, C.

1. God gives us a future,
daring us to go
into dreams and dangers
on a path unknown.
We will face tomorrow
in the Spirit's power,
we will let God change us,
for new life starts now.

2. Holy Spirit, teach us
how to read the signs,
how to meet the challenge
of our troubled times.
Love us into action,
stir us into prayer,
till we choose God's life,
and find our future there.

Elizabeth J. Smith 1956-
CAMBERWELL (TiS 687)

BLESSING

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE 'Herzliebster Jesu' Op. 122 No. 2 *Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)*

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)

HOLY WEEK & EASTER

29 MARCH PALM SUNDAY	10am Sung Eucharist with Procession of Palms <i>Preacher: The Assistant Priest,</i> <i>The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch</i>
1 APRIL HOLY WEDNESDAY	7pm Said Eucharist with Stations of The Cross
2 APRIL MAUNDY THURSDAY	7pm Choral Eucharist with Ceremonial Washing of Feet <i>Preacher: The Assistant Priest,</i> <i>The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch</i>
3 APRIL GOOD FRIDAY	10am The Liturgy of Good Friday <i>Preacher: The Vicar, The Revd Dr Peter French</i> 11.30am Ecumenical Walk of Witness
5 APRIL EASTER SUNDAY	8am Said Eucharist <i>Preacher: The Vicar, The Revd Dr Peter French</i> 10am Choral Eucharist <i>Preacher: The Vicar, The Revd Dr Peter French</i> Easter Egg Hunt & Games following!

CURRENT NOTICES

Last Lenten Study, this Tuesday night, at St. John's

Everyone is invited to join in the last of the four Lenten Studies provided by The Toorak Ecumenical Movement. Led by The Revd Peter Whitaker of Toorak Uniting Church, participants are guided through the theme, "Reflections on the Meaning of the Cross." Through his presentations, attendees will be encouraged to contemplate the significance of the cross and its impact on Christian faith and life. The last session is 7pm, **Tuesday 24 March, at St John's.**

Archbishop's Invitation to "Listening in Lent"

The Archbishop extends an invitation to listen, reflect, and respond together. During Lent, you are invited to be part of 'Listening in Lent' - an opportunity to pause, reflect, and share what you notice and hope for as part of the Diocese of Melbourne today, and as we look to the future together. Take part by filling in the online questionnaire. www.melbourneanglican.org.au/listening-in-lent
It's open to everyone and every response is valued. *The Vicar*

Saturday 28 March, 3pm, Palm Sunday Preparation

Please join us in preparing the church for Palm Sunday, Holy Week & Easter. We need your help to tidy the church and arrange palm branches for our much anticipated Palm Sunday service. Sign-up sheet available in the Narthex.

Palm Sunday Service, 10am only

Please note, there will be **NO** 8am service on Palm Sunday. We will instead come together for one joint service at 10am as we follow Jesus' path into Jerusalem and into Holy Week. Please note other Holy Week services in this pew sheet!

Election of Synod Representatives

Nominations are now open for two lay representatives (*and an alternate lay representative*) for the 55th Synod. Nominations close Easter Day, **Sunday 5 April 2026**. If required, elections will take place in person on Sunday 12 April between the 8am and 10am services. Nominees need to be members of the St. John's electoral roll. For more information on Synod representatives see [Synod: A Guide for Members and Prospective Members](#). Forms are available in the Narthex.

Sunday 3 May, Patronal Festival & Visit from Archbishop Ric Thorpe!

On Sunday May 3, we will celebrate our patron St. John the Evangelist with a visit from the new Archbishop, The Most Revd Dr Ric Thorpe, and his wife, Louie. Following the 10am Eucharist we will enjoy a special morning tea, prepared by our dedicated volunteers. It is vitally important that as many people attend this service as possible to show our new Archbishop our lively church, so please put it in your diary and commit to come! *The Vicar*

Archbishop's Prize for Emerging Composers 2026

The Melbourne Anglican Cultural Organisation (MACO) is delighted to announce the launch of the Archbishop's Prize for Emerging Composers. Entrants are invited to compose an original work set to, or inspired by, *Psalm 46*. The competition culminates in a special evening in May at Bishops court, where finalist works will be performed before invited guests, including supporters of MACO and the Melbourne Anglican Foundation. Submissions close Tuesday 7 April 2026. Final performance event Thursday 7 May 2026. For more information or to submit an entry go to: tinyurl.com/archbishopsprize4composers



Our Assistant Priest, The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch

After four fine years of service and ministry as our Assistant Priest, Wendy Crouch will be leaving St. John's, with her last Sunday being Easter Sunday, 2026.

Commencing on February 23, 2022, Wendy has since then made a terrific contribution to the life and ministry of St. John's, serving ever so faithfully across the wide array of ministries here, including leading worship, preaching, teaching and leading pastoral services and, with a particular emphasis on spiritual formation, leading numerous retreats and learning opportunities. Her ministry has seen many people join our church and her gentle, wise and prayerful presence has seen the community nurtured, cared for and supported through good times and bad, especially through her pastoral work and her leadership of the Pastoral Visiting Team. Until her departure we continue to be blessed with her presence and to enjoy her remaining time with us. I hope you will join me in a farewell to

Wendy following the 10am Easter Sunday service and, if you wish to make a contribution to a farewell gift, you may do so by direct deposit to BSB 033086 and Acc. No. 871931, marked "For Wendy." *The Vicar*



LENT APPEAL 2026

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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!



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 this month 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:

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, emailing them, or visiting the Vicarage, 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: St Columb's Hawthorn (Mark McDonald, Helena Cameron); The Diocese of Sydney (Abp Kanishka Raffel, Regional Bps Chris Edwards, Michael Stead, Peter Hayward, Peter Lin, Malcolm Richards, Gary Koo, Clergy & People); The Anglican Church of Korea; St Albans & St Augustines Merri-Bek – Pastoral visit (Abp Ric Thorpe); Lady Day Service – St Paul's Cathedral (Abp Ric Thorpe); St Luke's Frankston East – Confirmation Service (Bp Paul Barker) & St John's Sorrento & St Andrew's Rye – Evensong (Bp Paul Barker).

For the Anglican Church: The Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia, The Right Revd Dr Mark Short; Archbishop of the Diocese of Melbourne, The Most Revd Dr Ric Thorpe; The Rt Revd Genieve Blackwell, Assistant Bishop of Melbourne, Marningatha Episcopate.

For those who lead us in Government: His Majesty King Charles III; Governor General Sam Mostyn AC; Prime Minister Anthony Albanese; Member for Kooyong, Dr. Monique Ryan; Premier of Victoria, Jacinta Allan; and, Member for Prahran, Rachel Westaway.

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 our Neighbours: Our partner churches in the Toorak Ecumenical Movement, St. Peter's Catholic Church, Toorak Uniting Church, and The Swedish Church; and our friends at the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation.

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 Principal Suada Dzaferovic.

For the sick and all in need: Nichole, Joanna, James, Karen, Trisha, Daphne, Thomas, Rod, Stephen, Stella, Louis, Nina, Bissie, Jane, Naomi, Rosie, John, Alina, Maria, Diana & Briody.

For those in aged care and those who are housebound: Angela, Elizabeth, Sue & Nancy.

Give thanks for those whose Anniversary of Death is this week: Irene Woods (2007); Barry King (2017); Meredith Hunt (2017); Ruth Doig (2012); Rachel Griffiths (2008) & Paul Rice (2021).

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.



SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

Ezekiel 37:1-14

It is likely that Ezekiel was among those deported when the Babylonians first took Jerusalem, in 598 BC. He opposed a political solution to Judah's woes, espousing instead the notion of Israel as a community faithful to God in religious observance and obedience. Vv. 1-10 are a vision, a prophecy, and vv. 11-14 the interpretation. The "valley" is probably the Tigris-Euphrates plain. The scene the "spirit" of God shows the prophet is of an arid place, perhaps the site of a battle. The bones are "very dry", long lifeless; they symbolize the exiles, who lack hope of resuscitation of the kingdom of Israel: see v. 11a. Contrasting with the dead bones are "breath" and "spirit" – both *ru'ah* in Hebrew. See especially v. 9. In vv. 12-13 the metaphor shifts to "graves". God will renew the covenant, restoring Israel – but probably spiritually rather than literally. Perhaps v. 13 led to the Jewish notion of the resurrection of all at the end of time.

Psalms 130

This is a prayer for deliverance from personal trouble, but it ends with a message to all people. The "depths" are the chaotic waters, separation from God – as in Jonah's prayer from the stomach of the great fish (Jonah 2:2). May God be attentive to my pleas. God forgives, so he shall be "revered" (v. 4). If God were to record all our misdeeds, how could anyone face him? He is merciful by nature, so I eagerly await his help, his "word" (v. 5), a prophecy from him. I wait as do watchmen guarding a town from enemy attack (v. 6). Perhaps (v. 7) the psalmist has now received a prophecy of salvation which he tells to all Israel: wait in hope for God; he offers unfailing "love", freedom from grievous sin.

Romans 8:6-11 NRSV Paul has written that, as a result of God's love shown in the liberating act of Christ's death and resurrection, we are empowered to live a new life, one of freedom from sin, from the finality of death and the Law. As experience shows, the Christian is able to live a life for God, in the Spirit. Christian life is bound up in the Spirit, and not by the desires of the flesh. Now he explains the difference between what he calls living in the Spirit and living according to the flesh: two very different mindsets (v. 6). A person whose mind "is set on the flesh" (v. 7), whose view is limited to the natural world, is at enmity with God because he is fundamentally unable to obey God's law – he lacks the power to transcend his inner conflicts, and "cannot please God" (v. 8). On the other hand, Christians are in the Spirit (v. 9) and the "Spirit ... dwells in you", i.e. the Spirit fills and motivates our lifestyle. Attachment to Christ (belief in him) is only possible in this kind of relationship: Christ and the Spirit come together. Vv. 10-11 say: if Christ (or the Spirit) is in you, though you may be a corpse because of all the wrong you have done, you are actually very much alive – because of the Spirit. If God's Spirit is in you, God will resuscitate your bodies (from being corpses) through the Spirit, in raising you to new life at the end of time.

John 11:1-45

Jesus is beyond the reach of the Jewish religious authorities, across the Jordan when Martha and Mary (in “Bethany”, near Jerusalem) send a message to him (v. 3): Lazarus, a follower, is ill. Jesus says that his illness is not terminal, rather it will show the “glory” (v. 4, power and authority) the Father has bestowed on the Son. We will see why Jesus delays (v. 6). He urges the disciples to return to “Judea” (v. 7) with him, but they remind him of what happened when he was last there (v. 8). Jesus replies with a parable: there is still time (“hours of daylight”, v. 9) to do God’s work; harm will not come to him “during the day”. Those who do dark deeds will fail because I am not in them (v. 10). His words in v. 11 are ambiguous, as v. 13 explains: the disciples think that Lazarus’ sleep indicates that he is getting better (“all right”, v. 12), but Jesus clarifies: “Lazarus is dead” (v. 14). Note Jesus’ clairvoyance. Restoring Lazarus to life will be a greater opportunity (than just healing him) for strengthening the disciples’ faith in Jesus (v. 15). Thomas shows courageous loyalty. People thought that one’s soul hovered around one’s body for three days, but when Jesus arrives, Lazarus has been dead for “four days” (v. 17). (Bodies were buried on the day of death.) Per custom, many have come to “console” (v. 19) the sisters. Perhaps Martha sets out to warn Jesus of the rites while Mary receives mourners (v. 20). Martha rebukes Jesus for his tardiness but shows her confidence in his ability to heal (v. 21). She goes further: perhaps because the Father grants the Son whatever he asks, Jesus will restore life to Lazarus (v. 22). She, as many did, believed in “the resurrection [of all] on the last day” (v. 24), but this is small comfort to her now. Jesus identifies himself as he who raises believers from death (“resurrection”, v. 25) and who is the principle of “life”. Physical death is normal, even so life in Christ will continue, and this life cannot be taken away by the death of the body. Martha affirms her faith in Jesus in terms used earlier by Andrew, Nathanael and those present at the Feeding of the Five Thousand. Jesus and Martha are still outside Bethany. She discerns that Jesus wishes to speak to Mary. She tells Mary “privately” (v. 28) either so she can escape from the visitors or to shield Jesus from any who plot against him. The visitors see Mary leave, and follow her. Mary’s words to Jesus echo Martha’s. Jesus is “disturbed” (v. 33) inwardly by the crowd’s attitude towards death; his humanity shows in v. 35, causing some to say that he weeps at the loss of a friend, but others criticize him: if he’d been here earlier, being a miracle-worker, he could have healed him! (v. 37). Martha warns him of the “stench” (v. 39) of the decaying corpse. Perhaps Jesus prayed at v. 33; now he publicly thanks the Father – to help the crowd understand that his power is from God, and not magic. Being bound in a burial shroud, Lazarus needs unbinding (v. 44). Many believed because of the miracle (v. 45), but others told the Pharisees about it (v. 46).

MUSIC COMMENTARY

PRELUDE 'O Mensch, bewein' dein' Sünde groß'
BWV 622 from the *Orgelbüchlein*

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

The *Orgelbüchlein* is a collection of 45 chorale preludes that J.S. Bach composed in Weimar around 1713–1717, intended as teaching material for young organists and as a comprehensive exploration of Lutheran chorales. "O Mensch, bewein' dein Sünde groß," BWV 622, is one of its most expressive pieces and is often played on Good Friday.

POSTLUDE 'Herzliebster Jesu' Op. 122 No. 2

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Although Brahms had at one point explored the possibility of a career as an organist, he ultimately wrote little for the instrument, focusing most of his energy on vocal, chamber, and symphonic music. However, he returned to the instrument in 1896 for his final work: the Eleven Chorale Preludes, Op. 122. This is one of two preludes in the set that he wrote for the chorale tune *Herzlich tut mich verlangen*.

ART COMMENTARY

The art on today's pewsheet, *The Raising of Lazarus*, is by the French artist, Jean-Baptiste Jouvenet. It is one of four vast canvases painted by Jouvenet early in the eighteenth century for the church of Saint-Martin-des-Champs in Paris. Here the figure of Christ is somewhat passive amid the agitated crowd gathered around the looming rocks of the tomb. Meanwhile, Mary, the sister of Lazarus, takes on the role of heroine, distressed, yet decorous, in garments of gleaming white, gold, and green, poised in the centre of the scene. She is the embodiment of French academic classicism and could serve in comparable guise in many other pictures of the period. What she gestures towards, however, is dramatic in a different idiom: the stark moment of Lazarus's return from the dead, with him awakening in the deep cavernous gloom of his burial-chamber, lit only by a single torch, and experiencing hardly less violent and painful astonishment than do the figures gaping around him.



This Week

SUNDAY, 22 March 2026

Fifth Sunday in Lent

8am Said Eucharist

10am Sung Eucharist

Baptism of Conrad Lockwood,
Sutton Mortimer & Angus Bell

TUESDAY, 24 March 2026

5.30pm Toorak Op Shop AGM

7pm Lenten Study #4
at St. John's

WEDNESDAY, 25 March 2026

Feast of the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary

7pm Eucharist in the Angel Chapel

THURSDAY, 26 March 2026

9am Geelong Grammar School Service

SATURDAY, 28 March 2026

11.30am Wedding of Sammy He
& Matthew Maximillian
3pm Palm Sunday Working Bee



Next Sunday, 29 March Palm Sunday

NO 8am Eucharist

10am Eucharist

First Reading: *Isaiah 50:4-9a*, Richard Uglow
Second Reading: *Philippians 2:5-11*, Volunteer
Required

Gospel Reading: *Matthew 21:1-11*

Intercessor: Richard Uglow

Preacher: The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch

Morning Tea: Celia Langford & Fiona Singleton



ST. JOHN'S
ANGLICAN
CHURCH
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Parish Office

Open 9am - 5pm | Monday - Friday
9826 1765 or 9826 1434
enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org

Wardens

Mr Keith Beecher OAM,
Mr Jason Pennell, Mr Richard Uglow

Parish Council

Mr Rob Condon, Mr Craig Cooper,
Mr Anthony Gissing

Vicar

The Revd Dr Peter French
vicar@saintjohnstoorak.org

Assistant Priest

The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch
assistantpriest@saintjohnstoorak.org

Associate Priest

The Venerable Ray McInnes

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