



ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
TOORAK
EST. 1859



Sixth Sunday of Easter

10 May, 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

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

The Last Supper, Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640),
1630-1631, oil on canvas,
Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan, 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



Like us on
Facebook

**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. 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 SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

O God, you have prepared for those who love you joys beyond our understanding: pour into our hearts such love for you, that, loving you above all else, we may obtain your promises that exceed all we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

THE FIRST READING Acts 17.22-31 *read by Vivienne Randall*

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, 'Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, "To an unknown god." What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him – though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For "In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said, "For we too are his offspring." Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.'

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

THE PSALM Psalm 66.7-19 *said*

O bless our God, you peoples:
and cause his praises to resound,
Who has held our souls in life:
who has not suffered our feet to slip.
For you have proved us, O God:
you have tried us as silver is tried.
You brought us into the net:
you laid sharp torment on our loins.

You let our enemies ride over our heads,
we went through fire and water:
but you brought us out into a place of liberty.
I will come into your house with burnt-offerings:
and I will pay you my vows,
The vows that opened my lips:
that my mouth uttered when I was in trouble.
I will offer you burnt-offerings of fattened beasts,
with the sweet smoke of rams:
I will sacrifice a bull and the flesh of goats.
Come then and hear, all you that fear God:
and I will tell what he has done for me.
I called to him with my mouth:
and his praise was on my tongue.
If I had cherished wickedness in my heart:
the Lord would not have heard me.
But God has heard me:
he has heeded the voice of my prayer.
Praise be to God:
who has not turned back my prayer,
or his steadfast love from me.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was
in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

THE SECOND READING 1 Peter 3.8-22 *read by Maureen List*

Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called – that you might inherit a blessing. For ‘Those who desire life and desire to see good days, let them keep their tongues from evil and their lips from speaking deceit; let them turn away from evil and do good; let them seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.’ Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an account of

the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight people, were saved through water. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you — not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

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

Please stand for the reading of the Gospel

THE GOSPEL John 14.15-21

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 love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you for ever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you. 'I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.'

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

THE SERMON The Venerable Ray McInnes

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 Vivienne Randall*

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)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> | <p>4. Paschal Lamb, your offering,
finished
once for all when you were slain,
in its fullness undiminished
shall for evermore remain,
alleluia, alleluia,
cleansing souls from every stain.</p> <p>5. Great High Priest of our profession
through the veil you entered in;
by your mighty intercession
grace and mercy you can win:
alleluia, alleluia,
only sacrifice for sin.</p> <p>6. 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!</p> |
|---|--|

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 & 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

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 'Come, my way, my truth, my life'

Gr. Capo 1 Cm(Bm) Bbm(Am) Ab(G) Bbm(Am) Cm(Bm)

I Come, my way, my truth, my life, such a
 Bbm(Am) Ab(G) Bbm(Am) Gb(F) Fm(Em) Bbm(Am)
 way as gives us breath, such a truth as ends all
 Eb(D) Db(C) Eb(D) Fm(Em) Bbm(Am) Eb(D)
 strife, such a life as kill - - eth death.

1. Come, my way, my truth, my life,
 such a way as gives us breath,
 such a truth as ends all strife,
 such a life as killeth death.
2. Come, my joy, my love, my heart,
 such a joy as none can move,
 such a love as none can part,
 such a heart as joys in love.

George Herbert 1593-1633
THE CALL (TiS 552)

BLESSING

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE 'Introduction-Choral' 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)

CURRENT NOTICES

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.

Support Our Choir and Music Program

In the lead-up to the end of the financial year, please consider making a tax deductible donation in support of our choir and music program. You can do this by visiting bit.ly/donate_maco or scanning the QR code. Select *St. John's Toorak - Cultural Program*. Thank you. Every gift, large and small, helps us sing!



Sunday 24 May, 2pm, Toorak Ecumenical Pentecost Service

Please join us to celebrate Pentecost alongside our fellow Christian members of the Toorak Ecumenical Movement: Toorak Uniting Church, St. Peter's Catholic Church and The Swedish Church.

SAVE THE DATE - 4 July, 7.30pm, Harvard Krokodiloes Concert

The Ecumenical Candle

In front of the lectern our ecumenical candle is lit. This is the candle which moves from each member church of the Toorak Ecumenical Movement, the Catholic, Swedish, Anglican and Uniting Churches, to symbolise our unity in Christ. The word 'ecumenical' comes from the ancient Greek word 'oikumene,' meaning 'the whole (inhabited) earth,' and simply means churches who come together to better understand each other and to live into Christ's call for all his followers 'to be one.' St. John's has been a proud member of the Toorak Ecumenical Movement for all its 46 years of existence.

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=ZEN2M2xWRHRhMVhxTWhwcmVwTzFEdz09

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. Our Curate Victoria works Sunday, Monday and Wednesdays. 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

A Prayer 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: Jumbunna Episcopate, Archdeaconry of Frankston, Deanery of Mornington Peninsula: Holy Trinity Hastings, St Peter's Mornington with St Martin's Mount Martha, St Andrew's Somerville, St John's Sorrento with St Andrew's Rye, St John the Evangelist Flinders with St Mark's Balnarring, St George's Red Hill & All Saints' Rosebud with St Katherine's McCrae, St Mark's Dromana.

For the Anglican Church: Archbishop of Canterbury, The Most Revd and Rt Hon. Sarah Mullally; Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia, The Rt Revd Dr Mark Short; Archbishop of Melbourne, The Most Revd Dr Ric Thorpe; and, Assistant Bishop of Melbourne, Marningatha Episcopate, The Rt Revd Alison Taylor.

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 those celebrating birthdays: Tahli Shepherd

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.

For those who have died and their families who mourn them: David Richardson.

Give thanks for those whose Anniversary of Death is this week: Ian Palmer (2005); Margaret Reid (2020); Janet Frost (2003); Alan Owen (2022); David Strike (2022); Joan Carter (2015); Mary-Rose Croyle (2020); David Morley (2021); James Hancock (2018) & Betty Rose (2017).

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

Acts 17:22-31

On his second missionary journey, Paul has crossed Asia Minor (modern Turkey) and has arrived in Athens, a city known for its interest in the divine and its openness to discussion of philosophies and religions. He argues for Christianity in the synagogue and in the marketplace. Epicurean and Stoic philosophers see him as dabbling in philosophy and proclaiming “foreign divinities” (v. 18), of Jesus and the resurrection (possibly thought by them to be a god). He is invited to join in philosophical discussions at the “Areopagus” (v. 19) on edge of the marketplace. He presents the good news to a people of a culture very different from the one in which it was first proclaimed. He explains it in their terms.

After praising the Athenians for their piety and gods (“objects of your worship”, v. 23), he draws attention to an altar to “an unknown god”. He tells them: I know that god; he is God; he “made the world ...” (v. 24) and is “Lord” of it. He depends on nothing (“as though ...”, v. 25), so he is greater than all Greek gods; he is the source of all (“gives ... life”). Not being confined to specific “shrines” (v. 24) and needing no sacrifices (“nor ... served ...”, v. 25) shows his greatness. God created “all nations” (v. 26) from *proto-human*, Adam (“one ancestor”): Stoics too believed in the unity of humanity. Deuteronomy 32:8 says that God “fixed the boundaries of the peoples”; dividing history into eras is basic to faith (v. 26b). The Greeks thought of the seasons of nature’s cycles and the earth’s habitable zones. They *searched* and *groped for God* (v. 27); we go further: we find, obey and serve him.

Paul now quotes Greek writers in defence of his arguments (v. 28). For “God's offspring” (v. 29) idols are inadequate objects of worship; only the true God, the creator of heaven and earth and of all lower orders of spiritual being, is worthy of our worship and service. Jesus has brought an era when turning to God is imperative; “ignorance” (v. 30) of his ways is no longer acceptable – because God will have Jesus (“a man”, v. 31) judge people’s worthiness. This we know because he has raised Jesus. Raising “a man” to divine status is hard for Paul’s hearers to accept. Some are open to further discussion but others are not (v. 32).

Psalms 66: 7-19

“All the earth” (v. 1, not only Israel) is invited to join in praising God, seen as powerful in his “deeds” (v. 3). Throughout history he has done great things “among mortals” (v. 5). His rule is world-wide, over all “the nations” (v. 7). Vv. 8-12 are a communal thanksgiving. God preserves us in life (v. 9a); he protects us. In past difficulties he has “tested us” (v. 10), purifying us as “silver” ore is changed to pure silver. Israel has been subjugated by other people (perhaps during the Exile), yet after enduring every kind of difficulty (“through fire and ... water”, v. 12), God has brought her to freedom again.

In vv. 13-20, an individual (perhaps the king) vows to offer sacrifice in the Temple in thanks. He invites the community to hear “what [God] ... has done for me” (v. 16). He was repentant so God listened to him (v. 19) and has heeded his requests made in prayer. “Blessed be God” (v. 20) for hearing and for his covenant (“steadfast”) love.

1 Peter 3:13-22

The author has noted the persecution being endured by his readers; now he treats the topic explicitly. Who will weaken you in your faith or cause you to lose it? (v. 13) As v. 16 (“when you are maligned”) shows “if” (v. 14) is an understatement: when is meant. Suffering for good conduct puts you in a happy and fortunate (“blessed”) state with God. Reverence for God should transcend all fears. Be prepared to defend your commitment to Christ, and your faith (“hope”, v. 15) in him, to anyone who asks. Continue to live ethical, godly lives (“keep your conscience clear”, v. 16) so that your persecutors may be shamed (and desist from harrowing you). It is morally “better” (v. 17) to suffer for doing God’s will.

Christ, “the righteous” (v. 18), is your example of suffering; he brings you to God. He really died (“in the flesh”), but he overcame death. Even the condemnation carried out in the Flood is overcome by the power of the gospel, for Jesus proclaimed it (while dead) to the wayward dead (“spirits in prison ... who did not obey”, vv. 19-20), so that their fate might be reversed. (See also 4:6.) The saving of Noah and his family (“eight persons”, v. 20) “through water” is the forerunner of baptism. It saves not by ritual cleansing (“removal of dirt”, v. 21) but rather by putting you in a state to be found worthy at the Last Day (“appeal”), sharing as we do in Christ’s death and resurrection. Christ is now in heaven, where heavenly powers (“angels ...”, v. 22) are subject to him.

John 14:15-21

Jesus continues to prepare his disciples for his departure. He has given them a special commandment: to “love one another” just as he has loved them (13:34). Love requires obedience and (v. 21) those who love him are those who obey. Keeping Jesus’ commandments makes possible the continuance of their relationship with him – but how? The Father will send them “another” (v. 16) representative of God, also in God, as their “Advocate” or *champion*: one who will support, help and intercede for them. This is the Holy Spirit, the “Spirit of truth” (v. 17), of faith, of revealed doctrine. He is neither perceivable nor knowable by unbelievers, so they have no access to him. But “you” both recognize (“know”) him, because he will be within you and will remain (*abide*) in you. Jesus will come to you in the Spirit (v. 18). After Jesus’ death, unbelievers will not perceive him, but you will; because he lives (in a special way), so will you (v. 19). When he returns at the end of this era (v. 20), you will recognize that you have been taken into intimate association with both the Father and the Son. But (v. 21) this will only be so for followers who have divine love and show it by obeying me. Only to them will Jesus, the risen Christ, appear.

MUSIC COMMENTARY

PRELUDE 'Pastorale'

Charles Wesley (1757-1834)

Charles Wesley was an English clergyman, poet, and hymn writer who, with his elder brother John, started the Methodist movement in the Church of England.

POSTLUDE 'Introduction-Choral'

Léon Boëllmann (1862-1897)

from *Suite Gothique*, Op. 25

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 first is essentially a study in echo effects, with unusual (quasi-modal) chord progressions passed between manuals.

ART COMMENTARY

The art on today's pewsheet, *The Last Supper*, is by Flemish artist and diplomat Peter Paul Rubens. It was meant as an altarpiece for the Church of St. Rombout in Mechelen, Belgium. It shows the Apostles gathered around the table, headed by Jesus, who is bathed in light. Judas is also in the centre of this painting, but, unlike other Apostles, he looks away from the table, possibly directly at the viewer of the painting. As in many other Northern European depictions, a dog with a bone can be seen in the scene, probably a simple pet. It may represent faith, dogs are traditionally symbols of and are representing faith. According to J. Richard Judson the dog near Judas perhaps represents greed or evil, as the companion of Judas, as in John 13.27.



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This Week

SUNDAY, 10 May 2026

Sixth Sunday of Easter

8am Said Eucharist

10am Sung Eucharist

TUESDAY, 12 May 2026

7pm Parish Council meeting

WEDNESDAY, 13 May 2026

10.30am Pastoral Visiting Team meeting

7pm Eucharist, in the Angel Chapel

THURSDAY, 14 May

9am Geelong Grammar School Service



Next Sunday, 17 May Seventh Sunday of Easter

8am Eucharist

First Reading: *Acts 1:6-14*, Jason Pennell

Second Reading: *1 Peter 5*, Volunteer Required

Gospel Reading: *John 17:1-11*

Intercessor: Jason Pennell

Preacher: The Revd Dr Peter French

10am Eucharist

First Reading: *Acts 1:6-14*, Linda Gay

Second Reading: *1 Peter 51*, James Griffith

Gospel Reading: *John 17:1-11*

Intercessor: Richard Uglow

Preacher: The Revd Dr Peter French

Morning Tea: No Morning Tea



ST. JOHN'S
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CHURCH
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EST. 1859

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