



ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
TOORAK
EST. 1859



Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
12 July, 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 green, the liturgical colour during what the Church describes as 'Ordinary Time,' that is, the time outside the major seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter. Green symbolises life, hope and anticipation.

Cover Image

Parable of the Sower, Marten van Valckenborch (1535–1612),
1580–90, oil on canvas,
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge we meet on the Traditional Lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples of the East Kulin Nations and pay our respect to their Elders past and present.



@stjohnstoorak



Like us on
Facebook

As you enter the church, please ensure your phone is switched off or on silent and use the time before the service for prayer or quiet reflection, allowing others to do the same

INTRODUCTORY RITE

Please stand as the procession enters the church

PRELUDE 'Complainte' 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

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

HYMN 'Come down, O Love divine'

D A G D Bm E
A D G Em A7 D
Bm D E A C G Em D
A D A D Em A7 D

1. Come down, O Love divine,
seek now this soul of mine,
and visit it with your own ardour
glowing;
O Comforter, draw near,
within my heart appear
and kindle it, your holy flame
bestowing.

2. And so the yearning strong
with which the soul will long
shall far outpass the power of
human telling;
for none can guess its grace
till we become the place
in which the Holy Spirit makes his
dwelling.

Bianco da Siena d.1434 *tr.* Richard Frederick
Littledale 1833-90 *alt.* DOWN AMPNEY (TiS 398)

COLLECT FOR PURITY

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

THE TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS

'Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' Jesus said: 'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

KYRIE ELEISON *said*

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

CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, confident in God's forgiveness.

Silence is kept

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 AFTER PENTECOST

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ has taught us that what we do for the least of his brothers and sisters we do also for him: give us the will to serve others as he was the servant of all, who gave up his life and died for us; yet 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 Genesis 25.19-34 *read by Ted Mouritz*

These are the descendants of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, sister of Laban the Aramean. Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord granted his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived. The children struggled together within her; and she said, 'If it is to be this way, why do I live?' So she went to inquire of the Lord. And the Lord said to her, 'Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples born of you shall be divided; one shall be stronger than the other, the elder shall serve the younger.' When her time to give birth was at hand, there were twins in her womb. The first came out red, all his body like a hairy mantle; so they named him Esau. Afterwards his brother came out, with his hand gripping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them. When the boys grew up, Esau was a skilful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents. Isaac loved Esau, because he was fond of game; but Rebekah loved Jacob. Once when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was famished. Esau said to Jacob, 'Let me eat some of that red stuff, for I am famished!' (Therefore he was called Edom.) Jacob said, 'First sell me your birthright.' Esau said, 'I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?' Jacob said, 'Swear to me first.' So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank, and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

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

THE PSALM Psalm 119.105-112 *said*

Your word is a lantern to my feet:
and a light to my path.

I have vowed and sworn an oath:
to keep your righteous judgements.

I have been afflicted beyond measure:
Lord, give me life according to your word.

Accept, O Lord, the freewill offerings of my mouth:
and teach me your judgements.

I take my life in my hands continually:
yet I do not forget your law.

The wicked have laid a snare for me:
but I have not strayed from your precepts.

Your commands are my inheritance for ever:
they are the joy of my heart.

I have set my heart to fulfil your statutes:
always, even to the end.

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 Romans 8.1-11 *read by Brenda Mouritz*

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. 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 Matthew 13.1-23

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

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to St. Matthew.
Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the lake. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!' Then the disciples came and asked him, 'Why do you speak to them in parables?' He answered, 'To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. The reason I speak to them in parables is that "seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand." With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says: "You will indeed listen, but never understand, and you will indeed look, but never perceive. For this people's heart has grown dull, and their ears are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes; so that they might not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and understand with their heart and turn – and I would heal them." But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see

what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it. 'Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.'

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

THE SERMON The Assistant Curate, The Revd Victoria Bakerov

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 'Spread, O spread, almighty word'



1. Spread, O spread, almighty word,
spread the kingdom of the Lord,
where the breath of God has given
life to people meant for heaven.
2. Tell them how the Father's will
made the world, and keeps it still;
how his only Son he gave
all from sin and death to save.
3. Tell of our Redeemer's love,
who, for ever to remove
all the guilt that in us lies,
gave himself as sacrifice.
4. Tell them of the Spirit given
now to guide us on to heaven,
strong and holy, just and true,
working both to will and do.
5. Up! the ripening fields you see,
mighty will the harvest be;
but the reapers still are few,
great the work they have to do.
6. Lord of harvest, kind and true,
give us strength to work for you,
till the nations everywhere
see your light, and know your
care.

Jonathan Friedrich Bahnmaier 1774-1841 *tr.*
Catherine Winkworth 1827-78 *alt.*
GOTT SEI DANK (TiS 450)

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

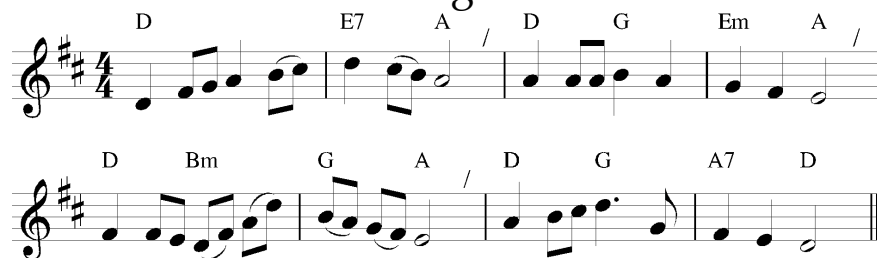
All baptised Christians are welcome to receive Holy Communion. Communion is available as consecrated bread, which is given to each person, and wine which may be drunk from the chalice. A separate chalice for intinction (dipped) is also provided. If you would prefer a blessing, please come forward and 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 'What shall we offer our good Lord'



1. What shall we offer our good Lord,
poor nothings, for his boundless
grace?
Fain would we his great name
record
and worthily set forth his praise.
2. Great object of our growing love,
to whom our more than all we
owe,
open the fountain from above,
and let it our full souls o'erflow.

3. So shall our lives thy power
proclaim,
thy grace for every sinner free,
till all the world shall learn thy
name,
shall all stretch out their hands to
thee.

4. Open a door which earth and hell
may strive to shut, but strive in
vain;
let thy word richly in us dwell,
and let our gracious fruit remain.

5. O multiply the sower's seed!
and fruit we every hour shall bear,
throughout the world thy gospel
spread,
thy everlasting truth declare.

August Gottlieb Spangenberg 1704–92 *tr.* John
Wesley 1703–91 DUKE STREET (TiS 439)

BLESSING

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE 'March in G'

Thomas Adams (1785-1858)

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

TODAY Sunday 12 July, 11.30am, Whitney King Room

Exploring Pastoral Care: A Conversation with Rev. Victoria

Are you curious about pastoral care, or do you have a heart for supporting others in our community? Whether you are already involved, interested in joining the team, or simply want to learn more, you are warmly invited to join us! Rev. Victoria will be sharing a brief introduction to pastoral care in our area, and we would love to hear your thoughts, ideas, and reflections.

Come pull up a chair – we'd love to see you there!

Vicar on Study and Annual Leave, 6 July to 20 July

I'm taking a week's study leave to attend the International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, in Adelaide, and then travelling on to Perth and Margaret River on annual leave. I'll be away until 20 July and will be uncontactable during this time. Please call the Parish Office in my absence. *The Vicar*

TODAY Sunday 12 July, Oxford Movement Sunday

You are warmly invited to attend a celebratory service of Choral Evensong and Benediction at St Peter's Eastern Hill, on Sunday 12 July at 5pm.

Thursday 23 July, 5-7pm, Celebrating Our Volunteers!

To everyone who generously gives their time to St. John's and our parish community - whether you help at the Op Shop, read during services, assist with Food for Friends, provide pastoral care, or prepare morning teas - you are warmly invited! Please join us in Buxton Hall as we celebrate and thank you for all that you do for our community. RSVP by 18 July. Sign the list in the Narthex, contact the Parish Office, or let the team know at the Toorak Op Shop.

Toorak Ecumenical Food for Friends Appeal

Maureen List and I have been busy shopping and delivering food to St Mark's Fitzroy, Richmond Churches Food Bank and Christ Church Mission St Kilda. We spent \$3000 between the three agencies that was gratefully received. We thank everyone who has generously given to this Appeal. This year, each church of the Toorak Ecumenical Movement has over \$9000 to spend over the year. We spend our allocation over three major shopping trips and then, if there is any remaining money left, we will do a Christmas shop, buying some treats that the agencies would not normally receive. If you would like to contribute, the banking details for the Toorak Ecumenical Fund are: BSB 063177 Acc 10026147. Once again, thank you from the agencies for your support. *Brenda Mouritz*

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.

Prayer Diary

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: Archbishop in Council: Archbishop Ric Thorpe, Bishop Genieve Blackwell, Bishop Paul Barker, Bishop Kate Prowd, Dean Andreas Loewe, Michael Dowling (Chancellor), Ian Gibson (Advocate), Malcolm Tadjell (Registrar), Ken Hutton (Executive Officer to Archbishop), Tim Arnold-Moore, Susan Brennan, Kirsty Brown, Colleen Clayton, Megan CurlisGibson, Helen Dwyer, Danna Grills, Seak-King Huang, Fiona Hudgson, Robert Miller, Nigel Pope, Russell Goulbourne, Ian Scarborough, Peter Sherlock, Greg Wong.

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: *Is it your birthday this week? Let us know!*

For the sick and all in need: Nichole, Joanna, James, Karen, Trisha, Daphne, Thomas, Rod, Stephen, Stella, Louis, Nina, Bissie, Jane, 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: The Revd Alan Nichols (Assistant Priest St. John's, Toorak, 1993-1997).

Give thanks for those whose Anniversary of Death is this week: Steve Jones (2019); Rod Carnegie (2024); Noel Waite (2025) & Heather Wynell-Mayow (2019).

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

Genesis 25:19-34

Abraham has taken another wife, Keturah, who has borne him sons; they found the Arabic tribes (vv. 2-4). He sends these sons eastward: they will not compete with Isaac (v. 6). Abraham has died (vv. 7-10). Ishmael, his son by Hagar, has twelve sons who become the fathers of tribes between Egypt and Arabia (vv. 12-18). Now vv. 19-20 recall Isaac's Aramean lineage. The story implies that Rebekah was barren for 19 years: see vv. 20 and 26. Isaac, mostly shown as a bridge between Abraham and Jacob, prays for her to conceive (v. 21), but when the pregnancy proves difficult, it is she who visits a shrine, seeking a divine oracle ("inquire of the Lord", v. 22). Contrary to Israelite custom, "the elder shall serve the younger" (v. 23). A scholar suggests that Esau is *ruddy* rather than "red" (v. 25). His abundance of body hair is important later when Isaac is fooled into blessing Jacob rather than Esau. The Hebrew for "hairy" (*se'ir*) reminds the reader of Seir, the land where Esau later lives. "Jacob" (v. 26) probably means *May God protect*. Within the name is a syllable which on its own means "heel". The two boys are indeed "divided" (v. 23) as God has foretold: Esau, like Ishmael, becomes nomadic while Jacob lives a settled life ("living in tents", v. 27).

Vv. 29-34 are a second story. Jacob may well be *cooking up* a stew, i.e. stirring up trouble. When Esau returns from hunting "famished" and weary, he wants to *gulp down* whatever Jacob is cooking. ("Edom", v. 30, meaning red one, is another name for Seir). But Jacob thinks fast, to his own advantage; he demands Esau's favoured status (and greater inheritance) as first-born. Esau will give anything for a meal (v. 32). So Jacob is able to extract from him a legal agreement (v. 33). And so we learn how Abraham's line, the line of God's people, continues through Jacob and not Esau, and how Israel became a greater power than Edom. God chooses; whom he chooses is his affair.

Psalms 119:105-112

This is the longest of the psalms, being made up of 22 8-line stanzas. Our reading is the fourteenth; in Hebrew, each line begins with the letter nun, the fourteenth letter in the alphabet. This stanza, as do the others, talks about the Law. It is called by several names: "word" (vv. 105, 107), "ordinances" (vv. 106, 108), "law" (v. 109), "precepts" (v. 110), "decrees" (v. 111) and "statutes" (v. 112). Perhaps the dominant idea in this stanza is standing up against "the wicked" (v. 110), those who oppose God's ways. The *affliction* in v. 107 may be insults and innuendos the ungodly hurl at the psalmist, as they plot, lay snares, against him. His very life, in which he holds God in awe, is at risk (v. 109). The Law is his guide to living (v. 105). He uses all his faculties, both intellectual and emotional ("heart", v. 112) to keep the Law, living up to the "oath" (v. 106) he has "sworn" (v. 106) to keep it. The Law comes to him as a "heritage" (v. 111) from his forebears, to be lived throughout his life.

Romans 8:1-11

Paul has written of the inner conflict which arises within the believer. Whether an adherent to the Law or a Christian, one wills to follow God's ways, but somehow one does otherwise. Something within one causes one not to follow through from "mind" (v. 6) to action. One's body, one's "flesh", seems naturally inclined to do evil. Paul has thanked God for rescuing us from this state: for we who are incorporated "in Christ Jesus" (v. 1) there are no dire consequences ("condemnation") of our mistakes. Why? Because God's "Spirit" (v. 2), in the new way of being, has freed us from the finality of physical death. God has overcome our inclination to sin by lovingly "sending his own Son" (v. 3): he who suffered the effects of human sin in order to do away with it through rising again, thus enabling us to attain oneness with God (v. 4).

There are two *mindsets* (vv. 5-6): one self-oriented and the other Spirit-oriented, one leading to the finality of "death", and one to spiritual "life". Self-orientation is inherently in opposition to God (v. 7). But Christians are motivated by the Spirit (dwells", v. 9), belong to God. "Spirit" and "Christ" 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.

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

The crowd that has come to hear Jesus is so large that he teaches from a boat on the Sea of Galilee. He tells several parables; the first one (vv. 3b-8) he explains in vv. 18-23, but only partially. People were familiar with Palestinian farming; sometimes seeding preceded ploughing. The "sower" (v. 3) and the seed are constant; where it lands varies: in three unfruitful places ("on the path", v. 4, among rocks, v. 5, "among thorns", v. 7) and in one fruitful place (v. 8). V. 9 tells us (and the crowd) that this is a story with a deeper meaning.

People naturally thought of the sower as God and the various soils as the people of the world; knowing the prophecy of the fate of Jeroboam's household in 1 Kings, they probably linked "birds" (v. 4) with evil. Perhaps here the sower is anyone who tells the good news. Growth represents receptivity. While Jesus has invited listening (v. 9), *understanding* (vv. 19, 23) is required in order to be fruitful: reflect on Jesus' message. Those who brush off the message are seduced by evil (v. 19). Vv. 20-21 also speak of lack of understanding: of superficiality, of reflecting insufficiently to withstand "persecution". Discipleship is demanding. Then v. 22: following Christ requires undivided loyalty, single-mindedness. Finally v. 23: only those who adequately reflect (thus coming to understanding), who meet the demands of the faith, and who are truly dedicated are fruitful and bring others to Christ.

MUSIC COMMENTARY

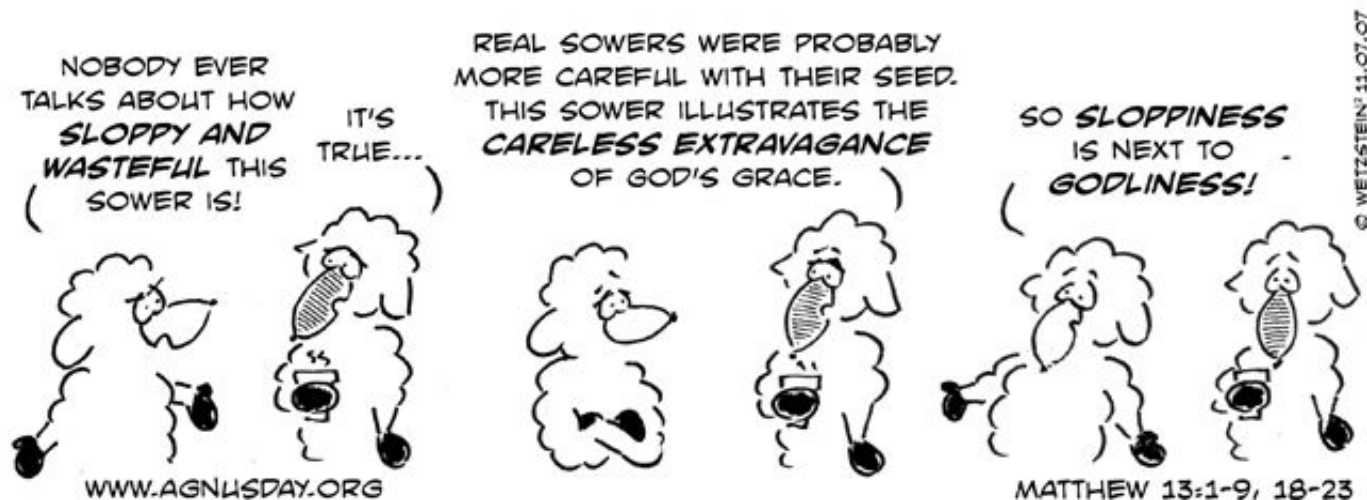
PRELUDE 'Complainte'

Louis Vierne (1870-1937)

A Belgian by birth who lived and taught most of his life in France, César Franck was one of the most influential music teachers of the period and a famous organist. Although he enrolled in the Paris Conservatoire at age 15, his maturation as a composer came late in life, with his most lasting compositions being written in his 50s and 60s.

ART COMMENTARY

Today's pewsheet features *Parable of the Sower* by Flemish Renaissance painter, *Marten van Valckenborch*. While well-known for his expansive landscapes and cityscapes, Valckenborch frequently used his art to explore deeper spiritual themes. This piece beautifully captures his signature style: a vast, detailed landscape interwoven with a biblical narrative. It also highlights a shift later in his career toward the *Mannerist* style, noticeable in the dramatic, sweeping clouds and towering mountains. He thus represented the final iteration of the panoramic, *Weltlandschaft* (*world landscape*) composition style, combining linear and aerial perspective as developed by Pieter Brueghel the Elder. His landscapes meticulously represent topographical details in a limited range of sober colours and are enlivened by the people placed in them.



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*Celebrating
Volunteers*

Buxton Hall St John's Toorak
Thursday 23 July, 5-7pm

All who volunteer for St. John's and our parish
community, in whatever capacity - Op Shop, readers,
Food for Friends, pastoral visiting, morning teas
All are welcome!

RSVP: 18 July 2026
enquiries@saintjohnstoorak.org



This Week

SUNDAY, 12 July 2026
Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
8am Said Eucharist
10am Sung Eucharist
12.30pm Baptism of Anna Lau

WEDNESDAY, 1 July 2026
7pm Eucharist, in the Angel Chapel



Next Sunday, 19 July Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

8am Eucharist

First Reading: *Genesis 28:10-19a*, Volunteer Required
Second Reading: *Romans 8:12-25*, Volunteer Required
Gospel Reading: *Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43*
Intercessor: Volunteer Required
Preacher: The Venerable Ray McInnes

10am Eucharist

First Reading: *Genesis 28:10-19a*, James Griffith
Second Reading: *Romans 8:12-25*, Linda Gay
Gospel Reading: *Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43*
Intercessor: John Horan
Preacher: The Venerable Ray McInnes

Morning Tea: Craig Cooper & Sharon Myers



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