



ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
TOORAK
EST. 1859



Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
13 September, 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 Unforgiving Servant, Claude Vignon (1593-1670),
1629, oil on canvas,
Musée des Beaux-Arts de Tours, France.

Acknowledgement of Country

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



@stjohnstoorak



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

INTRODUCTORY RITE

Please stand as the procession enters the church

PRELUDE 'Pastorale on *Lasst uns erfreuen*'

David Lasky (1957-)

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 'All creatures of our God and King'



1. All creatures of our God and King,
lift up your voice and with us sing
alleluia, alleluia!
O burning sun with golden beam,
and silver moon with softer gleam,
O praise him, O praise him,
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
2. Let all things their Creator bless,
and worship him in humbleness;
O praise him, alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the
Son,
and praise the Spirit, Three in One:
O praise him, O praise him,
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Based on *Laudato sia Dio mio Signore* the 'Canticle
of the Sun' of Francis of Assisi 1182-1226
by William Henry Draper 1855-1933 *alt*
arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams 1872-1958
LASST UNS ERFREUEN (TiS 100)

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 SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

O God, you call your Church to witness that in Christ we are reconciled to you: help us so to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may turn to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

THE FIRST READING Exodus 14.19-31 *read by Ted Mouritz*

The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night. Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, 'Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt.' Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers.' So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

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

THE PSALM Psalm 114 *said*

When Israel came out of Egypt:
and the house of Jacob from among a people
of an alien tongue,

Judah became his sanctuary:
and Israel his dominion.
The sea saw that, and fled:
Jordan was driven back.
The mountains skipped like rams:
and the little hills like young sheep.
What ailed you, O sea, that you fled:
O Jordan, that you were driven back?
You mountains, that you skipped like rams:
and you little hills like young sheep?
Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord:
at the presence of the God of Jacob,
Who turned the rock into a pool of water:
and the flint-stone into a welling spring.
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 14.1-14 *read by Brenda Mouritz*

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarrelling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgement on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgement on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honour of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honour of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honour of the Lord and give thanks to God. We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why do you pass judgement on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God. For it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.'

So then, each of us will be accountable to God. Let us therefore no longer pass judgement on one another, but resolve instead never to put a stumbling-block or hindrance in the way of another. I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean.

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

Please stand for the reading of the Gospel

THE GOSPEL Matthew 18.21-35

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.

Then Peter came and said to him, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. 'For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything." And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, "Pay what you owe." Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you." But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?" And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

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

THE SERMON The Assistant Priest, The Revd Kathryn Watt

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

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 'Make me a channel of your peace'

1 Make me a chan-nel of your peace. Where

1 there is ha-tred let me bring your love; where

1 there is in - ju - ry, your par - don, Lord; and

1 where there's doubt, true faith in you.

Mas-ter, grant that I may nev - er seek so

much to be con - soled as to con - sole, to be

un - der - stood as to un - der - stand, to be

loved, as to love with all my soul.

1. Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred let me bring your love;
where there is injury, your pardon, Lord;
and where there's doubt, true faith in you.

*O Master, grant that I may never seek so
much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.*
2. Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;
where there is darkness, let me bring your light;
and where there's sadness, ever joy.

*O Master, grant that I may never seek so
much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.*

3. Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving of ourselves that we receive,
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

Based on an anonymous prayer (?French) c.1900
version by Sebastian Temple 1928-1997
arr. Betty Pulkingham 1928-2019 (TiS 607)

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

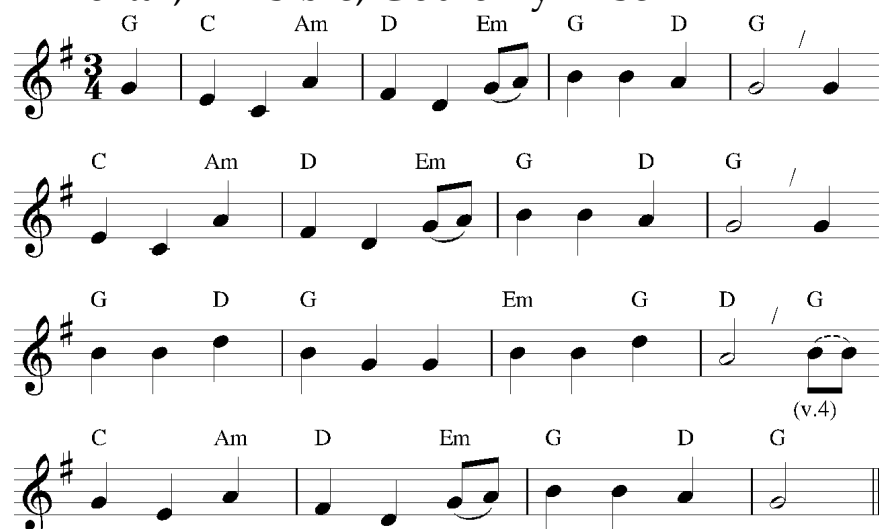
All baptised Christians are welcome to receive Holy Communion. Communion is available as consecrated bread, which is given to each person, and wine which may be drunk from the chalice. A separate chalice for intinction (dipped) is also provided. If you would prefer a blessing, please come forward and 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 'Immortal, invisible, God only wise'



1. Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible hid from our
eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the
Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, your great
name we praise.
2. All praise we would render: reveal
to our sight
what hides you is only the
splendour of light;
and so let your glory, Almighty,
impart,
through Christ in the story, your
Christ to the heart.

Walter Chalmers Smith 1824–1908 *alt.*
Welsh melody
ST DENIO (TiS 143)

BLESSING

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE 'Toccata in F major' BuxWV 157 *Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)*

As the postlude is played please remain seated or leave quietly



Order of Service from *A Prayer Book for Australia* 1995. Broughton Books by E.J.Dwyer (Australia) Pty Ltd, Unit 13, Perry Park, 33 Maddox Street, Alexandria, NSW 2015. © 1995, The Anglican Church of Australia Trust Corporation. With the Liturgical Psalter, Inclusive Language Version English text © 1995 by David L Frost, John A. Emerton, Andrew A Macintosh. Hymns from *Together in Song Australian Hymn Book II*. © The Australian Hymn Book Pty Ltd 2006. Registered Office 14 Martin Place (Level 17) Sydney 2000. Used with permission. C.C.L.I Licence number 669476. All readings from scripture are taken from The Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

Support St John's, Toorak

Your support of St John's is greatly appreciated!

Donations can be made directly to:

Account Name: St John's Anglican Church | BSB: 033 086 | Account: 871931.

International transfers please include SWIFT code **WPACAU2S**.



CURRENT NOTICES

Footy Tipping

After months of predictions, pies and patience we've reached the final round of the home and away season. Congratulations to Fr Ray McInnes, the winner of St. John's inaugural Footy Tipping competition!



Tuesday 22 September, 6pm, There are More Things in Heaven and Earth: A Renaissance Prince or a Reformation Play? Shakespeare's Hamlet

Revd Dr Gregory Seach (Vicar of St George's Malvern) is giving a presentation on Shakespeare's Hamlet at St Peter's Eastern Hill, 15 Gisborne St, Melbourne.

This is part of a series of talks being presented on *Faith and the Arts* at St Peter's throughout 2026.

Book now! events.humanitix.com/faith-and-the-arts

Email: arts@stpeters.org.au Phone: 0401 826 325

Website: www.stpeters.org.au/arts-and-the-faith



Sunday 27 September, 11.30am, St. John's Guided Tour

Ever wanted to learn more about the rich history of our church? Ever admired the stained glass windows or appreciated the ornate wood carvings? Parishioner and volunteer archivist, Nick Cree, will be giving a tour of the church after the 10am service on Sunday 27 September. Please sign-up [here](#) or in the Narthex.

Sunday 4 October, 4pm, Blessing of the Pets

A favourite afternoon in the St. John's calendar is the annual blessing of the pets service, held in honour of St. Francis (the patron saint of animals). All are welcome - with their pets! - to gather on the South Lawn for a service of prayer and blessing.

Sunday 18 October, Confirmation & Reception into the Anglican Church

Our annual service of Confirmation and Reception will be held on **Sunday 18 October at 10am**. Classes in preparation for this will begin soon. If you are interested in taking this significant step in your faith journey, please contact the Parish Office or speak to a member of clergy.

Nepal Flood Disaster Appeal

On Wednesday 26 August, a sudden and powerful flash flood tore through Nepal's Bhote Koshi and Trishuli river systems. A surge of water, ice, rocks and debris swept through towns and remote mountain areas, destroying homes, roads, bridges and critical infrastructure. Early reports indicate that at least 389 lives have been lost and more than 677 people are missing. Search and rescue operations remain underway. Anglican Overseas Aid's partner, International Nepal Fellowship, is delivering emergency shelter, food relief, safe drinking water, and early recovery to those who need it most. To find out more information and donate to this



cause visit tinyurl.com/anglicanoverseasaidnepal or scan the QR code.

A Prayer for Nepal

God of mercy,

Nepal is in the midst of disaster.

Floodwaters and landslides have torn through homes, roads and villages. People are missing. Many are injured. Families are grieving.

Lord, make a way where roads and bridges are gone. Bring rescuers safely to those still waiting. Strengthen every person searching through mud and debris, and give medical teams what they need to care for the injured.

Let shelter, clean water, food and essential supplies reach people without delay. Work through INF Nepal, ACT Alliance, local authorities and all those responding. Protect them as they enter dangerous and isolated areas, and direct them to those at greatest risk.

Hold Nepal through the difficult days ahead.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

AOA Anglican
Overseas
Aid

ART COMMENTARY

Today's pewsheet features *Parable of the Unforgiving Servant*, by French painter, printmaker and illustrator, *Claude Vignon*. Vignon depicts the king who has decided to settle his accounts with his servants as per today's Gospel reading. The king leans backwards in a semi-relaxed pose. The wicked servant is being brought before him, held by two other lavishly dressed servants. Gold coins, books and debt sheets lie in front of the king and take up almost the entire bottom half of the painting. Claude Vignon was born into a wealthy family in Tours, where the current painting is held. He likely travelled to Rome as early as 1609 when he was only 16 years old and formed part of the French community of painters there. You can see the Roman and Caravagesque influences on his artistic development in today's artwork.



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: Cathedral Chapter: Rhys Bezzant, Genieve Blackwell, Matthew Williams, Denise Nicholls, Bob Derrenbacker, Kate Drummond, Helen Dwyer, Paul Glass, Andreas Loewe, Naomi Nayagam, Philip Nicholls, Toni Meath, Nigel Pope, Brian Rosner, Neil Sigamoney, Ric Thorpe, Tim Watson.

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, Ben Carroll; and, Member for Malvern, Michael O'Brien.

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: Sam Shepherd.

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: Garry Spry, Norma Long & Linda Wang.

Give thanks for those whose Anniversary of Death is this week: Nancy Walton (2025); Tim Goodfellow(2018); David Mattingly (2016); Beverley Joyce (2025); Diana Atkinson (2021) & Rex Williams (2025).

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

Exodus 14:19-31

After suffering from plagues sent by God, the Pharaoh has allowed the Israelites to leave Egypt. While the direct route to Canaan is along the coast of the Red Sea, God has led them towards the Sea of Reeds (13:17-18), out of concern that they may abort their mission if beset by enemies. Finding the Egyptian frontier forts too strong, they have turned back at God's behest. He has fooled the Egyptians into thinking that the Israelites were trapped, and then pursuing them. His plan will show Israel's God to be victor over Egypt and her gods.

The Pharaoh has had his chariots prepared for battle (14:6). The appearance of the Egyptian army has struck fear in the Israelites – they have complained (14:11, for the first of many times in the Exodus saga) about Moses' leadership (and God's): they prefer slavery to certain death. But Moses has calmed his people, by assuring them of rescue – with God fighting with them – if they do not panic. God has commanded Moses to divide the sea.

The "pillar of fire and cloud" (v. 24) may have their origins as markers carried at the head of an army or caravan, but from this event on they become symbols of God's presence. The "angel of God" (v. 19) comes between the Israelites and the Egyptians protecting God's people and confusing the Egyptians, as does the "pillar of cloud".

The Sea of Reeds ("the sea", v. 21) is shallow and surrounded with marshy land. God uses a natural phenomenon to achieve his purpose: *east winds* strong enough to blow away the water do occur. The battle turns when the Egyptian chariots bog down in the soft earth (v. 25). The story was handed down orally from one generation to the next; that "the waters" (vv. 22, 29) form a "wall" suggest that it grew in the telling. Vv. 30-31 are probably a later editorial comment: God saves; subjugation to the Egyptians is over; the Israelites have seen the marvel which God has done for them, so they hold him in awe and trust in him. We do not know precisely what happened at the Sea of Reeds, but we see the result: God sets his people on his way, led by Moses.

Psalms 114

Vv. 1-3 speak of the Exodus in the briefest of terms, stating its initial and final events: the people saw the Sea of Reeds and the "Jordan" divided. Perhaps v. 4 speaks of the earth tremors which accompanied God's appearance on Mount Sinai. Why, ask vv. 5-6, did these remarkable phenomena occur? Because the lord of all creation was present. He even commanded the "rock" (v. 8) at Meribah to gush forth water, thus relieving the thirst of the Israelites during the Exodus. As the physical earth responded to God's command then, do so now!

Romans 14:1-12

Paul writes about two kinds of Christians: (1) those who being “weak in faith” concern themselves with details and added practices (rather than the main objective) and (2) the strong who concentrate on God’s purposes. The “weak” are to be welcomed as full members of the community “for God has welcomed them” (v. 3). The particular practices (of piety) mentioned are not eating meat (“eat only vegetables”, v. 2), fasting regularly (vv. 5-6) and abstaining from “wine” (v. 21).

In Roman society, it was considered ill-mannered to “pass judgement” (v. 4) on the conduct of another master’s servant; he was answerable to his “own lord” or master. Similarly, each Christian is answerable to “the Lord” and should not be criticized. One’s own conviction (v. 5) before God is what matters. Living (and dying) for God is our objective (v. 8); we should not judge; God will judge our conduct at the end of time: “each of us will be accountable to God” (v. 12).

In 14:13-15:6, Paul writes to the strong, those who see the purpose of life clearly. They should refrain from causing others to lose their faith; and not let their ideas and practices, however good, be misconstrued as evil. Rather they are to “pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding” (v. 19). It is through living in a manner consistent with one’s conscience that one achieves a right relationship with God (v. 22). One’s actions must be founded in faith (v. 23).

Matthew 18:21-35

Jesus has told the disciples how the community is to discipline those who disrupt its harmony by going against God’s ways. If such a person fails to respond to private counselling, he or she is to be judged by two of the disciples. What they decide, God will ratify. But they should realize that God forgives many times; however there are limits – as Jesus explains in a parable.

The story-line of the parable is straight-forward. There are three episodes: (1) a king decides to “settle accounts with his slaves” (v. 23, or possibly with court officials or even with finance ministers or tax gatherers); one of them owes “ten thousand talents” (v. 24), i.e. millions of dollars (to Jesus’ audience, as much as the fabled riches of Egyptian and Persian kings); he, of course, is unable to pay, so (as Mosaic law permitted) he and his family are to be sold; when he seeks forgiveness of the loan, the king grants it. (v. 27); (2) But this slave then demands payment of a loan of three month’s wages (“a hundred denarii”, v. 28) from a fellow slave, and when forgiveness is sought, refuses to grant it (v. 30); (3) When the king hears about this, he retracts his forgiveness and has the first slave tortured – probably for ever (v. 34).

In v. 35, Jesus identifies the figures in the parable: the king is God, the first slave any Christian, and the second slave any other person. Jesus makes a point in each of the episodes: (1) God loves us so much that he will forgive any sin, however grievous; (2) it is absurd to live in a way contrary to God’s love and mercy; and (3) those who accept forgiveness from God but fail to forgive others likewise will be punished eternally.

This Week

SUNDAY, 13 September 2026
Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
8am Said Eucharist
10am Sung Eucharist

MONDAY, 14 September 2026
2pm Funeral for Norma Long

TUESDAY, 15 September 2026
Funeral for Linda Wang

WEDNESDAY, 16 September 2026
7pm Eucharist, in the Angel Chapel



Next Sunday, 20 September Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

8am Eucharist

First Reading: *Exodus 16:2-15*, Volunteer
Required
Second Reading: *Philippians 1:21-30*, Anthony
Rose
Gospel Reading: *Matthew 20:1-16*
Intercessor: Volunteer Required
Preacher: The Revd Victoria Bakerov

10am Eucharist

First Reading: *Exodus 16:2-15*, Anthony
Mannerling
Second Reading: *Philippians 1:21-30*, Glenda
Strike
Gospel Reading: *Matthew 20:1-16*
Intercessor: John Horan
Preacher: The Revd Victoria Bakerov

Morning Tea: Craig Cooper & Sharon Myers



Parish

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