



ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
TOORAK
EST. 1859



Baptism of the Lord
12 January, 2025

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.

**During January we only hold services at 10am on Sunday, normal services resume in February.*

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 in celebration of the Baptism of Christ. White represents purity, light, glory, and joy.

Cover Image

The Baptism of Christ, Joachim Patinir (c.1480-1524),
1521-1524, Oil on panel
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 'Tranquillo, ma con moto' from Six Short Pieces for Organ

Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

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 'Crown him with many crowns'

D Bm G / D Em A /
D Bm E A / D E A / A7
D G / E A /
D G A7 D / G A7 D

1. Crown him with many crowns,
the Lamb upon the throne;
hark! how the heavenly anthem
drowns
all music but its own:
awake, my soul, and sing
of him who died for me,
and hail him as your chosen king
through all eternity.
2. Crown him the Lord of love;
behold his hands and side,
those wounds yet visible above
in beauty glorified:
no angel there on high
can fully bear that sight,
but downwards bends a burning
eye
at mysteries so bright.
3. Crown him the Lord of peace,
whose power a sceptre sways
from pole to pole, that wars may
cease,
absorbed in prayer and praise:
his reign shall know no end,
and round his piercèd feet
fair flowers of paradise extend
their fragrance ever sweet.

4. Crown him the Lord of years,
the Potentate of time,
Creator of the rolling spheres,
majestic and sublime:
all hail, Redeemer, hail!
for you have died for me;
your praise shall never, never fail
throughout eternity.

Matthew Bridges 1800–94 and Godfrey Thring
1823–1903 *alt.* (TiS 228)

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.

KYRIE ELEISON

Kyrie **2**

Lord, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy.
Christ, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy.

From Parish Eucharist - Michael Dudman (1938-1994)

CONFESSION

Christ the Son of God has been revealed as a light to the nations. Let us bring our darkness to his light, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent, and are sorry for all our sins. Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ABSOLUTION

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

Gloria



Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

Lord God, hea - ven - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we

give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry. Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the

Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on

us; you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer. For

you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord, you a - lone are the Most High,

Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spi - rit, in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

From *Parish Eucharist* - Michael Dudman (1938-1994)

THE COLLECT FOR THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Spirit of energy and change, in whose power Jesus was anointed to be the hope of the nations: be poured out also upon us without reserve or distinction, that we may have confidence and strength to implant your justice on the earth; through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Please be seated

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

THE FIRST READING Isaiah 43.1-7 *read by Jason Pennell*

But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour. I give Egypt as your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you. Because you are precious in my sight, and honoured,

and I love you, I give people in return for you, nations in exchange for your life. Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you; I will say to the north, 'Give them up', and to the south, 'Do not withhold; bring my sons from far away and my daughters from the end of the earth – everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.'

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

THE PSALM Psalm 29 *said together*

Ascribe to the Lord, you powers of heaven:

ascribe to the Lord glory and might.

Ascribe to the Lord the honour due to his name:

O worship the Lord in the beauty of his holiness.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters:

the God of glory thunders,

the Lord upon the great waters.

The voice of the Lord is mighty in operation:

the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice.

The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar-trees:

the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon.

He makes them skip like a calf:

Lebanon and Sirion like a young wild ox.

The voice of the Lord divides the lightning-flash:

the voice of the Lord whirls the sands of the desert,

the Lord whirls the desert of Kadesh.

The voice of the Lord rends the terebinth trees,

and strips bare the forests:

in his temple all cry 'Glory.'

The Lord sits enthroned above the water-flood:

the Lord sits enthroned as a king for ever.

The Lord will give strength to his people:

the Lord will give to his people the blessing of peace.

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 Acts 8.14-17 *read by Kim Collins*

Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

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

THE GRADUAL HYMN 'Christ, when for us you were baptized'



1. Christ, when for us you were baptized,
God's Spirit on you came,
as peaceful as a dove, and yet
as urgent as a flame.
2. God called you his beloved Son,
called you his servant true:
sent you his kingdom to proclaim,
his holy will to do.
3. Straightway and steadfast until
death
you then obeyed his call,
freely as Son of Man to serve
and give your life for all.
4. Baptize us with your Spirit, Lord,
your cross on us be signed,
that likewise in God's service we
may perfect freedom find.

Francis Bland Tucker 1895-1984 (TiS 250)

Please remain standing for the reading of the Gospel

THE GOSPEL Luke 3.15-22

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

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to St. Luke.

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit

and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.' So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people. But Herod the ruler, who had been rebuked by him because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and because of all the evil things that Herod had done, added to them all by shutting up John in prison. Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

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

THE SERMON The Assistant Priest, The Revd Dr Wendy Crouch

THE ANTHEM 'Litany to the Holy Spirit' *Peter Hurford (1930-2019)*

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 Jenny Smith*

The Prayers end with the following

Almighty God, you have promised to hear our prayers.

Grant that what we have asked in faith, we may by your grace receive, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PARISH NOTICES

THE GREETING OF PEACE *standing*

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

*All share with each other a 'COVIDsafe' sign of peace
Feel free to come and share peace with those people joining us on Zoom*

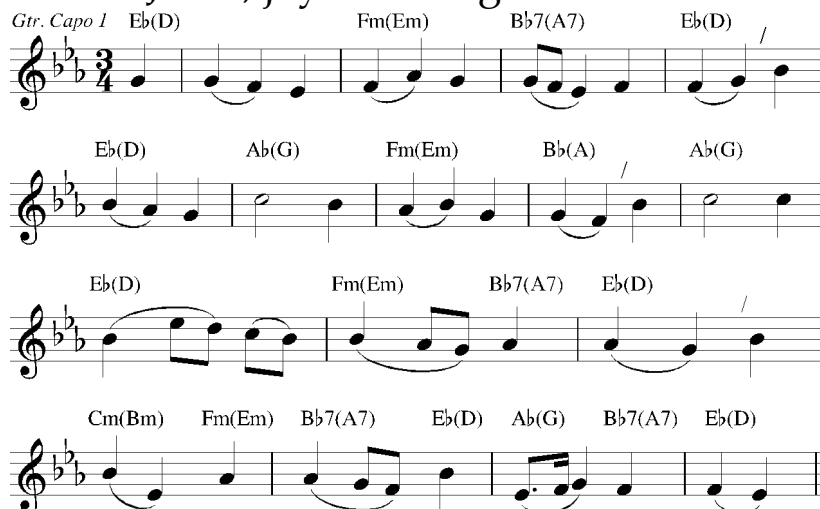
OFFERTORY

As the gifts of bread and wine are brought forward, a monetary collection for the life of St. John's is taken. Please give by contributing to the collection plate, at the paypoint at the rear of the church or by scanning the QR code.



OFFERTORY HYMN 'Lord Jesus, joy of loving hearts'

Gtr. Capo 1 Eb(D) Fm(Em) Bb7(A7) Eb(D) /



Chords: Eb(D), Ab(G), Fm(Em), Bb(A), Ab(G), Eb(D), Fm(Em), Bb7(A7), Eb(D), Cm(Bm), Fm(Em), Bb7(A7), Eb(D), Ab(G), Bb7(A7), Eb(D)

1. Lord Jesus, joy of loving hearts,
true fount of life, our lives sustain,
from any bliss that earth imparts
we turn unfilled to you again.
2. Your truth unchanged has ever
stood,
you save all those who on you call,
to those yet seeking you are good,
to those who find you, all in all.
3. We taste you, Lord, the living
bread,
and long to feast upon you still,
we drink of you, the fountainhead,
and thirst our souls from you to
fill.
4. For you our restless spirits yearn,
whatever comes, until the last,
glad when your presence we
discern, blest when our faith can
hold you fast.

5. For ever, Jesus, with us stay,
make all our moments calm and
bright,
chase the dark night of sin away,
shed on this world your holy light.

Anon., Latin, 12th cent.
tr. Ray Palmer 1808-87 alt. (TiS 499)

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 singing: Therefore, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and singing:

Sanctus 2

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,

Hea - ven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Benedictus

Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the

Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - - est.

From *Parish Eucharist* - Michael Dudman (1938-1994)

The Great Thanksgiving Prayer continues to the following

...Let us proclaim the mystery of faith

Acclamation

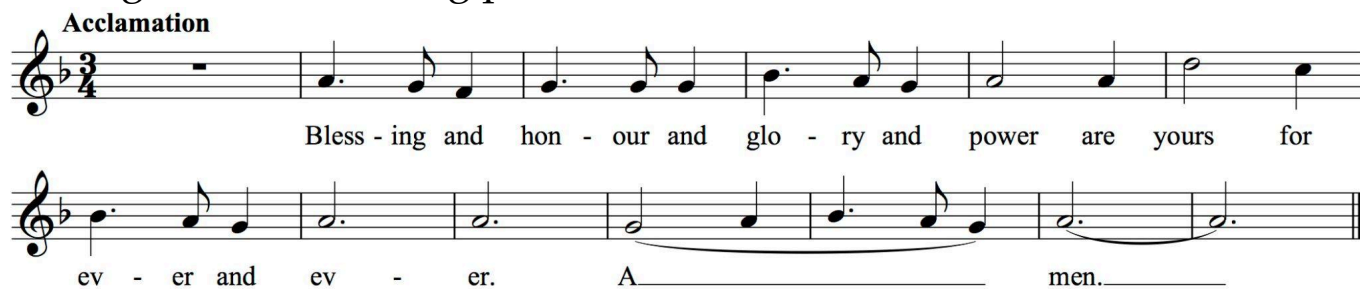


Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

The Great Thanksgiving Prayer ends with the following

... songs of never ending praise.

Acclamation



Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours for
ever and ever. Amen.

From Parish Eucharist - Michael Dudman (1938-1994)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

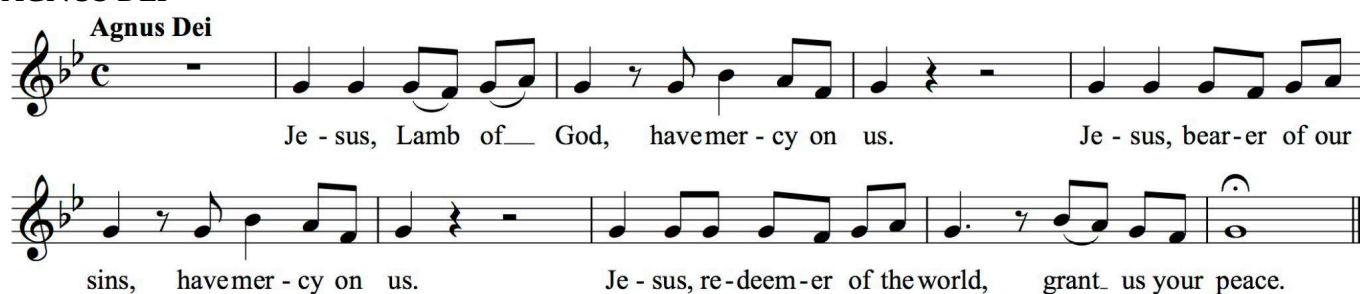
As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray
**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily
bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver 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

Agnus Dei



Je - sus, Lamb of God, have mer - cy on us. Je - sus, bear-er of our
sins, have mer - cy on us. Je - sus, re-deem-er of the world, grant us your peace.

From Parish Eucharist - Michael Dudman (1938-1994)

INVITATION TO COMMUNION *kneeling or standing*

This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.
**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word, and I
shall be healed.**

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.

COMMUNION 'Le Prie-Dieu' (A Meditation) George Oldroyd (1886-1951)

POST COMMUNION PRAYER *Please stand*

The prayer ends with the following

Most loving God, you send us into the world you love. Give us grace to go thankfully and with courage in the power of your Spirit. Amen.

FINAL 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. There let it freely burn,
till earthly passions turn
to dust and ashes, in its heat
consuming;
and let your glorious light
shine ever on my sight
and clothe me round, the while my
path illuming.
3. Let holy charity
my outer garment be,
and lowliness become my inner
clothing:
true lowliness of heart,
which takes the humbler part
and for its own shortcomings
weeps with loathing.
4. 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 her
dwelling.

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

BLESSING

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE 'Prelude & Fugue in C major' BWV 553 *J.S. Bach (1685-1750)*

As the postlude is played please remain seated or leave quietly



Order of Service from *A Prayer Book for Australia 1995*. Broughton Books by E.J.Dwyer (Australia) Pty Ltd, Unit 13, Perry Park, 33 Maddox Street, Alexandria, NSW 2015. © 1995, The Anglican Church of Australia Trust Corporation.

With the Liturgical Psalter, Inclusive Language Version English text © 1995 by David L Frost, John A. Emerton, Andrew A Macintosh. Hymns from *Together in Song Australian Hymn Book II*. © The Australian Hymn Book Pty Ltd 2006. Registered Office 14 Martin Place (Level 17) Sydney 2000. Used with permission. C.C.L.I Licence number 669476. All readings from scripture are taken from The Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

Support St John's, Toorak

Your support of St John's is greatly appreciated!

Donations can be made directly to:

St. John's Anglican Church General Account, Westpac

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

International transfers please include SWIFT code WPACAU2S.



CURRENT NOTICES

29 December - 26 January, Sunday 10am Eucharist *only*

Please note, there will be **no** Sunday 8am service or Wednesday 7pm service in January. If you wish to attend Eucharist we will still be holding the usual 10am service on Sundays. Normal service times will resume in February 2025.

Prayer Requests

We regularly review our prayer lists so they are current and up to date. If you or a loved one wishes to remain on the prayer list please contact the parish office or email prayers@saintjohnstoorak.org.

For your Diary! A Weekend Parish Retreat in Queenscliff, March 21-23 2025

You are invited to experience a gentle and quiet weekend in the season of Lent, offering space and time away from the demands of your everyday life. The retreat will be led by the Reverend Dr Wendy Crouch in the lovely surrounds of Santa Casa by the sea. For further information and expressions of interest contact Wendy on assistantpriest@saintjohnsanglican.org.

Lenten Study book for 2025: 'Journeying through Lent with New Daylight'

The reading material for our Lenten studies in 2025 needs to be pre-ordered as it takes several weeks to arrive. St John's will be ordering several copies that can be purchased for \$10 each. If you would like to purchase through St. Johns please complete the form [here](#) or contact the parish office.

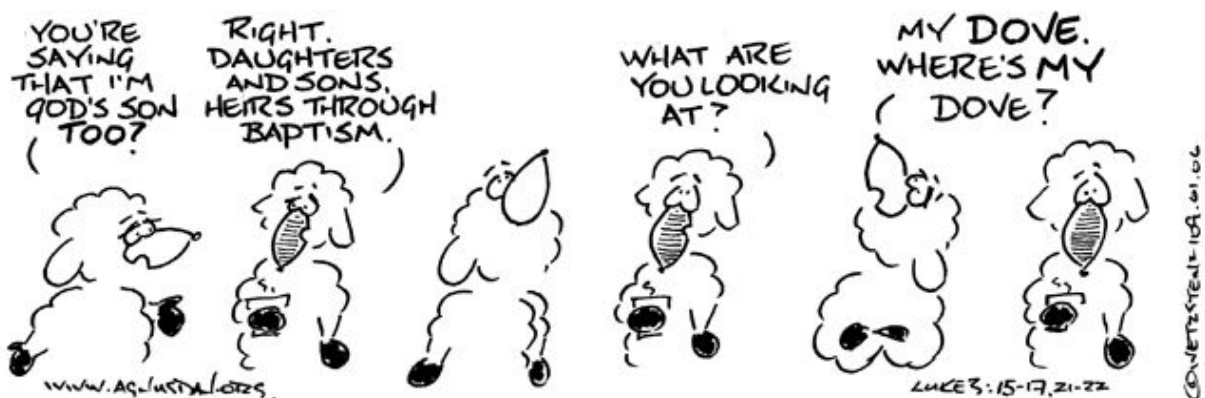
Process of Selection of our New Archbishop

Updates on the Selection process are available at www.boardofnominators.org

PRAYER FOR THE SELECTION OF OUR NEW ARCHBISHOP

Eternal God, shepherd and guide, in your mercy give your Church in this diocese a shepherd after your own heart, who will walk in your ways, and with loving care watch over your people. Give us a leader of vision and a teacher of your truth. So may your Church be built up and your name glorified; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer Book for Australia, p. 212.



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 January Prayer Diary is [here](#).

Contribute to Worship Services

All our ministries at St John's are supported by our wonderful volunteers. The rosters for January 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.

Communion Instructions

All are welcome at the altar and those baptised are welcome to receive Communion. Holy Communion is distributed via a chalice from which to sip or, a separate chalice into which the bread may be intincted (dipped). If you wish to simply receive the bread only that is perfectly appropriate. Gluten free wafers are available on request. A blessing only is also available.

Zoom Link

Our 10am Sunday service is streamed here:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86212089431?pwd=ZEN2M2xWRHRhMVhxTWWhwcmVwTzFEZj09> Meeting ID: 862 1208 9431 | Passcode: 541347

Prayer Requests

Prayer requests can be sent to prayers@saintjohnstoorak.org. The clergy check emails for prayer requests daily, and pray in solidarity with anyone who would like prayers said for them.

Clergy Days Off

Our clergy have one regular day off per week. Our Vicar Peter has Friday and Wendy usually works Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday only. Please respect their time away from work and unless in an emergency, please refrain from telephoning, texting, visiting the Vicarage, or emailing them on these days. Thank you.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Prayers for Victims of War

Give comfort, O Lord, to all who are torn away from their homes and their loved ones, by war, by famine, or by cruelty; give the world your peace and turn the hearts of those who will to war; grant that we who dwell secure in this insecure world may be generous in caring for our displaced brothers and sisters, of all faiths and none. We ask this in the name of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

From the Anglican Cycle of Prayer: St John Chrysostom Brunswick West (Michael Flynn); The Diocese of Newcastle (Bp Peter Stuart, Asst Bps Charlie Murry, Sonia Roulston, Clergy & People); Police Force Chaplains (Drew Mellor & other Chaplains) and members of the Police Force; The Church of the Province of West Africa (Bp Cyril Kobina Ben-Smith);

For those who lead us in Government: His Majesty King Charles III; Governor General Ms Sam Mostyn AC; Prime Minister Anthony Albanese; Federal Member of Parliament for Division of Higgins, Dr. Michelle Ananda-Rajah; and Premier of Victoria, Jacinta Allan.

For Reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians: For Aboriginal Anglican clergy and lay-leaders around Australia, their spiritual health and physical well-being, and the people they care for. For Aboriginal and Government leaders and their work together.

For The Toorak Ecumenical Movement: Our partner churches, St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Toorak Uniting Church, and The Swedish Church.

For The Anglican Board of Mission, The Brotherhood of St. Laurence, and Anglicare.

For schools in our parish: Geelong Grammar School Toorak Campus, Head of Campus Nicole Ginnane; St Catherine's School, Interim Principal Robert Marshall; and Toorak Primary School, Principal Julie Manallack.

For those who are celebrating birthdays this week: Sophia Stokes

For the sick and all in need: Gwen, Rex, Sam, Margaret, Nichole, Joanna, Ivan, Anthea, David, John, Tim, Joan, James, Karen, Trisha, Emma, Thomas, Rod, Robyn, Stephen, Stella, Spencer & Louis.

For those in aged care and those who are housebound: Beverley, Angela, Marg, Val, Rosalind, Elizabeth, Russ & Sue.

For those who have died recently and those who mourn them: Jenny Lincoln, Lionel Frank Shaw

Give thanks for those whose Anniversary of Death is this week: Ted Sewell (2013); Suzanne Cecil (2016); Elizabeth Cunningham (2022); Joan Condell (2022); Barbara Glen (2016); Trevor Levy (2001); Tony Beddison (2020); Pamela Kiel (2018); Mary Soans (2017); Vera Bowen (1993); Morgan Rollo (2021); Joan Clemenger (2022); Margaret Johnston (1981); Pamela Taranto (2021); Oswald Reginald Charlton (1976); Robert Marsh (1982) & Gladys Svensson (1979).

Need time for prayer? Some quiet space?

The church is open every day from 9am until 5pm for you to come and pray, meditate, or sit quietly. There are prayer books and prayer booklets in the Angel Chapel and the Narthex for use, the latter of which you can also download [here](#).

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

Isaiah 43:1-7

Judah has complained that God has deserted them, his people, in the destruction of Jerusalem and in their exile. God has told them, “my servant” (42:19), that they are “blind” and “deaf” to his will and his way. They see but do not observe; their “ears are open” (42:20) but they do not hear. They are a devastated people, a “prey with no one to rescue [them]” (42:22) God asks, through the prophet, “Who among you ... will attend and listen for the time to come?” (42:23).

Now God tells them (“Jacob”, 43:1), whom he has created, not to fear for the future: he has and will rescue, save, them. In all times, the Israelites are his, his people (“called you by name”). Even when in grave danger (“waters ... rivers ... fire”, v. 2), “I will be with you”. (Thunderstorms were considered evil, and the “waters”, the seas, to be inhabited by demonic monsters.) Because the Israelites are so “precious in my sight” (v. 4), God will “exchange” them for other nations: Israel will be freed (at least spiritually) while Egypt, Ethiopia and Seba (in Yemen) will become Persian vassal states. Vv. 5-6 prophesy that Jews, God’s people, will gather from the whole known world. So completely will God’s children share divine life that they will be addressed by God’s name (“called by my name”, v. 7). When God’s people observe and listen, they will contribute to his “glory”. While here God calls his family “sons” (v. 6) and “daughters” (those to whom he imparts life), it is only after Jesus comes that we are told to respond with “Abba” and “Father” (Luke 11:2 and Romans 8:15).

Psalms 29

This psalm is probably based on one to the Canaanite god Baal, the storm god, who brings the annual thunder-storm, the source of fertility for the land. In Israelite hands it expresses God’s supremacy and universal rule. In vv. 1-2, all other gods are invited to acknowledge the Lord’s supremacy and the glory due to him. (Israel was not yet strictly monotheistic.)

Vv. 3-9 give us a picture of the storm. The “voice of the Lord” (vv. 3, 4, 5, 7-9) is thunder (repetitious claps). The storm is first seen approaching over the Mediterranean (v. 3); it sweeps in to the land, breaking the tall “cedars” (v. 5), as it advances across southern Lebanon. It vents its power on Mount “Lebanon” (v. 6) and then on Mount “Sirion”; it proceeds on into “the wilderness” (v. 8, the Arabian Desert). (“Flames of fire”, v. 7, is lightning.) “Kadesh” (v. 8) is probably Kedar, part of the desert. The Word of God is indeed mighty. In v. 9, “all” the gods do acknowledge God’s supremacy; they cry *Glory be to the Lord!* God rules over all from his throne (v. 10). May the Lord strengthen Israel and give it peace.

Acts 8:14-17

Philip was one of the seven chosen by the Church to ensure that widows received basic rations: see 6:1-6. When persecution has started in Jerusalem, he has travelled to Samaria to preach the good news there: the first known evangelism

outside Jewish areas. The crowds there “listened eagerly” (v. 6) to what Philip told them, “hearing and seeing the signs that he did”. Even Simon the well-known magician told them that Philip spoke and acted through God’s power. Those who believed, including Simon, were baptised (vv. 12-13).

Now the apostles send Peter and John to Samaria. Usually in Acts, converts receive the Holy Spirit at baptism (see 2:38 and 19:5-6) or before it (see 10:44), but here they receive it some time after being baptised, and only when the two apostles, representatives of the mother church, come. In vv. 18-24, Simon *gets it wrong*: he offers the apostles money if they will give him the power to impart the Spirit to people. Peter reprimands him: the Holy Spirit is “God’s gift” (v. 20); it cannot be bought.

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

People flock to John the Baptist, responding to his urging to start new, ethical lives – as a way of preparing for Jesus (vv. 3-6). John has condemned those who seek his baptism with no intention of reforming their ways (v. 7). He has warned that being Jewish is no assurance of being part of the renewed Israel. Failure to respond to his call to repentance can lead to condemnation at the end of time.

V. 15a, in the Revised English Bible, says: “The people were all agog, wondering about John ...” People expected a “Messiah”, an agent of God who would restore Israel and the triumph of God’s power and authority. John tells them that “one who is ... coming” (v. 16) is so great that he is unworthy even to “untie ... his sandals”, a task done by slaves. Baptism purifies, removes sin. The agents the “one” will use are vastly superior to the water John uses. Jesus is also more “powerful”, mightier, as leader of the final struggle against evil. (At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit comes with tongues of fire.) V. 17 uses the metaphor of harvesting to tell of Christ’s action as judge at the end of time. The wheat was tossed in the air with a “winnowing fork”: the grain fell to the ground but the chaff was carried by the wind to the edge of the “threshing floor”. God will “gather” the godly but will condemn the ungodly (to burn in hell).

Jesus is baptised (v. 21) to show his solidarity with John’s proclamation of part of God’s plan for saving all who come to him. Jesus begins and ends (22:46) his ministry with a prayer. In vv. 21c-22, God shows himself to believers: an event beyond human language. The Holy Spirit, always with Jesus, is seen descending on Jesus, marking a milestone in Jesus’ career. People really see the event (“in bodily form”). The Holy Spirit seems “like a dove” – a bird symbolizing the hopes of humans for love, life and union with God – hopes now realized in Jesus. The voice calls on Jesus as God’s “Son” and servant (“well pleased”, v. 22). Jesus is God’s “Beloved”, the one whom he chooses as his agent.

MUSIC COMMENTARY

COMMUNION 'Le Prie-Dieu' (A Meditation)

George Oldroyd (1886-1951)

Oldroyd was an English organist, composer of organ and choral music, and a teacher of Anglican church music. He was organist of St. Alban's Church, Holborn from 1919 to 1920, and then of St Michael's Church, Croydon from 1920 until his death in 1951. In the 1920s he taught at Trinity College, London, and from 1933-1948 was Director of Music at Whitgift School in Croydon. From 1944 he was Dean of the Faculty of Music at London University, becoming King Edward Professor of Music from 1951, succeeding Stanley Marchant.

POSTLUDE 'Prelude & Fugue in C major' BWV 553

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Although it has not been possible to identify the composer of the "Eight Little Preludes and Fugues" Alfred Dürr writes in his preface to the Bärenreiter urtext edition: "Since the value of a musical work is in no way dependent pm whether the composer is known or not, the hope remains that the delightful and appealing music of the Eight will find enthusiasts in the future despite the fact that they no longer fulfil their former task, namely to introduce 'typically Bachian' elements to the future organists. The Eight definitely have their own value".

ART COMMENTARY

Joachim Patinir, lived and worked in Antwerp. In the *The Baptism of Christ*, we can see that he was a unique and influential forerunner of modern landscape painting. His unique style, called a "world landscape," is based on reality (his home was near dramatic cliffs like these) and with a great sense of atmospheric perspective. It is one of the few surviving paintings that Patinir signed.

Set against this dramatic, fantastical landscape, Jesus humbly is baptized by John. His pale, vulnerable body contrasts with the dark, almost threatening surroundings, and visually connects to the small yellow-lighted break in the clouds, where God the Father, depicted as an old man, sends the dove of the Holy Spirit down and declares his approval. In the background of the painting, John is seen preaching to some followers. John is wearing his signature camel hair while the others are dressed in hybrid Biblical and contemporary clothing (for Renaissance Belgium) and are a mixed bunch of old, young, men, women with babies, poor and wealthy. A bit farther back, dressed in blue, Jesus stands watching; He is about to ask John to baptize Him. One man in the crowd (perhaps a self portrait of the artist?) leans and looks toward the next part of the story, the foreground image of John baptizing Jesus.

This Week

SUNDAY, 12 January 2025

Baptism of the Lord

10am Sung Eucharist

12pm Baptism of

Zara Gosling & Millicent McDonald



Next Sunday, 19 January
Second Sunday after the
Epiphany

10am Eucharist

First Reading: *Isaiah 62:1-5*, Suzanne Cooper

Second Reading: *1 Corinthians 12:1-11*, Adriaan den Dulk

Gospel Reading: *John 2:1-11*

Intercessor: John Horan

Preacher: The Revd Dr Peter French



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