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**ST THEODORE'S, TOORAK GARDENS**

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**LENT 2  
16 MARCH 2025**



## **WELCOME**

St Theodore's is an active, caring and supportive community which values liturgy, prayer and preaching to sustain our daily lives, as we seek to foster love, hope and justice to all. You are welcome here as you are, embraced within God's boundless love. It is good to have you here today and we hope that you will feel at home.

## **PRAYING WITH CANDLES AND STONES**

As you enter our church, there are two stations for prayer. One is an invitation to light a candle, symbolising our praying for each other before God. The other is an invitation to drop stones into a bowl of water, symbolising letting go of something (or someone) weighing us down.

## **ADMINISTRATION OF COMMUNION**

All are welcome to receive Holy Communion and/or receive anointing for healing at the back. Due to Covid precautions, intinction (dipping) into the wine is prohibited.

*If you do not wish to drink the wine, we invite you to pause briefly before the chalice to acknowledge the sacramental presence.*

## **LIVE-STREAMING**

Our 9:30am Sunday Service is live-streamed on Facebook Live. During administration of communion, the camera is adjusted so that no one coming forward is visible online, but this cannot be guaranteed.

## **HEARING ASSISTANCE SYSTEM**

We have a Hearing Assistance System available on Wi-Fi, usable with or without hearing aids. Please ask the stewards for assistance.

Please email [office@theodores.org](mailto:office@theodores.org) to join our mailing list.

*Please stand if you wish*

**PROCESSIONAL HYMN: TIS 684 "LOVE WITH BE OUR LENTEN CALLING"**

1 Love will be our Lenten calling,  
love to shake and shatter sin,  
waking every closed, cold spirit,  
stirring new life deep within,  
till the quickened heart remembers  
what our Easter birth can mean.

2 Peace will be our Lenten living  
as we turn for home again,  
longing for the words of pardon,  
stripping off old grief and pain,  
till we stand, restored and joyful,  
with the Church on Easter day.

3 Truth will be our Lenten learning:  
hear the Crucified One call!  
Shadowed by the Saviour's passion,  
images and idols fall,  
and, in Easter's holy splendour,  
God alone is all in all.

Tune: Picardy

Words: Elizabeth J Smith (1956 - )

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

As we gather in worship, we acknowledge the Kurna People as the traditional owners and custodians of this land.

**May we walk together in harmony in a spirit of reconciliation.**

**INVOCATION AND GREETING**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.  
**whose mercy endures for ever.**

† Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
**Blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever.**

## WELCOME

## OPENING SENTENCE

Our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. (Philippians 3.20)

## PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Let us pray.  
**Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
cleans 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.**

## KYRIES

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

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God, though we have rebelled and wandered far off.

*Silence may be kept.*

Let us then ask for mercy, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

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

Almighty God,  
who has promised forgiveness  
to all who turn to him in faith:  
† pardon you and set you free from all your sins,  
strengthen you in all goodness  
and keep you in eternal life,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

God of our ancestors,  
whose chosen servant Abraham  
was given faith to obey your call  
and go out into the unknown:  
endow your Church with such faith  
that we may follow you with courage;  
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*Please be seated*

## FIRST READING: GENESIS 15.1-12; 15.17-18

<sup>1</sup> After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, 'Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.' <sup>2</sup> But Abram said, 'O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?' <sup>3</sup> And Abram said, 'You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.' <sup>4</sup> But the word of the Lord came to him, 'This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.' <sup>5</sup> He brought him outside and said, 'Look towards heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' <sup>6</sup> And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

<sup>7</sup> Then he said to him, 'I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess.' <sup>8</sup> But he said, 'O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?' <sup>9</sup> He said to him, 'Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon.' <sup>10</sup> He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. <sup>11</sup> And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

<sup>12</sup> As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him.

<sup>17</sup> When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire-pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. <sup>18</sup> On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, 'To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates,

For the word of the Lord,  
**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM 27

### Response: The Lord is my light and my salvation

- <sup>1</sup> The Lord is my light and my salvation;  
whom then shall I fear?:  
the Lord is the stronghold of my life;  
of whom shall I be afraid?
- <sup>2</sup> When the wicked, even my enemies and my foes,  
come upon me to devour me:  
they shall stumble and fall. **R**
- <sup>3</sup> If an army encamp against me,  
my heart shall not be afraid:  
and if war should rise against me, yet will I trust.
- <sup>4</sup> One thing I have asked from the Lord,  
which I will require:  
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord  
all the days of my life, **R**
- <sup>5</sup> To see the fair beauty of the Lord:  
and to seek his will in his temple.
- <sup>6</sup> For he will hide me under his shelter  
in the day of trouble:  
and conceal me in the shadow of his tent,  
and set me high upon a rock. **R**
- <sup>7</sup> And now he will lift up my head:  
above my enemies round about me.
- <sup>8</sup> And I will offer sacrifices in his sanctuary  
with exultation:  
I will sing, I will sing praises to the Lord. **R**
- <sup>9</sup> O Lord, hear my voice when I cry:  
have mercy upon me and answer me.
- <sup>10</sup> My heart has said of you, 'Seek his face':  
your face, Lord, I will seek. **R**
- <sup>11</sup> Do not hide your face from me:  
or thrust your servant aside in displeasure;
- <sup>12</sup> For you have been my helper:  
do not cast me away or forsake me, O God of my salvation. **R**

**Response: The Lord is my light and my salvation**

<sup>13</sup> Though my father and my mother forsake me:  
the Lord will take me up.

<sup>14</sup> Teach me your way, O Lord:  
and lead me in an even path, for they lie in wait for me. **R**

<sup>15</sup> Do not give me over to the will of my enemies:  
for false witnesses have risen against me,  
and those who breathe out violence.

<sup>16</sup> But I believe that I shall surely see  
the goodness of the Lord:  
in the land of the living.

<sup>17</sup> O wait for the Lord;  
stand firm and he will strengthen your heart:  
and wait, I say, for the Lord. **R**

**SECOND READING: PHILIPPIANS 3.17-4.1**

<sup>17</sup> Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. <sup>18</sup> For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. <sup>19</sup> Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. <sup>20</sup> But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>21</sup> He will transform the body of our humiliation so that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

For the word of the Lord,  
**Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand if you wish*



## GRADUAL HYMN: CP 397 "CHRIST THE WAY OF LIFE POSSESS ME"

1 Christ the Way of life possess me,  
lift my heart to love and praise;  
guide and keep, sustain and bless me,  
all my days,  
all my days.

2 Well of life, for ever flowing,  
make my barren soul and bare  
like a watered garden growing  
fresh and fair,  
fresh and fair.

3 May the Tree of life in splendour  
from its leafy boughs impart  
grace divine and healing tender,  
strength of heart,  
strength of heart.

4 Path of life before me shining,  
let me come when earth is past,  
sorrow, self and sin resigning,  
home at last,  
home at last.

Tune: Christ the Way of Life  
Music: Phil Burt (1957-)  
Words: Timothy Dudley-Smith (1926-2024)  
© Common Praise 2001

## THE GOSPEL

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.  
King of endless glory.**

**Re - / member O Lord  
Your faithful / -ness and love**

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.  
King of endless glory.**

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

**The Holy Gospel according to Luke 13.31-35  
‡ Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

<sup>31</sup> At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to Jesus, 'Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.' <sup>32</sup> He said to them, 'Go and tell that fox for me, "Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. <sup>33</sup> Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed away from Jerusalem." <sup>34</sup> Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! <sup>35</sup> See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord." '

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

## SERMON

*The sermon is followed by a time of silence for reflection.*

## THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us pray for the world and for the Church.

*Response:*

Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

*The prayers are followed by a time of silence for reflection.*

Compassionate 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.**

*Please stand if you wish*

## THE GREETING OF PEACE

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

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

## OFFERTORY HYMN: SP 37 "FROM ASHES TO THE LIVING FONT"

- 1 From ashes to the living font  
your Church must journey, Lord,  
baptised in grace, in grace renewed  
by your most holy word.
- 2 Through fasting, prayer and charity  
your voice speaks deep within,  
returning us to ways of truth  
and turning us from sin.

3 From desert to the mountaintop  
in Christ our way we see,  
so, tempered by temptation's might,  
we might transfigured be.

4 For thirsting hearts let water flow,  
our fainting souls revive;  
and at the well your waters give  
our everlasting life.

5 From ashes to the living font  
your Church must journey still;  
through cross and tomb to Easter joy,  
in Spirit-fire fulfilled.

Tune: Bangor

Music: William Tans'ur (1706-1783)

Words: Alan J Hommerding (1956-)

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## PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

As the grain once scattered in the fields  
and the grapes once dispersed on the hillside  
are now united on this table in bread and wine,  
so, Lord, may your whole Church soon be gathered together  
from the corners of the earth  
into your kingdom.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.**

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere,  
mighty Creator, everliving God.

We give you thanks and praise for your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who by the power of your Spirit was born of Mary  
and lived as one of us.

He was tempted in every way as we are,  
yet he did not sin.

By his death on the cross  
and rising to new life,  
he offered the one true sacrifice for sin  
and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people.

By his grace we are able to triumph over every evil,  
and to walk in the way of his love.

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:

**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.**

Merciful God, we thank you  
for these gifts of your creation,  
this bread and wine,  
and we pray that by your Word and Holy Spirit,  
we who eat and drink them  
may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread;  
and when he had given you thanks  
he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,  
'Take, eat. This is my body given for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup,  
and again giving you thanks  
he gave it to his disciples, saying,  
'Drink from this, all of you.  
This is my blood of the new covenant  
shed for you and for many  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

Therefore we do as our Saviour has commanded:  
proclaiming his offering of himself  
made once for all upon the cross,  
his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,  
and looking for his coming again,  
we celebrate, with this bread and this cup,  
his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice  
for the sins of the whole world.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith.  
**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

† Renew us by your Holy Spirit,  
unite us in the body of your Son  
and bring us with all your people  
into the joy of your eternal kingdom;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
with whom, and in whom,  
in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
we worship you, Father,  
in songs of never-ending praise:

**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.**

### **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

The gifts of God for the people of God.  
**May we who share these gifts be found in Christ and Christ in us.**

This is the table of communion with the earth,  
in which Christ became incarnate  
So come to this table, those who have much faith  
and those who would like to have more;  
those who have been here often  
and those who have not been for a long time;  
those who have tried to follow Jesus;  
and we who have failed.  
Come.

*Please stand if you wish*

## POST-COMMUNION SENTENCE

**Wait for the Lord; stand firm and he will strengthen your heart**  
(Ps 27.17)

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of mercy,  
may we who have shared in this holy meal  
know your forgiveness in our lives,  
bring your reconciliation to others,  
and be a sign of your wholeness in this broken world.



## PRAYER OF SELF-OFFERING

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.

## BLESSING

Christ our Saviour draw you to himself,  
that you may find in him crucified  
a sure ground for faith,  
a firm support for hope,  
and the assurance of sin forgiven  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
† the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

## NOTICES

## DISMISSAL

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

## RECESSIONAL HYMN SP 316 "THERE'S A WIDENESS IN GOD'S MERCY"

- 1 There's a wideness in God's mercy  
Like the wideness of the sea;  
there's a kindness in his justice  
which is more than liberty.  
There is no place where earth's sorrows  
are more felt than up in heaven;  
there is no place where earth's failings  
have such kindly judgment given.

- 2 For the love of God is broader  
than the measure of our mind,  
and the heart of the Eternal  
Is most wonderfully kind.  
But we make his love too narrow  
by false limits of our own;  
and we magnify his strictness  
with a zeal he would not own.
- 3 There is plentiful redemption  
through the blood that has been shed;  
there is joy for all the members  
in the sorrows of the Head.  
There is grace enough for thousands  
of new worlds as great as this;  
there is room for fresh creations  
in that upper home of bliss.

*Second half of tune:*

- 4 If our love were but more simple,  
we should take him at his word;  
and our lives would be all gladness  
in the joy of Christ our Lord.

Tune: Corvedale  
Music: Maurice Bevan (1921-2006)  
Words: Frederick William Faber (1814-1863)  
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**POSTLUDE: GREENE: VOLUNTARY NO 10 IN D MIN**

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Additional prayers taken from *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England*, © The Archbishops' Council 2000 and published by Church House Publishing.

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Where there is a † in the liturgy, you are invited to make a sign of the cross if you wish. When the Gospel is read and we say “† Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ”, you are invited to make three tiny signs of the cross, on the forehead, on the lips and on the chest. This symbolises the Word of God in our minds, our words and our hearts.