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**ST THEODORE'S, TOORAK GARDENS**

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**LENT 3  
23 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: CP 305 "I COME WITH JOY, A CHILD OF GOD"**

- 1 I come with joy, a child of God,  
forgiven, loved and free,  
the life of Jesus to recall,  
in love laid down for me.
- 2 I come with Christians far and near  
to find, as all are fed,  
the new community of love  
in Christ's communion bread.
- 3 As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share,  
each proud division ends.  
The love that made us, makes us one,  
and strangers now are friends.
- 4 The Spirit of the risen Christ,  
unseen, but ever near,  
is in such friendship better known,  
alive among us here.
- 5 Together met, together bound  
by all the God has done,  
we'll go with joy, to give the world  
the love that makes us one.

Tune: St Botolph  
Music: Gordon Slater (1896-1979)  
Words: Brian A Wren (1936-)  
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**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

'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts,' says the Lord.  
(Isaiah 55.9)

## PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Let us pray.  
**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.**

## 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

O God, the fountain of life,  
to a humanity parched with thirst  
you offer the living water that springs from the Rock,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ:  
stir up within your people the gift of your Spirit,  
that we may profess our faith with freshness  
and announce with joy the wonder of your love.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*Please be seated*

### FIRST READING: ISAIAH 55.1-9

<sup>1</sup> Ho, everyone who thirsts,  
come to the waters;  
and you that have no money,  
come, buy and eat!  
Come, buy wine and milk  
without money and without price.  
<sup>2</sup> Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,  
and your labour for that which does not satisfy?  
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,  
and delight yourselves in rich food.  
<sup>3</sup> Incline your ear, and come to me;  
listen, so that you may live.  
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,  
my steadfast, sure love for David.  
<sup>4</sup> See, I made him a witness to the peoples,  
a leader and commander for the peoples.  
<sup>5</sup> See, you shall call nations that you do not know,  
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,  
because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel,  
for he has glorified you.

<sup>6</sup> Seek the Lord while he may be found,  
call upon him while he is near;  
<sup>7</sup> let the wicked forsake their way,  
and the unrighteous their thoughts;  
let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them,  
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.  
<sup>8</sup> For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.  
<sup>9</sup> For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways  
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

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

### **PSALM 63.1-9**

#### **Response: My soul thirsts for you O my God**

1 O God, you are my God:  
eagerly will I seek you.  
2 My soul thirsts for you, my flesh longs for you:  
as a dry and thirsty land where no water is. **R**  
3 So it was when I beheld you in the sanctuary:  
and saw your power and your glory.  
4 For your unchanging goodness is better than life:  
therefore my lips shall praise you. **R**  
5 And so I will bless you as long as I live:  
and in your name will I lift my hands on high.  
6 My longing shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness:  
my mouth shall praise you with exultant lips. **R**  
7 When I remember you upon my bed:  
when I meditate upon you in the night watches,  
8 How you have been my helper:  
then I sing for joy in the shadow of your wings,  
9 Then my soul clings to you:  
and your right hand upholds me. **R**

## SECOND READING: 1 CORINTHIANS 10.1-13

<sup>1</sup> I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, <sup>2</sup> and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, <sup>3</sup> and all ate the same spiritual food, <sup>4</sup> and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. <sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

<sup>6</sup> Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. <sup>7</sup> Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, 'The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play.' <sup>8</sup> We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. <sup>9</sup> We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. <sup>10</sup> And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. <sup>11</sup> These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. <sup>12</sup> So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. <sup>13</sup> No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

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

*Please stand if you wish*



## GRADUAL HYMN: CP 385 "BE THOU MY GUARDIAN AND MY GUIDE"

- 1 Be thou my guardian and my guide,  
and hear me when I call;  
let not my slippery footsteps slide,  
and hold me lest I fall.
  
- 2 The world, the flesh, and Satan dwell  
around the path I tread;  
O save me from the snares of hell,  
thou quickener of the dead.
  
- 3 And if I tempted am to sin,  
and outward things are strong,  
do thou, O Lord, keep watch within,  
and save my soul from wrong.
  
- 4 Still let me ever watch and pray,  
and feel that I am frail;  
that if the tempter cross my way,  
yet he may not prevail.

Tune: Abridge  
Music: Isaac Smith (1734-1805)  
Words: Isaac Williams (1802-1865)  
© Common Praise 2001

## THE GOSPEL

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

**Repent / says the Lord  
the kingdom of heaven / is at hand**

**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 13.1-9  
**‡ Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

<sup>1</sup> At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. <sup>2</sup> He asked them, ‘Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? <sup>3</sup> No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. <sup>4</sup> Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them – do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? <sup>5</sup> No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.’

<sup>6</sup> Then he told this parable: ‘A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. <sup>7</sup> So he said to the gardener, “See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?” <sup>8</sup> He replied, “Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig round it and put manure on it. <sup>9</sup> If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.” ’

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: CP 557 "PRAISE TO THE HOLIEST IN THE HEIGHT"

- 1 Praise to the Holiest in the height,  
and in the depth be praise:  
in all his words most wonderful,  
most sure in all his ways.

- 2 O loving wisdom of our God!  
When all was sin and shame,  
a second Adam to the fight  
and to the rescue came.
- 3 O wisest love! that flesh and blood,  
which did in Adam fail,  
should strive afresh against the foe,  
should strive and should prevail;
- 4 And that a higher gift than grace  
should flesh and blood refine,  
God's presence and his very self,  
and essence all-divine.
- 5 And in the garden secretly,  
and on the cross on high,  
should teach his brethren, and inspire  
to suffer and to die.
- 6 Praise to the Holiest in the height,  
and in the depth be praise:  
in all his words most wonderful,  
most sure in all his ways.

Tune: Gerontius  
Music: Thomas Haweis (1734-1820)  
Words: John Henry Newman (1801-1890)  
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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

**My soul thirsts for you, my flesh longs for you, as a dry and  
thirsty land where no water is. (Ps 63.2)**

## 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 TIS 464 "GOD BE WITH US IN OUR LIVES"

*Refrain:*  
*Seek, O seek the Lord, while he is near;*  
*trust him, speak to him in prayer,*  
*and he will hear.*

- 1 God be with us in our lives,  
direct us in our calling;  
break the snares the world contrives,  
keep us from falling.

*Refrain*

2 God, increase in us the life  
that Christ by dying gave us:  
though we faint in mortal strife  
his love will save us.

*Refrain*

3 Strengthen in our hearts the love  
we owe to one another;  
how can we love God above  
and not each other?

Tune: Morestead  
Music: Richard Connolly (1927-)  
Words: James Phillip McAuley (1917-76)  
© Together in Song 1999

*Refrain*

## **POSTLUDE: BOYCE: VOLUNTARY IN D MIN**

Liturgy from *A Prayer Book for Australia* © Broughton Publishing 1995. All Rights Reserved. The Scripture is from the **New Revised Standard Version** of the Bible, © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission.

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.