

# SAINT THEODORE'S TIDINGS



**Lent-Easter issue**  
**February – May 2026**

*The Anglican Church of St Theodore*  
*Cnr Swaine Avenue and Prescott Terrace*  
*Toorak Gardens, S.A*

Website: [www.theodores.org](http://www.theodores.org)



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*St Theodore's Anglican Church recognises that we meet on the traditional lands of the Kaurna people. We express our gratitude for the sharing of this land; our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing; and our hope that we may walk together in harmony in a spirit of reconciliation.*

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## Psalm 139 – Reflecting on Disability

*Rev'd Dr Matthew Anstey*

*"O Lord, you have searched me and known me"*. Psalm 139 begins with intimacy, not commands or creeds. Before we are told who God is, we are told that we are known. Not assessed. Not measured. Not compared. Known.

*"You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away"*. This is not surveillance, it is attentiveness. The slow, patient knowing that comes from staying, from dwelling, from refusing to turn away. And this is where Psalm 139 opens space for a theology of disability – not at the margins of faith, but at its very heart.

Much Christian theology has been shaped by an unspoken norm: the ideal body, the capable body, the independent body. The body that works properly and predictably. When disability appears at all, it is often framed as a lack, a tragedy, or a problem to solve . . . through healing, cure, endurance, or heroic overcoming.



A good friend of mine, Shane Clifton, names this honestly. Writing from his own experience of acquired quadriplegia, he refutes narratives that rush too quickly to redemption, that demand meaning before grief has had its say. Shane insists disability is not a detour from the Christian story. It is one of the places where that story reveals itself most clearly. Not despite vulnerability, but through it.

Psalm 139 refuses the fantasy of the autonomous self: *"You hem me in, behind and before"*, the psalmist says. We are bounded creatures. Dependent. Entangled. Held. For many disabled people this is not an abstract theological claim, it is daily reality.

Dependence is not a failure of faith. Vulnerability is not a moral flaw. Needing others is not evidence of spiritual immaturity. It is simply what it means to be human.

*"For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made"*. These verses are often read sentimentally, as though they are saying God makes no mistakes. But many disabled people have heard those words weaponised, used to deny pain, to silence protest, to insist that everything is already fine just the way it is.

Julia Watts Belser, a Jewish disability scholar and theologian, helps us read Scripture more carefully. Belser speaks of 'crip wisdom', knowledge that emerges not from perfection, but from bodies that move through the world differently, bodies that negotiate fragility, pain, adaptation, and creativity every day.

To say *"I am wonderfully made"* is not to say *"nothing hurts"*. It is to say: this body, *this* body, is not outside God's delight. Belser reminds us that bodies are not static objects but living processes. Bodies change. They fail. They surprise us. They resist our control. And God's creative love is not exhausted at conception, it continues, breath by breath, adaptation by adaptation.

*"You knit me together"*: not once, long ago, but continuously. For some bodies, knitting includes scars. For some, it includes assistive technologies. For some, it includes pain, fatigue, or unpredictability. None of this places a person beyond the reach of divine care.



*"Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?"* For those whose bodies do not fit easily into public spaces, this is not a rhetorical question. It is lived experience. What if the church is inaccessible? What if worship assumes standing, speaking, processing, focusing, enduring? What if theology itself presumes clarity of mind, continuity of memory, control of speech?

Disability theology thus exposes how our liturgies and practices too often exclude, rather than expressing the inclusion that flows from God's love. This love extends from our present to the future hope of resurrection. Shane Clifton speaks of resurrection – not as restoration of an idealised body – but as the promise that our embodied lives, in all their contingency and fracture, are taken up into God's future. Resurrection does not erase disability as though it were a mistake, it transfigures relationship, meaning, and belonging.

This matters because too often Christian hope has been imagined as escape from the body rather than redemption of embodied life. But the risen Christ still bears wounds. The scars are not corrected. They remain.

Psalm 139 tells us that even in the depths, *"if I make my bed in the grave"*, God is present. Not waiting on the other side of suffering, but there, in the midst of it.

*"Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me"*. This is not a script that removes agency or struggle. It is testimony that no life is an afterthought. No one is surplus. No existence is a theological problem to solve.

Belser writes about time experienced differently as 'crip time', where productivity is disrupted, where progress is nonlinear, where rest is not laziness but necessity. Psalm 139 speaks into this gently. God's knowing is not rushed. God's attention does not depend on efficiency or output. *"You are precious"*, the psalmist says, *"in God's sight"*, not because of what you produce, but because you are.

The psalm ends with a prayer: *"Search me, O God, and know my heart . . . and lead me in the way everlasting"*. This is not a plea for correction so much as a request for accompaniment. Lead me, not away from my body, not out of my limits, but through them, toward life.

A theology of disability invites the church to conversion. To repent of the ways we have confused wholeness with normalcy, strength with worth, independence with holiness. It invites us to listen, truly listen, to those whose bodies tell different truths about what it means to live, to love, to trust.

Psalm 139 assures us that God knows those truths. Knows them from the inside. Dwells within them.

We are known not in spite of our bodies, but through them. We are held not beyond our limits, but within them. And the everlasting way God leads us on is not the path of perfection, but the way of faithful, embodied, shared, limited life.

**Amen**

## Thank you, Mavis

As of the last Sunday 9.30 am Eucharist service for 2025, Mavis Evans stepped down from the position of Sacristan . . . a role she has performed so wonderfully and professionally for a number of years. At the notices at the end of that service, our Peoples' Warden (Angela Hazebroek) said a few words honouring Mavis' contribution, and Angela has given *The Tidings* permission to print those words . . . in addition, Mavis wished to respond. Their words are presented below.



### Angela Hazebroek:

I would like to say a few words about Mavis and her role in this community.

For Mavis, the role of Sacristan was much more than just a job with a description. Mavis discerned her *call* to the role, she had a sense of it being a vocation – a ministry of service that God was calling her to, and God would sustain her and give her the grace she needed.

She studied the role of Sacristan and understudied Fr Peter for nine months. She learned how to handle the holy objects with deep respect and dignity. She was taught to be reflective and prayerful in the sacristy, and all of us who have watched her move around the sanctuary know that she brought that reflection and reverence into everything she did in terms of making the liturgy special and sacred. She certainly went above and beyond the role description for love of God and for love of the Eucharist and the people of this parish.

We have benefited enormously from Mavis' dedication and energy, and *love* for the role that she has performed for God, for the church and for us.

The really nice thing is that this is not a farewell – we cannot wait to work with Mavis in new ways . . . which is really exemplified by her being at the door as a steward on her first day at the end of her time as Sacristan.

### Mavis Evans:

After a period of discernment, I accepted the position of Sacristan and I believe God gave me the grace to carry out my duties. Rev'd Matthew 'inherited' me and I thank him for keeping me on.

There has been lots of help along the way and I would like to thank all who have helped and supported me in any way. In particular, I wish to give special thanks to Fr Peter for his meticulous attention to detail and kindness in teaching me and answering my questions. I will miss his stories and wisdom. It has been a privilege to serve, respect and honour the liturgy in this way.

Thanks to Pam Fulton for her time as Sacristan. Pam has also given many hours to sewing and repairing garments, altar linen . . . and much more, including weekly washing of the linen. Thanks go to Janet Packer for her part as well. Thanks to Stewart Perkins for his support in the ordering of wafers, incense, candles and wine . . . and his general knowledge in all things St Theodore's. And finally, thank you to Angela Hazebroek for her kind words, love and support.

I acknowledge the large scale of these and various other tasks, and the commitment required – which are all important parts in keeping the wheels of our beloved St Theodore's turning.

Six months ago and after another period of discernment I told Matthew I would be stepping down by the end of the year 😊.

I wish the current team blessings in their work and offer my full support.

Thank you everyone, Mavis

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**Heartfelt thanks, Mavis, from the parish community for such a sustained, committed and polished contribution to our liturgy and to parish life in your time as Sacristan.**

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## The 'haute couture' of the Church Church Vestments (Part 2 . . . Liturgical Colours)



**Fr Peter Anson**

In Part 1 (last issue of *The Tidings*), we looked at the origins of the garments which are worn by various ministers (Bishops, Priests and Deacons) – and others who assist them in the liturgies of the Church – and we noted that fashions have changed from Apostolic times until the present day.

Some vestments have ceased to be used altogether (e.g. the amice and the maniple), and others are hardly used at all nowadays.

The shapes of these garments have also been modified – often more than once over the centuries since Apostolic times – but essentially they have retained the form of common garments used in the early imperial Roman times.

(cont./)

Sunday by Sunday you see the clergy and their assistants wearing these vestments, so you would certainly have noticed that the outer garments change colour from time to time. The colours you would see are **White** (or **Gold**), **Red**, **Violet**, **Green** and **Black** (although this has almost entirely dropped out nowadays). Occasionally, in some places, two other colours are used – **Pink** (sometimes called **Rose** or **Rose Purple**) and **Blue**.



It has not always been like that. Before the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the colours varied widely, usually governed by whatever was adopted in the region you were in. The colours – as we know them – are first to be found in regular use was in the monastery of the Augustinian Canons in Jerusalem early in the 12<sup>th</sup> century . . . and they are also mentioned in a treatise by Pope Innocent III (“De Sacro Altaris Mysterio”) written just a few years later. Since the Crusades were in full flight at that time, it is easy to see that the use of these colours which the crusaders saw in Jerusalem became widespread.

In our own Church of England, the use of colours dropped out, along with the vestments, after the Reformation . . . but not for long. The Tractarian Movement in the early 1800’s saw a gradual reintroduction of the colours along with the vestments, but not without a struggle in some sections of the Church who opposed their reintroduction. Indeed, our own Augustus Short – who became the first Bishop of Adelaide in 1847 – came under severe criticism for allowing his priests to wear coloured stoles. It was considered outrageously ‘Romish’.

Sometimes the vestments are made from expensive materials, with gold or silver thread, and can display icons or other symbols. But they can simply be made from readily available material of the appropriate colour and often are.

So, do the colours have any significance? Yes they do! Let us take each one by one.

**White**



Sometimes yellow or gold, these are used on Trinity Sunday, and festivals of our Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and saints who are not martyrs. Vestments of these colours are quite often the ‘best’ set – a bit more ornate than others used at ordinary times.

**Red**



Red is the colour of blood and is, therefore, used on festivals of martyrs and the Apostles who are thought to have been martyrs (with the exception of St John who was not a martyr). In modern times red has come to be used on Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Red is also associated with fire and so is used on festivals of the Holy Spirit (e.g. Pentecost). Because red is associated with the Holy Spirit it is often used at ordinations as well.

**Violet**



This is a solemn colour and is therefore used at times of contemplation, self-examination, repentance, and sometimes at funerary rites and memorials. The seasons of Lent and Advent are obvious times for the use of violet (or purple) because they are times of repentance (thinking again about our relationship with God) and preparation for the major festivals of Christmas and Easter.

When confessions are heard by a priest, violet stoles are worn.

Violet has nowadays been supplanted by white or gold at funerary rites and memorials because of a change of view in many places. Rather than looking upon the death of a Christian with grief and mourning it may be looked upon as a life lived well and a trust in the promise of God of forgiveness and mercy.

## Green



Green is the colour of creation, life and development. It is worn on Sundays and days that have no particular observance – although every Sunday of the year is really a Festival of the Resurrection. These Sundays mostly occur following Epiphany season to Lent, and Trinity Sunday to Advent, and are called ‘Ordinary Sundays’. They provide an opportunity for the church to concentrate on the scriptural teachings and the growth of the church in Apostolic times.

## Black



Following Roman and Anglo-Catholic traditions, in places where vestments were worn, black vestments were used at requiems and on Good Friday up until the 1970’s. This practice has now been abandoned just about everywhere and black vestments languish unused in vestry cupboards. It reflects a change of thinking in the church.

Black, in many countries particularly in the West, is the colour of grief and mourning, doom, complete loss, and hopelessness. In more recent times, it came to be thought as inappropriate that a church which teaches that we have a loving God who forgives and saves would use a totally negative colour such as black.

There is always hope. Paul, in speaking about those who have died, tells us that we “should not grieve as others who have no hope” (1Thess 4:13).

So white or gold or sometimes violet have replaced black – white, as a symbol of triumph and violet to reflect our earthly loss.

Good Friday should be seen as a day of solemnity, not a day of defeat or mourning. Jesus’ sacrifice of himself on the Cross is a triumph in every way, so black was never appropriate. Nowadays, the colour red is used at Passiontide – the colour of a martyr and the blood Jesus shed for us.

One last thing. There are services in the church which are non-Eucharistic nor Sacramental. We remember the times when Evensong was said or sung in every parish church on Sundays. At those times, the ministers (they may not always have been Bishops, Priests or Deacons) wore a surplice over a cassock, and an academic hood (as appropriate).

If they were clergy, they also wore a long, narrow black garment over the shoulders which looked very much like a stole. However, they are not stoles and so the colour does not change according to the ecclesiastical seasons, but always remained black. This garment, was commonly called a Scarf, or sometimes a Preaching Scarf, or a Tippet.

The tippet seems to have evolved from university regalia as a part of the hood and is made of silk, if the wearer is a graduate . . . and other ‘stuff’ if not. In many, if not most, services in evangelical circles the cassock, surplice, hood and scarf are the only vesture used, but with some of less extreme views the stole can replace the scarf.



Tippet



Stole

But fashion seems not to be able to be staunched however we might try to regulate it. We nowadays see the stole used instead of the tippet on all sorts of occasions.

To the shock of many, colours and vestments have been abandoned altogether in a few places and services are conducted in ordinary street clothing. Will this be the new fashion? Well I suppose that is what the Apostles did!

### St. Theodore’s – Contacts

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(Office – 8333-1567)

Associate Priests: Fr Peter Anson  
Fr David Thornton-Wakeford

Priest’s Warden: Lee Fulton

Peoples’ Warden: Angela Hazebrook

Parish Council (2024) – Rev’d Dr Matthew Anstey, Peter Burke, Ian Campbell, Lee Fulton, Angela Hazebrook, Angela Jones (Secretary), John Needs (Treasurer), Fiona O’Neill, Catherine Travaglione

“The Tidings” Editor: Dr Richard Keene (ph. 0416-275-161)

# A Lenten Meditation

## Rev'd Sam Goodes

The Rev'd Sam Goodes is currently Archdeacon Assisting the Administrator in the Diocese of Adelaide, as well as Archdeacon of the City and the Port. Prior to this role he worked as Assistant to Archbishop Geoff Smith in his role as Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia, and was in parish ministry for 15 years in the Dioceses of Adelaide and Melbourne.

Sam Goodes is well known to the St Theodore's parish community, and is warmly welcomed as an occasional visiting priest at our Eucharists. *We thank him sincerely for this contribution to our newsletter.*



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## LAMENT – A REFLECTION ON A FORGOTTEN ASPECT OF LENT

As we approach the season of Lent, our minds might naturally begin to turn towards some of the more traditional parts of the season. Such things are made explicit in the liturgical act of the Ash Wednesday service, where we are reminded that Lent is about “self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, self-denial and acts of generosity, and reading and meditating on the word of God”.

The flowers will be removed from the church; our seasonal colour will change to purple (or violet); the Gloria is not said or sung in our Eucharist services; the “Hallelujah” will be buried – not to be uttered until the first service on Easter morning; and we will mark the transition in the most profound way – the reminder of our Baptismal mark – not with fragrant oil, but with ash, accompanied by the sobering words “remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return”.

All of this goes to remind us of the solemnity of the season. And rightly so. It is important to remember, however, that this is all done in a right spirit of penitence and remembrance – **not** in a self-deprecating manner. Lent is not a season that seeks to make us good enough to earn God's love, but an opportunity to deepen our relationship which is already made right through Christ.

Lent also leads us to self-honesty. It bids us consider the ways in which, both personally and corporately, we have failed to live up to the ways of Christ. And our rightful response to that honest self-assessment is *lament*. Lament, or lamentation, is not a word that is common in our vocabulary. This is partly because it brings to mind images of extreme acts of public mourning and wailing; of Job sitting in sackcloth and ashes scraping his sores, or of a wailing and gnashing of teeth of biblical proportions.



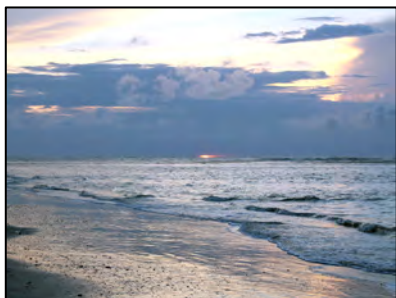
More than the mere expression of sorrow and regret, however, lamentation is a powerful act, one that the church desperately needs to reclaim. Lament is a formalised biblical practice of articulating profound pain, grief, confusion, anger, or frustration directly to God. It is not a sign of weak faith or doubt, but rather a robust, honest expression of faith that insists on engaging with God in the midst of suffering and chaos.

Scripture suggests that lamentation is a liturgical act that reorients and transforms us. Lamentation is uncensored communion with God – visceral worship where we learn to be honest, intimate and humble before God. Lamentation is both an acknowledgment that things are not as they should be and an anguished wail, beckoning the Lord to intervene with righteousness and justice.

The Christian tradition draws its understanding of lament primarily from the Psalms and the prophets. Approximately one-third of the 150 Psalms are laments which provide the Church with a language for sorrow. The entire book of Lamentations, traditionally ascribed to Jeremiah, is a sustained communal cry over the destruction of Jerusalem. The ultimate expression of Christian

lament is found on the cross when Jesus cries out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46, quoting Psalm 22). This shows us that honest human experience, even a feeling of abandonment, is valid within the relationship with God.

There are four aspects of lamentation – remembrance, reflection, confession and repentance. And in these I see a correlation between the season of Lent and of the act of lament. A Lenten journey, I believe, will also incorporate these same steps. A true Lenten journey requires that we stand honestly before God; remembering, reflecting, confessing, and repenting, so that we might have our eyes and hearts opened to the truth that God loves us, and that God desires we say "yes" to the reconciling love and grace that God freely offers.



*Remembrance* is the first step to lament. For if we do not remember then we cannot begin to grow. Honesty in this self-examination is critical. As we bring ourselves and our deepest needs and desires before God we do so conscious of God's faithfulness and goodness to us. This is helpful to recall as it allows us a sense of hopefulness in our remembering, confident that God knows us and loves us because of who we are, not in spite of what we have done.

Honest *reflection* is a proper response to the pain and shame of the remembrance of our failures. Lamentation, rightly understood, brings us to the place where we own the responsibility for all of our personal and corporate history including its positive and negative impacts. It is in this way, by truth telling and standing under the judgement of God that we can find ways of still celebrating the good as we continue to right the harm of the evil.

*Confession* and *repentance* flow from this act of reflection. Acknowledging our own part in the brokenness of the world or our personal distance from God is a powerful step which leads us to an honest place where we repent of our failings and receive God's boundless gift of forgiveness.



So, in this season of Lent we have the opportunity to mourn our personal failures and our complicity in the corporate brokenness of the world. Lament provides us with a language for this mourning – the sorrow over what is broken because of human action and inaction. The tone of our Lenten liturgies creates a necessary space for both personal and communal lament.



Lent is the season where the Church deliberately walks alongside Christ on his path to the cross. To follow Christ is to confront suffering. Lament allows us to acknowledge the systemic suffering and injustice of the world that Christ willingly entered and took upon himself. Lament articulates the pain and longing for the full redemption promised at Easter.

By thoroughly engaging with lament during Lent, we prepare the ground for the profound events of Holy Week (the ultimate lament on Good Friday) and the resurrection of joy and hope on Easter Sunday (God's final answer to lament). The joy of the resurrection is only fully understood after passing through the valley of genuine, honest lament. May your Lenten journey be a blessed one.

## “Stages on the Way”



“Stages of the Way” is a wonderful publication by the Wild Goose Worship Group – a subsidiary of the Iona Community in the U.K. – containing worship resources for Lent, Holy Week and Easter . . . litanies, meditations, poems, readings, scripts and actions. I want to share with you two examples . . .

### THE CROSS

The Cross is the hope of Christians  
the Cross is the resurrection of the dead  
the Cross is the doctor of the sick  
the Cross is the way of the lost  
the Cross is the staff of the lame  
the Cross is the guide of the blind  
the Cross is the strength of the weak  
the Cross is the hope of the hopeless  
the Cross is the freedom of the slaves  
the Cross is the water of the seeds  
the Cross is the consolation of the bonded labourers  
the Cross is the source of those who seek water  
the Cross is the cloth of the naked.  
We thank you, Father, for the Cross.

### IT WAS ON A FRIDAY

*It was on a Friday  
that they ended it all.*

*Of course,  
they didn't do it one by one.  
They weren't brave enough.  
All the stones at one time  
or no stones thrown at all.*

*They did it in crowds . . .  
in crowds where you can feel safe  
or lose yourself  
or shout things  
you would never shout on your own,  
and do things  
you would never do  
if you felt the camera was watching you.*

*It was the crowd in the church that did it,  
and the crowd in the public service that did it,  
and the crowd in the street that did it,  
and the crowd on the hill that did it.*

*And He said nothing.*

*He took the insults,  
the bruises,  
the spit on the face,  
the thongs on the back,  
the curses in the ears.  
He took the sight of his friends turning away,  
running away.*

*And He said nothing.*

*He let them do their worst  
until their worst was done,  
as on Friday they ended it all . . . .  
and would have finished themselves  
had He not cried,  
“Father, forgive them . . . “.  
and began the revolution.*



## Feast of the Transfiguration/Harvest Festival – Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> February

A feast before the fast in the season of Lent. This will include a Harvest Festival Display in the church and a Long Table Lunch commencing at 12 noon. Preparation the day before on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> February: bring any home grown produce – flowers, fruits and vegetables – to church at 11 am for the display.

The Harvest Festival Long Table Lunch will feature mainly Mediterranean food and will make the best use of seasonal produce. The dessert course will be pancakes with a variety of toppings. A donation \$20 or \$15 concession will contribute to our Mission Giving. Booking arrangements will be given in the pew sheet. Feel free to invite your family and friends!

# ST THEODORE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH TOORAK GARDENS

## LENTEN STUDY PROGRAM FOR 2026

### "HOLIDAY"

*Matthew's Gospel stories of the adult ministry of Jesus from his baptism to his resurrection imagined in a contemporary Australian landscape.*



#### About the Study

The Lenten Study is based on the program prepared for the Anglican Board of Mission (ABM) by Stephen and Vanessa Daughtry. Many of you will be familiar with Steve's engaging storytelling from his guest preaching at St Theodore's, his meditation in the last issue of The Tidings, and the Lenten Study program in 2023 entitled "The Imaginary Doorway".

Australian Biblical Scholar Rev'd Dr Ruth Mathieson described her response to HOLIDAY: "The stories are gritty; at times I tasted the dust in my mouth and felt the pain of broken relationships. These stories are also of love and faithfulness with gentle and true transformation in the lives of ordinary people."

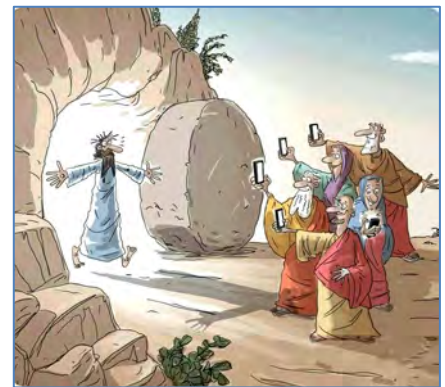
**When will the studies happen?** Lenten studies will be offered in person and on Zoom.

Rev'd Matthew will lead studies at 11.15 am on Sundays 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> March at St Theodore's.

Peter Burke will lead studies on Zoom on Wednesdays from 7 pm to 8.30 pm on the following dates: 25<sup>th</sup> February and 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> March.

#### Registration and Materials

Please contact [office@theodores.church](mailto:office@theodores.church) to register your attendance and request a printed copy of the study booklet. You can also complete the form at the back of the Church. The cost is \$12 each. Alternatively, you can download a pdf for \$10 from <https://intothedesert.org>.



"Yes . . . but good luck getting it peer-reviewed!"



PRAYER - A CONVERSATION BETWEEN FRIENDS



"If you've ever headed the wrong way in life, remember the road to Heaven allows U-turns"



"As slim as your chances are for salvation, it's good to see you keep trying"



## A CONUNDRUM OR SEMANTICS? 'Calling to Lay Ministry' and 'Church Volunteers'

In Chapter 12 of the First Letter to the Corinthians, St Paul writes:

*"<sup>4</sup> There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. <sup>5</sup> There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. <sup>7</sup> Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. <sup>8</sup> To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, <sup>10</sup> to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,<sup>[a]</sup> and to still another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup> All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines."*

and the passage goes on to use the analogy of unity and diversity in the human body as a model of the Body of Christ. So while the Holy Spirit gives diverse spiritual gifts, it is the one single Spirit working through all believers that creates unity in the diverse Body of Christ – emphasising that God distributes these gifts for the common good, not individual preference. It highlights unity in diversity, showing one God, one Lord, and one Spirit empowering different functions within the church for collective benefit.

All of us can be 'called', but that challenge may be in a lay capacity or (for some) to a priestly capacity. And while a call may be related to our gifts (a concept that most of us will understand) and our disabilities, it will often be related to the 'downs' of our lives – in our healed wounds and shouldered suffering. While our gifts can be an important issue, basically the gift is us – that unique person that God urges us to give in action. No pre-formed labels . . . knowing gifts is not the same as hearing a call, and – perhaps frighteningly to some of us – there are others who might recognise in us, even better than we can for ourselves, what may be a call and we need to be open to accept that counsel and confirmation.

As a community, we continually and prayerfully seek the guidance of the Spirit for us to discern God's plan for St Theodore's parish to be His church in this place at this time; so the challenge of what is our individual (and communal) calling – and what part it plays and the energy it provides to that ministry – should be much on our minds. There has been for many of us a 'calling to a Lay Ministry', a 'lay vocation', recognised as the Holy Spirit moving us to a contribution to the community of faith – and there are many who gratefully and willingly exercise that call.

But within the parish community there is another level of service. There are many tasks to be undertaken in the stewardship of our church in terms of the property, management, liturgy, fellowship and so on . . . and we would recognise that in our parish life, members make available – they volunteer – their time and abilities for the communal good. The term volunteer is defined as an 'unpaid helper/assistant/worker; a person who freely offers to take part in an enterprise or undertake a task'.

I believe there is a difference in these two acts of service . . . and in truth, we can do both. As with many members of this wonderful community we share, I make a number of contributions. Certainly many of those jobs are identified by the priest/wardens/parish council and I freely and willingly share my abilities, time and energy to do them if I can for the community – as a volunteer. But there are some other contributions that are in a very different category: in my heart I feel God (through the Holy Spirit) is calling me to serve and contribute to His ministry in a lay role in the parish of St Theodore's. For those latter contributions I am personally quite uncomfortable with the label of 'volunteer' if it is applied because I am not salaried, as such a label does not honour my calling. However, there are other implications in this parish and all parishes. The co-labelling of ALL lay activity (meaning freely offered as a volunteer, and also any call to a lay vocation) as 'volunteering', because it is unpaid, has the logical implication that ultimately the priest (salaried) is the only person in the parish who is truly called to ministry. I – for one – do not accept that . . . and I am quite sure I would not be alone . . . and it is not what St Paul had in mind either. The ministry of faith operates through all believers with the guidance and urgings of the one Holy Spirit.

I think this is truly a conundrum – rather than semantics – and I believe we should be extremely careful with the broad classification of 'volunteers' emerging in our parish as it is applied to all lay service to the faith community.

**Richard Keene**

"The Tidings" is the newsletter of the parish of St Theodore's Anglican Church, Toorak Gardens. It is published three times each year – the first issue in January, and includes Lent and Easter; the second in June, and includes the Patronal Festival of St Theodore; and the third in December, and includes Advent and Christmas.

The Editor is **Dr Richard Keene** (ph: 0416-275-161; email: frkeene@me.com)

Comments/compliments/criticisms/contributions are always welcome!



# AN INVITATION

## Hearth Gatherings:

### more encounters with mystics who can light our way

Angela Hazebroek invites you to join others who are seeking to deepen their relationship with the One who creates, restores and sustains us. We can learn so much from those men and women who have travelled this way before us. Give yourself some quiet time to reflect on their lives and teachings and how these might influence your spiritual journey.

**Session times: Saturdays between 11 am and 2 pm**

**Venue: St Theodore's Anglican Church and Quiet Garden (46 Prescott Terrace, Toorak Gardens)**

#### February 7th: Women as Leaders in Celtic Christianity

- ❖ Brigid of Kildare (451-525 CE) – *Rekindling the Flame*
- ❖ Hild of Whitby (614-680 CE) – *Trusting in the Knowledge of God*
- ❖ Samthann of Clonbroney (late 7<sup>th</sup> century - 739 CE) – *Praying in All Ways*



Brigid of Kildare



Hild of Whitby

#### March 7th: Wisdom from Wales – Introducing Five Welsh Saints of the 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> century

- ❖ **St Illtyd** - *Perseverance*; **St Non** - *Holy Mothering*; **St David** - *Community*;  
**St Melangell** - *A Place of Refuge*, **St Winefride** - *Wounds and Healing*

#### April 11th

#### Three Spanish Mystics of the Sixteenth Century

- ❖ Ignatius of Loyola, Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross.

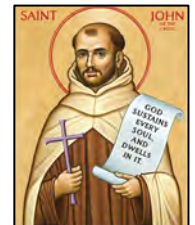
What can a wounded soldier, a wild child and daughter of Jewish conversos, and a poor medical student teach us?



Ignatius of Loloya



Teresa of Avila



St John of the Cross

#### May 2nd

#### Julian of Norwich

- ❖ Julian of Norwich is a fourteenth century anchorite who devoted her life to exploring and explaining the revelations of Divine Love.

Her wisdom highlights God's mercy and love and encourages us to see ourselves as "knitted to God" in our making.



Julian of Norwich

- > Costs for Individual reflections \$30/\$20 (Pensioner/Student);
- > Payment by card or cash (or by EFT with your initials and HG);
- > Registration: Contact Angela one week prior to the session (SMS to 0407 600 124 or by email '[angelaandjack@gmail.com](mailto:angelaandjack@gmail.com)');
- > BYO Lunch if required. Coffee, tea, and snacks provided.

## SELECT DATES



During Lent and Holy Week, we will be having a number of services and activities held jointly between the parishes of St Theodore's, Toorak Gardens and All Souls', St Peters. These events are shared between the two venues – in this diary list, they are indicated in blue, with the venue nominated. Members of both parishes are welcome.

The listings in black are St Theodore's services.

- February 15 **Transfiguration**
- ❖ 8.00 am Holy Communion
  - ❖ 9.30 am Sung Eucharist; to be held in association with a Harvest Festival Celebration (see details on p. 8 of this issue of The Tidings, and in pew sheets)
- February 17 **Shrove Tuesday** – 10 am: Pancakes at [All Souls' Church](#).
- February 18 **Ash Wednesday**
- ❖ 10.00 am Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes at [All Souls'](#)
  - ❖ 7.30 pm Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes at [St Theodore's](#)
- March 8 Breaking Bread Service – 3.30 pm: International Women's Day
- March 29 **Palm Sunday**
- ❖ 8.00 am Holy Communion
  - ❖ 9.30 am Sung Eucharist with Procession
- March 31 **Holy Tuesday**
- ❖ 7.30 pm Stations of the Cross (at [St Theodore's Church](#))
- April 02 **Maundy Thursday**
- ❖ 7.30 pm Mass of the Last Supper with Foot Washing, Stripping of Sanctuary and the Watch
- April 03 **Good Friday**
- ❖ 9.30 am Liturgy of Christ's Passion with Veneration of the Cross
- April 05 **Easter Day**
- ❖ 8.00 am Holy Communion
  - ❖ 9.30 am Sung Eucharist
- May 24 **Pentecost**
- ❖ 8.00 am Holy Communion
  - ❖ 9.30 am Sung Eucharist – followed by a special morning tea to honour our volunteers (as part of International Volunteers' Week)
  - ❖ 3.30 pm Breaking Bread Pentecost Service



## ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING

Our Annual Vestry meeting for 2026 will be held on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026 at 10.45 am in the church, immediately following the Sung Eucharist.

In Anglican polity, the Annual Vestry functions like an AGM. It hears reports, receives the financial statement for the previous year and passes the budget for the year ahead. There is the opportunity to ask questions from the reports; also items/motions for discussion and debate can be listed – *Motions need to be submitted in writing with Rev'd Matthew by January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026.*



From the : Church Times

The annual Vestry Meeting was held straight after the 9.30 am Sung Eucharist

It is also the meeting where parish officers are elected. This year the following positions fall vacant:

- ❖ People's Warden
- ❖ Parish Councillors (6)
- ❖ Auditor
- ❖ Nomination Committee [3]

Nomination forms will be available in the month prior, and *nominations close on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026.*

We endeavour to run efficient meetings, so generally the Vestry runs for no more than 45 minutes. Because of its importance in the administration and care of the parish, Vestry is a meeting all parishioners are encouraged to attend. If you have any questions please ask Matthew, one of the Wardens or a member of Parish Council.