

**5th SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY****ST. PETERS ANGLICAN CHURCH BUNDOORA****Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2026****Fr. Stephen Monsiegnur****Readings:**<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 58:1-9a / Psalm 112 / 1 Corinthians 2:1-13 / Matthew 5:13-20**Theme:** *Being a light in the dark***Isaiah 58:1-9a**

Shout out; do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet!

Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins.

<sup>2</sup> Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments; they want God on their side.

<sup>3</sup> "Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?"  
Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day and oppress all your workers.

<sup>4</sup> You fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high.

<sup>5</sup> Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord?

<sup>6</sup> Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?

<sup>7</sup> Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

<sup>8</sup> Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

<sup>9</sup> Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, "Here I am."

**Psalm 112**

<sup>1</sup> Praise the Lord!

Happy are those who fear the Lord,  
who greatly delight in his commandments.

<sup>2</sup> Their descendants will be mighty in the land;  
the generation of the upright will be blessed.

<sup>3</sup> Wealth and riches are in their houses,  
and their righteousness endures forever.

<sup>4</sup> They rise in the darkness as a light for the upright;  
they are gracious, merciful, and righteous.

<sup>5</sup> It is well with those who deal generously and lend,  
who conduct their affairs with justice.

<sup>6</sup> For the righteous will never be moved;  
they will be remembered forever.

<sup>7</sup> They are not afraid of evil tidings;  
their hearts are firm, secure in the Lord.

<sup>1</sup> New Revised Standard Version, Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

- <sup>8</sup> Their hearts are steady; they will not be afraid;  
in the end they will look in triumph on their foes.
- <sup>9</sup> They have distributed freely; they have given to the poor;  
their righteousness endures forever;  
their horn is exalted in honor.
- <sup>10</sup> The wicked see it and are angry;  
they gnash their teeth and melt away;  
the desire of the wicked comes to nothing.

### **1 Corinthians 2:1-13**

When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the testimony of God to you with superior speech or wisdom. <sup>2</sup> For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. <sup>3</sup> And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. <sup>4</sup> My speech and my proclamation were made not with persuasive words of wisdom but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, <sup>5</sup> so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

<sup>6</sup> Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are being destroyed. <sup>7</sup> But we speak God's wisdom, a hidden mystery, which God decreed before the ages for our glory <sup>8</sup> and which none of the rulers of this age understood, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. <sup>9</sup> But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him" —

<sup>10</sup> God has revealed to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. <sup>11</sup> For what human knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God. <sup>12</sup> Now we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. <sup>13</sup> And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual.

### **Matthew 5:13-20**

<sup>13</sup> "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

<sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. <sup>15</sup> People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

<sup>17</sup> "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup> For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. <sup>19</sup> Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup> For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

## SERMON

Today's readings move us beyond last week's understanding of who is blessed. Today, we are invited to reflect deeply on our own calling—not just as individuals, but as a community entrusted with the light of Christ. We remain with Jesus on the hillside; however, before us, a question that is both personal and communal: *What is my contribution as a member of God's church to ensure that St Peter's shines bright as a welcoming place offering Christ's hope, compassion, and love to whoever enters our space?*

The sentence setting today's theme and heard in the first reading, *"Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to let the oppressed go free?"*<sup>2</sup> highlights how God's vision for worship is not confined to ritualistic practices, but is expressed beyond in acts of justice, mercy, and liberation.

Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, declares: "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid"<sup>3</sup>. Our calling is clear: we are to let our light shine before others, so that our good works point not to ourselves, but to the glory of God. But what does this mean for us, here and now? It means that each of us is both a recipient and a reflector of Christ's light. The light we receive—God's hope, compassion, and love—is not meant to be hidden, but shared. In Isaiah's words, when we embody these values, "your light shall break forth like the dawn"<sup>4</sup> Our contribution is found in the ways we allow that light to shine through our lives, illuminating the path for others. --- How do we do this?

Psalm 112 describes those whose lives are marked by generosity, justice, and steadfastness as the righteous, the ones who "rise in the darkness as a light for the upright."<sup>5</sup> The psalm links ethical living—graciousness, lending freely, conducting affairs with justice—to the imagery of light.

To be a welcoming church is to be a community where Christ's light is visible and inviting to others, especially strangers. It means greeting with warmth, listening to the stories of those who feel marginalised, and creating space for all to encounter God's love. Our hospitality is not just about coffee and conversation—it is about making room for the Spirit to work in unexpected ways.

Each member's contribution matters. Whether you serve in visible roles or behind the scenes, your presence, prayers, and acts of kindness help shape the character of our church. When we work together—sharing burdens, celebrating joys, and supporting one another—we become individually and communally a "city on a hill," radiant and welcoming.

Paul speaking to the Corinthians reminds us that God's wisdom is revealed not through lofty words, but through the Spirit. Jesus fulfils the law and prophets, embodying their deepest intent—justice, mercy, and righteousness. Faithfulness is not about ticking boxes, but about living out the heart of God's commands.

---

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 58:6

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 5:14

<sup>4</sup> Isaiah 58:8

<sup>5</sup> Psalm 112:

Our contribution is found in the ways we move beyond ritual to relationship. It is seen in our willingness to forgive, to seek reconciliation, and to advocate for those whose voices are seldom heard. It is expressed in our commitment to learning, growing, and discerning the Spirit's guidance together. To shine bright as a church is to offer Christ's hope to those who despair, compassion to those who suffer, and love to all who enter our doors. It is to be a beacon in our community—a place where people know they are valued, supported, and challenged to grow.

This light is not passive; it is active. It exposes injustice, comforts the afflicted, and guides the lost. It is both a gift and a calling: Jesus shines as the light, and we are invited to reflect that light through lives of justice and mercy. To do this, we must

- **Pray for discernment:** Ask God to show you where your gifts and passions can serve the church and community.
- **Practice hospitality:** Greet newcomers, listen deeply, and make space for diverse voices.
- **Serve with joy:** Whether in worship, outreach, or daily life, do not see service as a chore but let your actions reflect Christ's love.
- **Advocate for justice:** Stand with those who are oppressed, and seek ways to loosen the bonds of injustice in your context.
- **Encourage others:** Build up the body of Christ through words of affirmation, acts of kindness, and shared service.

Your contribution matters. As members of St Peter's Bundoora, we are called to shine together—not for our own glory, but so that all may see and give glory to God.

Let us pray

God, through us, you call others.

As we light this candle, we remember Jesus' words:

"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid."

May this flame remind us that Christ's light shines in us and through us—

Guiding, comforting, and calling us to acts of hope and compassion.

May we, the community of St Peter's Bundoora, as part of the body of Christ, be a city on a hill—visible, radiant, and welcoming. May our lives reflect the hope, compassion, and love of Christ, so that all who enter may find light for their journey.

Amen.

## **Liturgical Elements to Highlight Christ's Light**

### **2. Candle Lighting Ritual**

**Purpose:** Symbolizes Christ as the light of the world and our call to reflect that light.

**Leader:**

*(Light a central candle, then invite individuals or families to light smaller candles from the central flame, symbolizing the spreading of Christ's light.)*

### **5. Sending/Blessing**

**Leader:**

Go forth as bearers of Christ's light.

May your words and deeds shine with hope, compassion, and love.

May St Peter's Bundoora be a city on a hill—

Welcoming all, radiating God's justice and mercy,

And pointing others to the glory of God.

**People:**

Amen.