

EASTER VIGIL**ST PETERS ANGLICAN CHURCH BUNDOORA****Saturday 4TH April 2026****Fr. Stephen Monsiegnur**

Readings¹: Using these scriptures in the NRSVUE, Genesis 1:1-2:4a / Genesis 22:1-18 / Exodus 14:10-31; 15:20-21 / Isaiah 55:1-11 / Proverbs 8:1-8, 19-21; 9:4b-6 / Ezekiel 36:24-28 / Zephaniah 3:14-20 / Romans 6:3–11 / Matthew 28:1-10,

Theme: *“Light for the New Creation”*

Genesis 1:1-2:4a / Genesis 22:1-18 / Exodus 14:10-31; 15:20-21 / Isaiah 55:1-11 / Proverbs 8:1-8, 19-21; 9:4b-6 / Ezekiel 36:24-28 / Zephaniah 3:14-20 / Romans 6:3–11 / Matthew 28:1-10

Matthew 28:1-10

After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ² And suddenly there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning and his clothing white as snow. ⁴ For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. ⁵ But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here, for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ This is my message for you.” ⁸ So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers and sisters to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”

SERMON

From the opening words of Genesis, scripture testifies that God’s first gift is light. “Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light”². Creation begins not with human effort but with divine illumination—light that orders chaos, reveals goodness, and makes life possible. On this night of resurrection, as the paschal candle is lifted high, we recognise that the same God who spoke light into being has shone a new and decisive light in Jesus Christ.

Across the great sweep of readings, we hear again and again that God’s light is not abstract. It is deliverance, promise, mercy, and renewal. In the binding of Isaac, Abraham discovers that God’s faithfulness is stronger than fear, and that life—not death—is God’s final word³. At the Red Sea, Israel sees “the great work that the Lord did”⁴, a light of liberation that breaks the power of oppression. Isaiah invites all who

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² Genesis 1:3

³ Genesis 22:1–18

⁴ Exodus 14:31

thirst to come to the waters, promising that God’s word “shall not return... empty”⁵. Wisdom in Proverbs calls out to the simple, offering life, insight, and a way of walking in the light of understanding⁶.

These threads converge in the prophets’ vision of renewal. Ezekiel proclaims that God will give a new heart and a new spirit, sprinkling clean water upon the people so they may live faithfully⁷. Zephaniah imagines a people restored, gathered, and rejoicing because God is in their midst⁸. These are not small adjustments but acts of re-creation—God making all things new.

And then, in the fullness of time, the women come to the tomb “as the first day of the week was dawning”⁹. Dawn is not incidental. Matthew wants us to see that the resurrection is the first light of a new creation. The earth shakes, the stone rolls away, and the angel announces the truth that reframes all others: “He is not here; for he has been raised”¹⁰. The paschal candle burns because the Light of the World has overcome the darkness.

Paul tells us that this light is not merely observed—it is entered. “All of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death” so that “we too might walk in newness of life”¹¹. Baptism is not a symbolic sentiment; it is participation in Christ’s dying and rising. It is transformational, as we become one with Christ, and the moment when the light of the resurrection becomes the light of our lives.

So tonight, as the paschal flame flickers against the shadows, we remember that Christ’s light is not fragile. It is the light that created the world, liberated the oppressed, renewed the exiled, and shattered the tomb. For all who call him Lord, these scriptures speak with one voice: in Christ, God has begun a new creation, and in baptism we are reborn to walk as children of the light.

Let us pray

Risen Christ, Light of the world, kindle in us the fire of your love. Renew our hearts, deepen our faith, and guide our steps in the brightness of your resurrection. Amen.

References

Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. (2021). National Council of Churches.

Anglican Church of Australia. (2025). *An Australian Lectionary 2026: Year B*. Broughton Books. ISBN 978-1-922441-16-4

⁵ Isaiah 55:11

⁶ Proverbs 9:4–6

⁷ Ezekiel 36:25–27

⁸ Zephaniah 3:17–20

⁹ Matthew 28:1

¹⁰ Matthew 28:6

¹¹ Romans 6:3–4