

Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church
BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA, OUR SAVIOUR LOWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,
ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, TRINITY MARBURG, TRINITY OAKEY,

16 May 2021

The Seventh Sunday of Easter

HYMNS: 500 191 357 320 289 510

INTROIT: Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of wicked people, or stand in the path of sinners, or sit in the seat of scoffers. But his delight is in the Law of the LORD, and on His Law he meditates day and night.

He will be like a tree planted by streams of water, which produces its fruit in its season, and has leaves that do not wither; and whatever he does will prosper.

The ungodly are not like that, but are like the chaff that the wind blows away.

Therefore wicked people will not stand up in the judgment, or sinners in the assembly of righteous people.

For the LORD knows the way of righteous people, but the way of wicked people will perish. Psalm 1

COLLECT: O king of glory, Lord of hosts, uplifted in triumph far above all heavens, leave us not without consolation, but send us the Spirit of truth, whom You promised from the Father; for You live and reign with Him and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

READINGS: Acts 1:12-26 Matthias chosen to replace Judas.
1 John 5:9-15 The believer has God's testimony in himself.
John 17:11b-19 Jesus' prayer for His apostles.

SERMON: 1 John 5:9-15

WE MUST DISTINGUISH BETWEEN GOOD NEWS AND FAKE NEWS

Welcome to all worshipping with us today! Pastor Peter Ziebell, Phone 46333604 or 0407583922.

Email him at paziebell@gmail.com or to the church office at ddaelc@gmail.com.

Weekly sermons and bulletins are available at www.aelc.org.au

Please notify pastor of anyone who is unwell or in need of a visit.

The Lord's Supper has always been seen as a sign of unity between those who commune together at the Lord's table (1 Cor. 10:17). When Christians partake of the Lord's Supper in a church body that has a confession of faith, they thereby declare that they believe that they are one in faith with those who commune with them. Since people cannot honestly hold two differing confessions at the same time, they cannot honestly commune with those whose confession is in conflict with their own. If any do this nevertheless, they deny their own confession, and so deny Christ Himself (2 Cor. 6:14-18). **We ask visitors who are communicant members in a church not in fellowship with the AELC, or are not familiar with the *AELC Statement of Faith*, to refrain from communing today. If you have questions, please speak with the pastor after service.**

Would You Be Willing to Stand? Religious Persecution Comes to Finland

Päivi Räsänen, a Finnish Member of Parliament, was charged with three hate crimes based on her published views on sexuality – perhaps a sign of things to come in Australia.

Religious persecution is already here in the West - and it's increasing. Now, some Christians will cry "foul" on this, pointing to the much worse religious persecution currently happening in countries such as China. But intense persecution doesn't usually begin overnight - it begins with small acts of persecution and discrimination, such as that which recently took place in Finland. Once such "doors" are opened, then they are pushed open more and more over time.

In 2004, Member of Parliament in Finland and former Minister of the Interior Päivi Räsänen published a booklet on the Bible and sexuality. Well, over a decade later, in 2018, she spoke on a radio program about Jesus and homosexual behaviour. Then, in 2019, she posted Romans 1:24-27 on social media to call out the Finnish Lutheran Church for joining an LGBT pride festival. This MP is now being charged with three hate crime counts and can face up to six years in prison if convicted - for speaking the truth about homosexual behaviour as the Bible clearly teaches about it.

This is what she shared about the charges against her:

"I do not consider myself guilty of threatening, slandering or insulting anyone . . .

My statements were all based on the Bible's teachings on marriage and sexuality. I will defend my right to confess my faith, so that no one else would be deprived of their right to freedom of religion and speech. I hold on to the view that my expressions are legal and they should not be censored. I will not back down from my views. I will not be intimidated

into hiding my faith. The more Christians keep silent on controversial themes, the narrower the space for freedom of speech gets.”

Here’s what the Finnish Prosecutor General (who actually supports communism) said about why Räsänen is being charged:

“[Räsänen’s] statements were “derogatory and discriminatory against homosexuals,” and violated “their equality and dignity,” and that as a result, her comments would “overstep the boundaries of freedom of speech and religion and are likely to fuel intolerance, contempt and hatred.”

And she’s not alone in being persecuted in Finland! Rev. Dr. Juhana Pohjola, an influential bishop in the Evangelical Lutheran Mission Diocese of Finland and the editor-in-chief who published Räsänen’s booklet, has likewise been charged with “incitement” for publishing a booklet on biblical marriage thirteen years before same-sex “marriage” was even legalised in Finland.

Rev. Pohjola said this about his charges:

“As a Christian, I do not want to and cannot discriminate against or despise anyone created by God... Every human being, created by God and redeemed by Christ, is equally precious... At the same time... this does not remove the fact that, according to the Bible and the Christian conception of man, homosexual relations are against the will of God, and marriage is intended only between a man and a woman. This is what the Christian church has always taught and will always teach.”

To that we say, “Amen!” Rather than recanting things they wrote and published nearly two decades ago, these believers are standing firm on God’s Word as they should. This isn’t some minor issue we can capitulate to the culture on - this is a question of the authority of God’s Word and the very Gospel message. As soon as we refuse to call sin what it is – sin - we undermine the gospel. And when we reinterpret God’s clear Word about God’s design for sexuality, marriage, and gender, we undermine the authority of God’s Word.

If your beliefs and the public statements regarding sexuality and marriage you made years ago are now put on trial, would you have the courage to do what these two have done and stand firm? We must all check our hearts regarding these matters and pray that the Lord would give us the boldness and conviction to stand firm for His glory and the good of other image-bearers of God.

COMING SERVICES

23 May PENTECOST	30 May TRINITY SUNDAY	6 June 2 Pentecost
	Mission Day Festival	
8.30am OAK LR 8.30am TMBA HC 9.00am GRN LR 10.30am AUB HC 9.00am LOWOOD LR	10.00am MARBURG HC (AELC Service) 9.30am OAK LR	8.30am OAK HC 8.30am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.00am GRN HC 9.00am MARBURG LR
Sunday, 23 May		
READINGS: Ezekiel 37:1-14; Acts 2:1-21; John 15:26-27, 16:4b-15		
HYMNS: 164 121 116 (774 289) 123		
Sunday, 30 May		
READINGS: Isaiah 6:1-8; Acts 2:14a, 22-36; John 3:1-17		
HYMNS: 501 140 219 (138 287) 139		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, 30 May. Trinity Marburg will be hosting an AELC service. This will also be a Mission Day service with the collection received going towards helping to pay for the continual running costs of the AELC website. Please also bring along something for a shared luncheon after service.

BIBLE STUDIES:

Thursday, 20 May, 10.00am at Lowood. Please bring along something for a shared morning tea.

Friday, 28 May, 7.30pm AUB/OAK at Aubigny.