

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

5 September 2021
15th Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 505 450 161 430

INTROIT:

Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul!

Let me praise the LORD throughout my life; let me sing praise to my God as long as I live.

Do not trust in influential people, in a descendant of Adam, who cannot save. His spirit will depart, he will return to his earth; on that day his plans will have perished.

Blessed is the one who has the God of Jacob for his help; whose hope is in the LORD his God, who has made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who remains faithful for ever, who provides justice for the oppressed; and who gives food to the hungry. The LORD causes prisoners to go free.

The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD raises up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves righteous people.

The LORD watches over the resident aliens. He comes to the aid of the orphan and the widow. But He makes the way of wicked people crooked.

The LORD will reign for ever; Your God, O Zion, for all generations.

Praise the LORD!

Psalm 146

COLLECT: O Lord, let Your merciful ears be open to the prayers of Your humble servants and grant that what they ask for may be in accord with Your gracious will; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

READINGS:

Isaiah 35:4-7a The salvation of our God.

James 2:1-10, 14-18 Do not prefer the rich. Keep the whole Law. Faith is active.

Mark 7:24-37 The Syro-Phoenician woman's faith; and the healing of the man who was deaf and dumb.

SERMON: Mark 7:31-37 EPHPHATHA! BE OPENED!

Welcome to all worshipping with us today! Pastor Peter Ziebell, Phone 0407583922.
Email him at paziebell@gmail.com or to the church office at ddaelc@gmail.com.
Please notify pastor of anyone who is unwell or in need of a visit.

Cherish Life are holding a Brisbane March for Life on Saturday 11 September. The "Voluntary Assisting Dying Bill", is scheduled to be debated and voted on in the parliamentary week commencing Tuesday 14 September. More information about emailing your local politician can be found on this website <https://www.cherishlife.org.au>

Am I Willing to Take a Stand?

It's popular today to talk about being spiritual but not religious. Some people want to be considered spiritual, but they are not sure they want to take a stand for Jesus.

Other people tend to think about religion in terms of family or tradition. Children or spouses act as though someone else can maintain a relationship with God for them - that having godly parents or grandparents will somehow qualify them for life in heaven. But that simply does not work.

Jesus Himself acknowledged that being a follower is a personal matter that will not always be easy. In fact, it may at times cause divisions even in families. He says, "*Do you think that I have come to give peace on the earth? No, I tell you but rather, division. For from now on there will be five in one family who have been divided, three against two, and two against three*" (Luke 12:51-52).

In saying these words, Jesus was just being honest. No one will doubt that, in times past, Christians have faced opposition because of their faith. Probably all of the apostles with the exception of John died violently because of their faithfulness to Christ. Moreover, the list of martyrs has lengthened in every century.

So, what do Jesus' words say to each of us? Perhaps we can remember a time when being a Christian was popular and respected. What do Jesus' words mean for us as 21st-century followers of Christ living in post-Christian Australia? Hopefully, His words will cause each of us to pause and take stock of our faith. If our faith is never challenged, is it possible that we have made our faith so much like our world that it simply offends no one? Have we come to the point that the world sets the standards for our faith, rather than us setting standards for our world by living out our faith? Jesus clearly indicates that there are times when the truth of His Word will create division and controversy.

Does that mean we have to get involved in difficult issues? Does God want us to take stands? There is a simple answer to those questions: Jesus did.

How peaceful His life could have been! He could have remained in the carpenter's shop in Nazareth. He could have preached and healed and won great popularity among the people. But Jesus did what He had to do, even if the consequences were a cross.

And there we find our challenge and our comfort. Following Christ and taking a stand for Him may at times cause divisions and troubles. It certainly will not be considered politically correct by many in our society. But, at the same time, we know that when we do follow Christ and stand up for Him and for the truths of His Word, there is no cause for fear even if others choose to ridicule or attack us. We are standing with the very One who gave His life on the cross so that we can have eternal life.

Once when Martin Luther was at the height of his struggles with the Roman Church, someone asked him what he would do if the princes and their supporters deserted him. "Where will you be then, Martin?" he was asked.

The bold reformer replied, "I will be where I have always been, in the hands of God."

That is still true today when we take our stand for Jesus. We are always in the hands of God, and we can count on Him. I pray that God will give each of us the courage to take our stand with Jesus in our lives each day.

COMING SERVICES

| 5 September 15 Pentecost | 12 September 16 Pentecost | 19 September 17 Pentecost |
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| 8.30am OAK LR 8.00am TMBA Bible Study & 9.00am HC 9.00am GRN LR 10.30am AUB HC 9.00am LOWOOD LR | 8.30am OAK LR 8.30am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am LOWOOD HC | 9.30am OAK HC followed by Bible Study 9.00am TMBA LR 9.00am MARBURG LR |
| Sunday, 12 September | | |
| READINGS: Isaiah 50:4-10; James 3:1-12; Mark 9:14-29 | | |
| HYMNS: 411 326 449 (842 291) 156 v.5 | | |
| Sunday, 19 September | | |
| READINGS: Jeremiah 11:18-20; James 3:13-4:10; Mark 9:30-37 | | |
| HYMNS: 503 356 605 (85 291) 434 | | |

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tuesday, **14** September, 7.30pm. Men's Fellowship at Oakey. Opening devotion: John.

At a recent parish meeting, discussion was held on a revised service schedule. Beginning September 19, a new schedule will be trialled. We hope to let it run for the rest of the year so as to give sufficient time to see if it will work, and to fine tune it if needed, or to scrap altogether. However, it will be further discussed at the next CoC meeting, to be held on October 23 at Lowood.

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

Weekly Sunday School lessons are also now available in the Members section.

If there are any late changes to be made to divine services due to covid lockdowns, these will be listed immediately on the website. If you are unsure, please contact pastor.