

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

19 September 2021

17th Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 503 356 605 85 291 434

INTROIT:

O God, save me by Your name, and bring justice to me with Your might.
O God, hear my prayer, and open Your ears to the words from my mouth.
For strangers have risen up against me; and violent men have been seeking my life. They have not set God before them.

Surely God is my Helper! The Lord is with those who support my life.
He will repay my enemies for their evil. Silence them by Your truth.
Let me sacrifice a freewill offering to you; I shall praise Your name,
O LORD, for it is good.

For He has delivered me out of all trouble; and my eye has been gloating over my enemies. Psalm 54

COLLECT: O God, whose strength is made perfect in weakness, grant us humility and childlike faith, that we may please You in both will and deed; 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:

Jeremiah 11:18-20 A plot against Jeremiah's life.

James 3:13-4:10 Wisdom from above. Do not love the world. Resist the devil.

Mark 9:30-37 The servant of all is the greatest.

SERMON: Mark 9:30-37 JESUS, THE PERFECT SERVANT

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.**

Christians pray in accord with the will of God

God wills that we give Him thanks in our prayers. When we stop and count all the blessings God has given us in our lives, both temporal and spiritual, we have much for which to give thanks. Paul wrote, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” (Phil 4:6). When only one leper out of ten came back to thank Jesus for healing, Jesus said, “Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” (Luke 17:17). When we remember to thank God for His blessings in our prayers, we also shall see that God has richly blessed us. It will enable us to keep the problems God permits to come into our lives in proper perspective.

God wills that we include all people in our prayers. Paul wrote, “I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone - for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness” (1 Tim. 2:1-2). Jeremiah urged the exiles in Babylon to pray for the peace and prosperity of the place where they had been taken captive (Jer. 29:7). We shall pray even for our enemies. Jesus tells us to do this (Matt. 5:44). Jesus did this for His enemies as He suffered on the cross (Luke 23:34).

Stephen prayed for those who stoned him (Acts 7:60). We receive the strength to do this from God’s love for us (1 John 4:19).

God also tells us to pray in accord with His will. John wrote, “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us” (1 John 5:14). We may pray for spiritual blessings unconditionally, for we know what God’s will is with regard to our spiritual lives. Paul wrote, “It is God’s will that you should be sanctified” (1 Thess. 4:3). God wants us to grow in faith, love, and sanctified living. Thus we do not have to ask for these things conditionally, saying “not my will but Your will be done.”

God wills that we pray conditionally for earthly blessings. In this way we, in faith, place the governance of our lives into His hands. With regard to earthly blessings, we do not know what God’s will is. We do not know if His will is that we be rich or poor, sick or healthy, and so on. We leave these matters up to God. We bring our requests to God with the confidence that God will do what is best for us. We know He loves us, for He has given His Son to die for us. Thus we have the assurance He will do what is best for us (Rom. 8:32). If an earthly father can give his children good gifts, certainly our heavenly Father will give us what is best for us (Luke 11:9-13). Thus, when we ask God for earthly blessings, we place ourselves by faith into the hands of our loving heavenly Father. Jesus did this as He prayed for His Father to spare Him the cross, if that was possible (Luke 22:42).

The leper did this as he asked Jesus to heal him, if it was His will (Matt. 8:2).

God wills that we pray with the confidence that He will hear and answer our prayers. God does not want us to pray with doubt that he will help. James wrote, "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does" (1:5-8). When people approach God with the attitude "I really don't think this will help but I am ready to try anything once," they should not expect God to answer their prayers.

There are those who have said that prayer is like a blank cheque. Just fill in the amount you want God to give you. It is true, no request we can make is too great for our God. Yet we are told to pray conditionally for earthly blessings. Thus we leave earthly matters up to God's will. Further, Paul tells us that God the Holy Spirit distributes His gifts as He wills. So the claim that the Holy Spirit must give us the gifts of speaking in tongues and healing if we ask Him for them does not agree with Scripture.

Further, those who say that God must heal us if we believe strongly enough do not teach what Scripture teaches. Faith healers do not acknowledge that it may not be God's will to heal someone. We are directed to ask for earthly blessings in accord with God's will. Three times the apostle Paul asked God to heal him. Three times the Lord told Paul that it was not His will to heal him. Rather, God gave Paul the strength to bear the problem he had (2 Cor. 12:7-9).

Finally, we will not pray for the dead. Scripture tells us that people are judged at death (Heb 9:27). Those who die as believers go to heaven. They do not need our prayers, as they rest in glory. Those who die as unbelievers go to hell. Not one of our prayers cannot help them.

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

COMING SERVICES

26 September 18 Pentecost	3 October 19 Pentecost	10 October 20 Pentecost
8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA HC & Bible Study 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am MARBURG LR	9.00am TMBA LR 10.00am MARBURG HC and Sunday School Picnic (Downs Parish members invited)	8.30am OAK HC 9.00am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.30am GRN HC 9.00am LOWOOD LR
Sunday, 26 September		
READINGS: Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29; James 5:1-20; Mark 9:38-50		
HYMNS: 119 338 341 (840) 346		
Sunday, 3 October		
READINGS: Genesis 2:18-25; Hebrews 2:1-18; Mark 10:2-16		
HYMNS: 276 893 621 789 285 604 TMBA: 504 893 621 604		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Choir Practice, 26 September at Oakey at 7.30pm. Next choir practice for members below the range will be on Sunday the 3rd of October after service.

LOWOOD: 23 September, 10.00am. Bible Study at the church.

Please take home with you today a copy of the latest AELC Newsletter.

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 Saturday, 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.