

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

10 October 2021
20th Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 305 359 332 645

INTROIT:

Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a wise heart.
Return, O LORD! How long? Have compassion on Your servants.
In the morning satisfy us with Your mercy; that we may shout happily
and be glad all our days.
Make us glad for as many days as You have made us suffer, for as
many years as we have seen misery.
Let Your work appear to Your servants, and Your splendour to their
children.
And let the kindness of the LORD our God be upon us. Establish for us
the work of our hands. Yes, establish the work of our hands.

Psalm 90:12-17

COLLECT:

Lord Jesus Christ, whose grace always precedes and follows us, help us
to forsake all trust in earthly gain and to find in You our heavenly
treasure; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one
God, now and for ever. Amen.

READINGS:

Amos 5:6-7, 10-15 Hate evil, love good, maintain justice!
Hebrews 3:12-19 Warning against unbelief.
Mark 10:17-22 The rich man goes away sad.

SERMON: Mark 10:17-22 TREASURE IN HEAVEN

*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.

Do Not Harden Your Hearts

From our Second Reading for today, Hebrews 3:12-19, we see that with pastoral concern the author applies a warning to his readers and fellow believers when he writes, “*Be careful, fellow-Christians, that none of you has in him a wicked, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God!*” (v.12). He did not want a single one of them to be lost. Unbelief is always a heart problem, one that deals with the inner being, and unbelief is always serious because it rejects Christ’s salvation.

Turning away from a living God is not a matter of casual drifting but of *deliberate desertion* by hearts that once heard and believed but then cut themselves off from the living God. Were any of the readers inclined because of persecution’s heat to rebel against Jesus by turning back to Judaism? Let them be warned! To turn away from Jesus is to reject the living God. In John 5:23 Jesus had said, “*He who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father, who has sent Him.*”

All of them needed constant encouragement from one another. Sin can be so violently deceitful. It disguises its horrible purpose, dilutes its poisonous taste, and in the end utterly destroys. Did the sin of turning from Christ back to Judaism seem not so serious, perhaps even prudent, in the face of persecution? Therefore, “Watch out,” the author warned, “*that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin!*” Rather, they were to “*Encourage one another daily.*”

The author reminded his readers that no believer exists as an island. Christian faith and spiritual health are not just matters between a man and his God. They are of vital concern among fellow believers. Gathering together in local congregations is more than advisable; it is necessary so that we can “*encourage one another daily.*”

Believers share so much in Christ and have so much more waiting for them. All that the heaven-sent Saviour offers is ours “*if we firmly hold the reality that we had at the beginning until the end*” (v.14). What a firm, confident stand those readers had when first brought to faith! How sad if any were now to turn out like the rocky soil of Mark 4:16-17, where the seed of faith lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the Word, they quickly fall away.

Once more the author warns his readers about hardening their hearts when he writes, “*Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as you did in the rebellion!*” (v. 15). Then with a series of hard-hitting questions, he drives home his point. “*Who, indeed, were those that heard Him and rebelled?*” (v. 16). Not people who were ignorant or had never experienced God’s wondrous works and ways but “*all those who were brought out of Egypt through Moses. With whom was **He angry for forty years?** Was it not with those who sinned and whose **bodies fell in the wilderness?**” (v. 17). God’s anger was not with those who didn’t know any better or were innocent but “*those who sinned.*” God’s anger is not capricious or hasty.*

Forty years of rejection and rebellion by those who had richly experienced divine providence was the cause of all those graves dotting the desert. “*To whom did He **declare on oath that they would not enter His place of rest?***” To people who had no excuse whatsoever, to those who knew better and yet disobeyed, refusing to believe. Can any reader miss the point? “*So, we see,*” the author concludes, “*that they could not enter because of unbelief*” (v. 19). What robbed that generation of Israel of rest both in the earthly and the heavenly Canaan? The answer is unbelief. Will the consequences be any less severe for those who would turn away from the superior Jesus today?

So much seems to be demanded of those first readers and of us today. The race of faith is to be all-out all the time; the course on which it is run is hazardous and obstacle-filled, and it never lets up! How can we do it? How can we hold out? “*Consider Jesus,*” the author urges, “*the Apostle and High Priest of our confession!*” (3:1). Let that superior Jesus and His Word be the sure basis of our confidence. This is why we pray, “God, rest our faith not on what we are but on what Jesus is, not on what we do but on what Jesus has done.” Then our journey in life’s wilderness, unlike Israel’s, will have both a good beginning and a good end.

17 October 21 Pentecost	24 October 22 Pentecost	31 October Reformation Day
8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA HC 9.00am GRN LR 10.45am AUB HC 9.00am LOWOOD LR	9.30am OAK HC (Combined with Aubigny & Greenwood) followed with Bible Study 9.00am TMBA LR 9.00am MARBURG LR	9.00am TMBA LR 10.00am LOWOOD AELC HC Service
Sunday, 17 October		
READINGS: Ecclesiastes 5:10-20; Hebrews 4:1-16; Mark 10:23-31		
HYMNS: 372 377 149 (84 376) 509		
Sunday, 24 October		
READINGS: Jeremiah 31:7-9; Hebrews 7:23-28; Mark 10:46-52		
HYMNS: 103 400 241 (779 77) 643		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Choir Practice tonight at Oakey at 7.30pm.

Tuesday, 12 October, 7.30pm. Men's Fellowship at Oakey. Opening devotion: Grant.

Saturday, 23 October, 10.00am. CoC/Sem. Committee meeting at Lowood. Please pass on any agenda items to your representatives to bring to the meeting.

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.