

Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church

**BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA, OUR SAVIOUR LOWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,
ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, TRINITY MARBURG, TRINITY OAKEY,**

14 November 2021

25th Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 296 563 129 297 293 301

INTROIT:

You receive praise in silence in Zion, O God, and vows to You will be fulfilled.

O You who hear prayer, to You all human beings will come.

Iniquitous things have been prevailing over me. You Yourself will provide atonement for our rebellious actions.

Blessed is the person whom You choose and whom You bring near, that he may dwell in Your courts! We shall be satisfied with the good things of Your house, the holiness of Your Temple.

You answer us in righteousness with awesome deeds, O our saving God, the Confidence of all the ends of the earth and of the most distant sea. He is the One who sets the mountains in place by His strength, the One who puts on strength like a waistcloth.

He is the One who calms the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves and the turmoil of the peoples.

Those who live at the ends of the earth have been in awe of Your miraculous signs. You make the places where morning dawns and the places where evening fades shout for joy.

You have taken care of the land and have caused it to overflow. You have enriched it abundantly. The stream of God is filled with water. You are providing their grain. For that is how You have prepared it.

You have given its furrows their fill of drink and levelled off the edges of its furrows. You soften it with gentle rain and bless its growth.

You have crowned the year of Your goodness, and Your wheel-tracks drip with fat.

The pastures in the desert overflow. The hills are robed with joy.

The meadows are clothed with flocks, and the valleys are covered with grain. They are shouting for joy. Indeed, they are singing.

Psalm 65

COLLECT: Almighty God, You crown the fields with Your blessing and permit us to gather in the fruits of the earth. As stewards of Your creation, may we receive Your gifts in humble thankfulness and share Your bounty with those in need; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

READINGS Deuteronomy 26:1-11 Offerings of Firstfruits and Tithes.
2Corinthians 9:6-15 The Cheerful Giver.
Luke 12:13-21 The Parable of the Rich Fool.

SERMON: John 20:21&22 & Acts 2:2&4 BREATHE ON ME BREATH OF GOD

Eternal Life is Ours

All our sins have been forgiven! Ponder that for a moment! They have been washed away in the blood of the Lamb, washing which we enjoy day after day in this life and which we shall enjoy fully and perfectly in heaven (Revelation 7:9-17). While we mourn in repentance our whole life long over our sins and failures to perfectly reflect our faith, at the last judgment all such mourning will end. For there will be no more sins and no more temptations to sin in heaven but only perfect joy over the redemption won for us by Christ and received by us here in faith.

What a day that will be for us! Just think of it: All that has been suffered silently and without any comfort save that of the Gospel itself will be exposed to the light for praise from the Saviour. All that was done without the slightest hint of gratitude in this life will hear the praise of God before the whole world. All that was done simply because it was in accord with God's Word but that at the time seemed so pointless and in vain, all of it will receive from Him for whom it was done the highest acclamation. Oh to be sure, none of these things were ever done perfectly or even with a perfect motive, but at the last judgment that won't matter. The work will be held up as a perfect jewel, a diamond, and a sapphire, fit only for the praises of the Lamb who sits on the throne.

That's what St. Paul is talking about in 1 Corinthians 15, his great resurrection chapter. To mention just the point most pertinent here, the apostle speaks of the difference between our bodies now and our bodies at the resurrection and in heaven. He says, "*It will be like that with the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in decay: it is raised without decay.*"⁴³ *It is sown in dishonour: it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness: it is raised in power.*"⁴⁴ *It is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body... For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*"⁵³ *For this perishable body must clothe itself with what is imperishable, and this dying body must clothe itself with what cannot die.*

⁵⁴ *When this perishable body clothes itself with what is imperishable and when this dying body clothes itself with what cannot die, then this passage of Scripture will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory!" (15:42-44, 52-54)*

So then, at the resurrection on the Last Day all that is wrong with our bodies and, yes, with our souls too will disappear. To put it another way, the body and soul will together forever be set free from the sinful nature that infected them from the moment of conception (original sin) and that showed that corruption throughout earthly life with sins of thought, word, and deed (actual sin). All that is wrong with us as a result of sin, including mortality, will disappear on the Last Day - the sin forgiven, and its consequences forever destroyed. That's the difference between a "natural body" and a "spiritual body" in the resurrection: still a body, but minus its sins and limitations.

When will all of this happen? When will the Last Day finally come? We certainly reject all the foolish attempts that have been made to pin-point an actual date for Jesus' return. Jesus Himself warns against such folly and does so emphatically when He declares that even He (in the state of humiliation of His human nature) does not choose to know the exact date (Mark 13:32). It isn't difficult to conceive of reasons why God does not choose to tell us the exact date of Jesus' return. If He did, we can well imagine that people would put off repentance until that day promised - by which time, of course, the Gospel would have disappeared together with any faith in it. It is for the same reason that He does not reveal to us the day of our death: we simply are too perverse in our nature to handle that knowledge with wisdom!

So instead of telling us the hour of our death or the date of the Last Day, He tells us instead always to be ready, to watch for His coming. He urges that repeatedly in almost every instance when He speaks of the Last Day (e.g., Matthew 24-25; Mark 13; Luke 12:40; 21:36). The apostles make the same plea: Watch (e.g., 1 Corinthians 15:52). St. Peter (2 Peter 3) is especially graphic in his call to us to watch and be prepared always for that day. For it will come so swiftly ("like a thief," i.e., without an announcement or warning) that there will then be no time to prepare, to repent, or to perform good works as fruits of faith. In an instant all that we know of time and space, of landscapes and geography will disappear and be destroyed or transformed.

Welcome to all worshipping with us today! A special welcome to Thomas Steinhardt, who is being confirmed 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.

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.**

COMING SERVICES

21 November Last Sunday of the Church Year	28 November 1 Advent	5 December 2 Advent
8.30am OAK HC Harvest 9.00am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.30am GRN HC Harvest 9.00am LOWOOD LR	8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA HC Harvest 9.00am GRN LR 10.45am AUB HC Harvest	8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am MARBURG HC
Sunday, 21 November		
READINGS: Isaiah 51:4-6; Jude 20-25; Mark 13:24-37 OAK/GRN: Deuteronomy 26:1-11; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15; Luke 12:13-21		
HYMNS: 272 173 487 219 OAK & GRN: 562 (tune OLD 124) 487 563 839 840 219		
Sunday, 28 November		
READINGS: Jeremiah 33:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 19:28-40		
HYMNS: 2 10 86 19 TMBA & AUB: 2 562 (tune OLD 124) 563 839 840 219		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tentative dates to remember for the Christmas Season:

12 December, 10.00am. Downs Children's Christmas Program at Aubigny.

12 December, 7.30pm. Carols Evening at Toowoomba.

19 December, 7.00pm. Marburg Children's Christmas Program.