

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

26 December 2021

The First Sunday after Christmas

HYMNS: 28 33 44 630

INTROIT: Praise the LORD! I shall give thanks to the LORD with all my heart, in the company of upright people and in the congregation.

The works of the LORD are great. They are studied by all who delight in them.

His work is splendid and majestic, and His righteousness endures for ever.

He has caused His miraculous acts to be remembered. The LORD is gracious and compassionate.

He has given food to those who fear Him. He will remember His Covenant for ever.

He has shown His powerful works to His people by giving to them the inheritance of the nations.

The works of His hands are faithful and just. All His Precepts are trustworthy. They are firm for ever and ever. They have been made in truth and uprightness.

He has sent redemption to His people. He has ordained His Covenant for ever. His name is holy and awesome.

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. All who observe His Precepts have good understanding. His praise endures for ever.

Psalm 111

COLLECT: O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him, who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

READINGS: Exodus 13:1-3a, 11-15 Consecration of the Firstborn.

Colossians 3:12-17 We should live as God's people.

Gospel: Luke 2:22-40 Jesus presented at the Temple.

SERMON: Luke 2:22-40 WHAT A WAY TO GO!

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

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

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

Christmas Comfort and Joy

“I am bringing you Good News of great joy, which will be for all the people!” the angel said to the shepherds (Luke 2:10). Why is this Good News? Because He is BORN and He is our SAVIOUR. In this Child of Bethlehem the Lord of Hosts and the Creator of heaven and earth is BORN. He has joined the human family and become one of us, a human being with flesh and blood, body and soul just like any other human being; only without sin, since He was conceived, not by natural generation, but by the Holy Spirit as Scripture testifies and we confess in our Creed.

What breath-taking honour and distinction for the human race! No other creature in the whole universe can boast of such honour and distinction, not even the angels of heaven who are far more glorious creatures than we humans are. The God of heaven and earth *“is not concerned with angels. Rather, He is concerned with the offspring of Abraham”* (Heb. 2:16). Our human nature is raised and received into the Godhead! God the Son, by becoming, man, has honoured our human nature above every other creature that He has created, including the angels of heaven, think of it!

But even though we are Christians, we are too dull to perceive the significance and meaning of this unsurpassable compassion and love of God for us. God stoops to be one of us. Our flesh and blood is at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, ruling and sustaining everything everywhere, so that all things are under the absolute dominion and power of the One who is God and man in one person, both our God and our brother. This thought alone should be enough to incite our mind and heart to confidence, hope, adoration, and unending joy and praise.

As a rich and mighty king from a far land comes to a poverty and famine-stricken people and says to them: *“I shall join your ranks; I shall be like one of you; my bread will feed you, and my wealth and my knowledge will deliver you from poverty. I shall make your land a fruitful field and a beautiful garden, and I shall build you houses and beautiful homes where you all may dwell in peace”* - so God comes to us, joins the human family and says to all: *“My wealth, My wisdom, and My power will deliver you from your enemies that hold you captive, namely sin, death, and hell, and will lead you to eternal life, where, in the mansions of My Father’s house,*

you will live with Me and behold My glory forever.” That is the meaning of the birth of this Child whose birth the angels announced.

Can we fathom the comfort and joy that lies in this truth for us mortals? Surely, if we could fully grasp its meaning our joy would know no bounds, and we would love with all our heart the God who so loved and honoured us, as to raise one of us (for Jesus is one of us) to the glory of the Highest Majesty. And if we believe that God is with us in this Child, must we not then also honour, respect and love the nature that God assumed when He became a little Child, human flesh and blood, our fellow man? But more, our admiration for God’s love and compassion must rise to even greater heights when we begin to consider what we humans really are in our present state. We are not only dust and ashes, but sinners and rebels against our greatest Benefactor, our God, to whom we owe all. A look at the world as it is today tells the story: corruption and intrigue, war and bloodshed, murder and adultery, violence, hatred, envy and jealousy, pride and arrogance, blasphemy and mockery of all that is good and pure, noble and beautiful, everywhere. All of which is an affront of defiance of the Divine Majesty who has created man with love in His heart for God and for each other. Are we not all guilty here? Even the decent and respectable man as well as the Christian falls in judgment here, because their hearts, too, are full of iniquity, falsehood, pride, and love of the creature.

Where shall we go and where shall we stand here? We are all worthy that God should cast us away from His presence in anger and disgust: for we are all morally corrupt by our own fault and choice; God did not create man that way.

But instead of casting us all away, God so loved us, that He assumed our nature so that He could redeem us from sin, death and the grave by His perfect and holy life and His innocent suffering and death: and all this because He loved us. What sublime love above all understanding!

COMING SERVICES

1 January 2022 New Year's Day	2 January 2 Christmas	9 January The Baptism of Jesus
Saturday		
9.30am AUB HC	8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am LOWOOD LR	8.30am OAK R 9.00am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am MARBURG LR
Saturday, 1 January 2022		
READINGS: Numbers 6:22-27; Galatians 3:23-29; Luke 2:21		
HYMNS: 166 36 161 155 291 514		
Sunday, 2 January		
READINGS: 1 Kings 3:4-15; Ephesians 1:3-14; Luke 2:40-52		
HYMNS: 147 588 39 20		
Sunday, 9 January		
READINGS: Isaiah 43:1-7; Romans 6:1-11; Luke 3:15-22		
HYMNS: 168 361 277 279		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor will be away from 2 January to 15 January. If there is an emergency during this time, do not hesitate to call. Otherwise, if it isn't urgent, contact your elders.