

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

25 December 2021

Christmas Day

HYMNS: 627 622 634 625

INTROIT:

Why have the nations been restless, and why do the peoples plot for no purpose?

The kings of the earth take their stand, and the rulers conspire together, against the LORD and against His Anointed One,

saying: "Let us tear up their chains and throw their ropes away from us!"

The One enthroned in heaven laughs. The LORD ridicules them.

Then He speaks to them in His anger and terrifies them in His glowing anger, saying: "Nevertheless, I Myself have consecrated My King on Zion, My holy mountain."

"I shall proclaim the decree of the LORD: He has said to Me: 'You are My Son. Today I have begotten You.

"Ask Me, that I may make the nations Your inheritance and the ends of the earth Your property.

"You will break them with an iron rod. You will smash them to pieces like a vessel of pottery."

Now therefore, kings, act with insight! Take advice, judges of the earth!

Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling!

Fervently kiss the Son, that He may not become angry, and that you may not perish in your way! For His anger may blaze up in a short time. Blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

Psalm 2

COLLECT: Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

READINGS: Isaiah 52:7-10 The good news about salvation

Hebrews 1:1-12 God reveals Himself through His Son.

John 1:1-18 The Word became a human being.

SERMON: John 1:1-18 THE WORD BECAME FLESH AND LIVED AMONG US

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.

God with Us

Again this year, we came together to listen to the children present the Christmas story. That is something we never grow tired of hearing! There is something inexpressibly precious about hearing the good tidings of great joy brought to us in the voices of our children.

The gospel is God's gift to us of eternal life in Christ. Our children are God's gifts to us. When we teach the gospel to our children God joins us to them in a bond stronger than blood. He unites us in the common confession of the one true faith that receives eternal life. God binds us together forever. Our children are God's children.

God gives us children. But they aren't own possessions. They belong to Him. When we bring our children to God in Holy Baptism, we are not only confessing that we believe that God adopts us as His children in this spiritual washing, but we are also confessing that our baptised children belong to God. They bear the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. They are heirs of God's promises. They are Christians.

Jesus says in Matthew 18:1-5 that we must be converted and become like little children, or we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. Why? Is it because children are so innocent? But they're not! Jesus also said that which is "*born of the sinful human nature is sinful human nature*" (John 3:6). Children don't need to be taught how to sin. They are born sinful. They believe that the world exists to serve them. It's cute for a while until we see it for what it is.

Why then does Jesus say we must be converted and become like little children, or we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven? Is it because their faith is purer than the faith of an adult? I don't doubt that it is, but if our faith must be pure and free from any doubt at all I wonder if anyone over the age of six can be saved! It is true that little children believe with a more implicit confidence than we have as we grow older and become so smart that we think we know better than God knows.

Our Lord is not talking specifically about the faith of a little child when He says that we must become like little children in order to get to heaven. Consider

the question Jesus was answering when He said these words. The disciples had asked Him who was greatest in the kingdom of God. In response to that question Jesus set a child in the midst of them. He pointed to the child and said to be like him. Humble yourself as a little child.

Even in our day, when children often lack proper discipline and make themselves the centre of attention when they should be respectfully silent, children don't have the status of an adult. We don't let them drive or vote. We set down rules about what they will wear, eat, and drink. They are minors. And we try to teach them to submit to parental authority so that they will learn to get along in this world. We look at families in which the children have their parents under their control, and we pity the poor parents.

Who among adults wants the status of a child? But that's what Jesus wants for us! He's not telling us to think or act as a little child would think or act. He's telling us to accept the status a little child has: to become small and powerless and without any real status at all. When we humble ourselves before God and one another and become like little children, whom do we see? We see the little Child of all little children. We see the little Child born of Mary. We see the almighty Son of the Father given to us as the helpless Child of Mary. We see our God with us. And look! He's with our children! He's in their voices. He's in the words we hear them speak to us. He's in their singing of the ancient hymns and carols of the Church.

He, who has joined Himself to us as a little Child, remains with us and with our children even today. He is God. He is our God. He is with us. He is with our children. He grew to manhood in innocence. He was pure and free from all sin. On the cross, in His innocence He bore our sin. His pure, holy, and spotless life was offered to heaven in the place of our sinful, prideful, and corrupt lives. God remained with us as Jesus rose from the dead to proclaim forgiveness of sins to the whole world. God was with us as He established His holy Christian Church on this earth and gave to her the pure gospel and sacraments in which and through which God is with us until the end of time. God is with us and our children.

Humble yourselves before your Creator today. Bow down before Him whom the sea and wind obey. See Him lying in a manger, a little Child. Find in that Child the greatness you need, for He is God with us.

COMING SERVICES

26 December 1 Christmas	1 January 2022 New Year's Day	2 January 2 Christmas
	Saturday	
8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am MARBURG HC	9.30am AUB HC	8.30am OAK R 9.00am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am LOWOOD LR
Sunday, 26 December		
READINGS: Exodus 13:1-3a, 11-15; Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:22-40		
HYMNS: 28 33 44 (628 30) 630		
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		

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.

Matthew 1:23
They shall call His name Emmanuel
(which is translated, God with us).