

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

24 April, 2022

Second Sunday of Easter

**HYMNS:** 100 103 169 839 292 175

**INTROIT: Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD** from the heavens!  
Praise Him in the heights above!

Praise Him, all you His angels! Praise Him, all His hosts!

Praise Him, sun and moon! Praise Him, all you stars of light!

Praise Him, you heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the LORD! For He commanded, and they were created.

He set them in position for ever and ever. He gave a decree that will not pass away.

**Praise the LORD** from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths, fire and hail, snow and fog, wind and storm, which carry out His Word, you mountains and all hills, you fruit trees and all cedars, you wild animals and all cattle, you reptiles and winged birds, you kings of the earth and all peoples, you princes and all judges on the earth, you young men and also you maidens, you old men together with young people!

Let them praise the name of the LORD! For His name alone is exalted. His majesty is above earth and heaven.

He has raised up a horn for His people, praise from all His devout people, from the people of Israel, the people who are close to Him!

Praise the LORD!

Psalm 148

**COLLECT:** Almighty God, grant that we, who have celebrated the Lord's resurrection, may by Your grace confess in our life and conversation that Jesus is Lord and God; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**READINGS:** Acts 5:27-32 The God of our fathers raised Him.

Revelation 1:4-8 He died and is alive again.

John 20:19-31 The disciples were delighted to see the Lord.

**SERMON:** John 20:19-31 WORDS OF LIFE

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.**

## The Christian Difference is the Gospel

The gospel is not an obvious teaching. We Lutherans can easily take it for granted. Some years ago, I heard a church leader say, "Yes, of course we are all straight on the gospel, now we have to get busy on using it!" This then was a call for us to do and us to serve, never mind about God's doing and God's serving. The gospel can never be treated as obvious. "Oh, yes, well of course we have the gospel. It's all sewn up. Let's get on to bigger and better things." There is nothing bigger. There is nothing better than teaching what Christ says that He "*has not come to be served but to serve and give (My) life as a ransom for many*" (Matt. 20:28). The Christian difference is the gospel.

Even the disciples "don't get it." They are afraid when Jesus turns His face to Jerusalem to confront His doom. He plans to "*be betrayed to the Chief Priests and the scribes. They will condemn Him to death and will hand Him over to the Gentiles.*"<sup>34</sup> *They will mock Him and spit on Him, flog Him and kill Him, and after three days He will rise*" (Mark 10:33-34). The disciples, however, want to move on to bigger and better things. "*Grant that one of us may sit at Your right, and the other at Your left in Your glory*" (Mark 10:37). They had no idea what they are asking! If even Jesus' closest companions cannot get this straight, why should we think that the gospel is "obvious, every knows it, and no big deal." Only when they are confronted by the Crucified One after He has risen, and only after the Lord had sent them the Holy Spirit did the disciples truly "get it." Only then could they witness to the servant Lord who gives Himself to sinners through suffering and death. The Christian difference is the suffering Lord.

Unfortunately, many churches today have long soft-pedalled Christianity. Soft-peddalling has not worked. The church's enemies are still implacably opposed to our teaching and principles and they are still coming for us. Never doubt it. The baby boomer project attempting to make Christianity less offensive

to the continuously offended has failed. It has left many churches utterly lethargic, unable to respond faithfully to the declining culture and its false messiahs. Many Christian churches are simply fighting for sexual degeneracy, and all manner of “wokenesses” under the guise of what are called “justice and equity.” They certainly have no time for the Saviour whose church it is; the Saviour who gives Himself for sinners. When nothing done by humans could be classified as sin, what good is a Saviour from sin?

When the only shameful things are acts, words, or deeds that offend against “wokeness,” who needs a Saviour who suffers and dies? In a world where your deeds can be dredged up from your online profile from Facebook etc., and weaponized against you, who needs a merciful Christ that swallows down your depravity and returns your life to you cleansed by His precious blood? In a day when love has grown cold, how can the Saviour’s love unknown to the loveless shown, lead us to a love that covers a multitude of sins? Such a Saviour is inconvenient, because He makes it impossible for us to destroy others in the forum of public opinion. The churches have not preached this Christ who serves us. Therefore, we can find no way to serve one another. We can only devour each other, chew upon each other, and spit each other out. O Lord Jesus, save us from such a world! This the Christian difference: The God who serves (Mark 10:45).

Jesus has come for just this purpose. He comes not to fix a world broken, but to save His dear children from this present evil age by giving His life as a ransom. Because the world is fallen and frustratingly fractured, we feel held hostage by the madness. We feel as though someone has ordered us to stay home behind locked doors (Oh, wait! We feel that way because someone already has!). Our Lord has come to rescue us from being taken hostage in Satan’s dominion. He will not leave us in the clutches of the enemy. He comes to serve us in the place of our exile and defy our enemy, throwing down the gage of God’s Word, *“A person does not live by bread alone but by every Word that comes out through the mouth of God”* (Matthew 4:4).

Weekly sermons and bulletins are available at [www.aelc.org.au](http://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, these will be listed immediately on the website. If you are unsure, please contact pastor.

*Welcome to all worshipping with us today!*

Pastor Peter Ziebell, Phone 0407583922.

Email him at [paziebell@gmail.com](mailto:paziebell@gmail.com) or to the church office at [ddaalc@gmail.com](mailto:ddaalc@gmail.com).

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

## COMING SERVICES

<b>1 May 3 EASTER</b>	<b>8 May 4 EASTER</b>	<b>15 May 5 EASTER</b>
8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA HC 9.00am GRN LR 10.45am AUB HC Confirmation Service 9.00am MARBURG LR	8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am LOWOOD HC & Bible Study	8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am MARBURG PR & Baptism
<b>Sunday, 1 May</b>		
READINGS: Acts 9:1-22;	Revelation 5:1-14;	John 21:1-19
HYMNS: 386 336 113 (162 289) 434 AUB: 299 336 162 301 289 292		
<b>Sunday, 8 May</b>		
READINGS: Acts 20:17-35;	Revelation 7:9-17;	John 10:22-30
HYMNS: 97 391 400 (771 289) 602		

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE TO SERVICES ON 15 MAY

BIBLE STUDIES:

Friday, 29 April, 7.30pm at Aubigny for AUB/OAK members.

Next Sunday, 1 May, 1.00pm at Bethlehem Toowoomba. Frank Steinhardt will be celebrating his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday and is holding an afternoon tea with fellowship. All members of the AELC are invited to attend. No cards or gifts, but please bring a plate to share.

Wednesday, 4 May, 10.00am. Women's Guild at Lowood. Opening Devotion: Jeanette. Choose a Bible verse from Exodus 9-14. Item of interest: Story or photo of family pet.

Saturday, 7 May, 10.00am. CoC/Sem meeting at Bethlehem Toowoomba. Please note: This is the AGM and election of office bearers will take place, so all delegates are urged to attend. Any agenda items, please place through your reps.