

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

9 October 2022

The 18<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

**HYMNS:** 172 241 159 451

**INTROIT:**

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

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

His work is glorious and majestic; and His righteousness endures for ever. He has caused His wonders 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 declared the power of His 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 steadfast for ever and ever; they are done in truth and uprightness.

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

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:** Almighty God, You show mercy to Your people in all their troubles. Grant us always to recognise Your goodness, give thanks for Your compassion, and praise Your holy name; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**READINGS:** Ruth 1:1-19a Naomi and Ruth.  
2 Timothy 2:1-13 Encouragement to be faithful.

Luke 17:11-19 None came back to give God glory except this foreigner.

*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.***

**Ruth 1:1-19a**

<sup>1</sup> In the days when the judges were ruling, there was a famine in the land. A man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to stay as a foreigner in the country of Moab. <sup>2</sup> The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's name was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. As descendants of Ephrathah they came from Bethlehem in Judah to the country of Moab and were staying there. <sup>3</sup> Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left alone with her two sons. <sup>4</sup> They married women from Moab. The name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other was Ruth. They continued to live there for about ten years. <sup>5</sup> Then both Mahlon and Chilion died too, and Naomi was left alone, without her two children and without her husband.

<sup>6</sup> Then Naomi and her daughters-in-law started out on the way back from the country of Moab, because while still in Moab she had heard that the LORD had taken care of His people and had given them food. <sup>7</sup> Therefore, she left the place where she had been staying, and her two daughters-in-law went with her. They walked along the road back to the land of Judah.

<sup>8</sup> However, Naomi told her two daughters-in-law: "Go! Return, each of you, to your mother's home! May the LORD be kind to you, as you have been kind to those who are now dead and to me! <sup>9</sup> May the LORD grant that each of you will find security in the home of her husband!"

Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. <sup>10</sup> They told her, "No! We shall go back with you to your people."

<sup>11</sup> However, Naomi said: "Go back, my daughters! Why should you come with me? Do I have any more sons in my womb, that they should become your husbands? <sup>12</sup> Go back, my daughters! Leave me, because I am too old to have another husband. If I should say, 'I still have hope even if I had a husband tonight, and, even if I gave birth to sons, <sup>13</sup> would you wait until they grew up and remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters! It is certainly more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the LORD has gone out against me!"

<sup>14</sup> Then they began to weep aloud again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth firmly clung to her. <sup>15</sup> Then Naomi said: "Look! Your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods. Go back after your sister-in-law!"

<sup>16</sup> However, Ruth answered: "Do not urge me to leave you or to turn back and stop following you! For where you go, I shall go, and where you lodge, I shall lodge. Your people will be my people, and your God my God. <sup>17</sup> I shall die in the place where you die and be buried there. May the LORD treat me harshly and even worse if anything except death separates you from me!"

<sup>18</sup> When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.

<sup>19</sup> So, the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem.

## 2 Timothy 2:1-13

<sup>1</sup> You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus <sup>2</sup> and entrust the things that you have heard from me before many witnesses to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also! <sup>3</sup> Endure hardships with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus! <sup>4</sup> No one who serves in the army becomes entangled in civilian affairs, because he wants to please the one who has enlisted him. <sup>5</sup> Moreover, if anyone competes in athletics, he does not receive a crown unless he competes according to the rules. <sup>6</sup> The hard-working farmer must be the first to receive a share of the crops. <sup>7</sup> Understand what I am saying! For the Lord will give insight to you in all things.

<sup>8</sup> Remember that Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead and is a descendant of David, according to my Good News! <sup>9</sup> For this I am suffering, even to the point of being chained like a criminal. However, the Word of God has not been chained. <sup>10</sup> Therefore, I patiently endure all things because of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. <sup>11</sup> This is a trustworthy saying: If we have died with Him, we shall also live with Him. <sup>12</sup> If we patiently endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we disown Him, He will also disown us. <sup>13</sup> If we are faithless, He remains faithful. For He cannot disown Himself.

## Luke 17:11-19

<sup>11</sup> As Jesus was travelling to Jerusalem, He went along the border between Samaria and Galilee. <sup>12</sup> As He was entering a village, ten men who were lepers came toward Him. They stood at a distance <sup>13</sup> and called out aloud, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

<sup>14</sup> When Jesus saw them, He told them, “Go! Show yourselves to the priests!” As they went, they were made clean. <sup>15</sup> When one of them saw that he had been healed, he came back, loudly glorifying God. <sup>16</sup> He fell on his face at Jesus’ feet, thanking Him; and he was a Samaritan.

<sup>17</sup> Jesus asked, “Were not the ten made clean? Where are the other nine? <sup>18</sup> Has no one been found to return and give glory to God except this foreigner?”

<sup>19</sup> Then Jesus told him, “Get up and go! Your faith has saved you.”

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**CLEANSING FOR LEPERS. SALVATION FOR SAMARITANS.  
MERCY FOR THE MARGINALISED**  
**Sermon for the 18<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, 2022**  
**Luke 17:11-19**

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is our Gospel from before, Luke 17:11-19: **As Jesus was travelling to Jerusalem, He went along the border between Samaria and Galilee. <sup>12</sup> As He was entering a village, ten men who were lepers came toward Him. They stood at a distance <sup>13</sup> and called out aloud, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”**

**<sup>14</sup> When Jesus saw them, He told them, “Go! Show yourselves to the priests!”**

**As they went, they were made clean. <sup>15</sup> When one of them saw that he had been healed, he came back, loudly glorifying God. <sup>16</sup> He fell on his face at Jesus’ feet, thanking Him; and he was a Samaritan.**

**<sup>17</sup> Jesus asked, “Were not the ten made clean? Where are the other nine?”**

**<sup>18</sup> Has no one been found to return and give glory to God except this foreigner?”**

**<sup>19</sup> Then Jesus told him, “Get up and go! Your faith has saved you.”**

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth, Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

Earlier in his Gospel, Luke recounts how a leper was one of the first outcasts that Jesus healed during His Galilean ministry.<sup>1</sup> At that time, a leper who had struck down with leprosy begged Jesus, “*Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.*” Of course, Jesus healed the leper but then said, “*Do not tell anyone but go, show yourself to the priest and make an offering*

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 5:12-16

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for your cleansing as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them!” (Luke 5:14).

Today, from our text, Jesus has a similar run-in, only this time there are *ten lepers*, not one. These lepers “**stood at a distance and called out aloud, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”**” “Mercy” is a biblical word that has to do with God’s help for people in a state of distress, in a state of misery. Each Sunday, as part of our liturgy, we sing the ‘*Lord, have mercy.*’ When we sing these words, we are simply asking the Lord to supply our needs, which are many, out of His great compassion and love for us poor sinners. Mercy is God’s answer to our misery.

So mercy it was that those ten lepers were seeking. They were calling out to Jesus with their “*have mercy.*” They were suffering from affliction and distress. Being lepers, they were afflicted with a terrible skin disease, a wasting disease that had destroyed their flesh and ostracised them from their community. It had also kept them from going to the temple because they were ceremonially unclean. And so, lepers were people who could be described as “*the marginalised.*” They were on the margins of society, literally. They were people on the fringe. Lepers had to keep away from normal, healthy people for fear that they may infect others and would call out “Unclean!” whenever someone would come close.

But take note that here, when Jesus comes close, instead of crying “Unclean!” these lepers feel bold enough to ask for mercy, to ask for His help. They call out, “**Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!**” They know that there is something about Jesus - things they’ve heard about this unusual Man - that has led them to expect great things from Him. They have heard of His miracle-working power. They have heard of His deep compassion, and so they are bold to call out, “**Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!**”

Jesus listens and responds. His mercy moves Him into action. Luke writes, “**When Jesus saw them, He told them, “Go! Show yourselves to the priests!”**”

With His mighty Word, Jesus cleanses the lepers because His Word is a divine Word, a creative Word, powerful and effective. His Word

accomplishes what He says.<sup>2</sup> He wills it, and He says it, and it is so. This is the eternal Son of God speaking here.

Jesus sends the lepers on their way, knowing that His Word will do its work, and sure enough, “**as they went, they were made clean.**” But why did Jesus say to them, “**Go! Show yourselves to the priests!**”? What was that all about?

To begin with, the Law of Moses had provided that when someone was healed of a disease that had made them unclean, then that person was to go and show himself to a priest to verify the healing and to admit the person back into access to the temple, or, before that, back to the tabernacle.<sup>3</sup> It was a way to restore that person back into the community of God’s people. And while at the tabernacle or temple, the healed person would offer up a thank offering, a sacrifice of thanksgiving, to give thanks to God for the healing. That’s why Jesus had told the lepers, “**Go! Show yourselves to the priests!**”

But at the same time, what else would this do, this sending of the ten lepers to the priests? By the priests verifying that these ten lepers were indeed healed, they would be affirming the divine authority of Christ. Jesus was the One who had healed these men, and the priests would *not be able to deny that*. The conclusion that ought to be reached from this was that *Jesus exercised undeniable authority from God*. So, if the priests won’t believe in Him, then hopefully, these lepers will get the message and make the connection.

So, the ten went off to see the priests, except for one of them, who, when seeing that he had been healed, turned around and came back. Why? Well, for starters, this man was a Samaritan, and that meant that he wouldn’t be a person who would go to the Jewish priests because Jews and Samaritans didn’t get along. The Samaritans didn’t go to the temple in Jerusalem to worship, so the healed Samaritan came back.

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<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 55:11

<sup>3</sup> Leviticus 13-14

Let's back up here and give a little background to this whole Samaritan thing. After the reign of Kings David and Solomon, the nation of Israel had split in two, dividing into a northern kingdom, which took the name *Israel*, and a southern kingdom, which was called *Judah*. The temple was in Jerusalem, in the southern kingdom, as was the throne of the line of David. Thus, the legitimate temple and the legitimate king were in the south, in Jerusalem. The northern kingdom, though, set up a rival shrine, unauthorised, and set up a rival capital in the city of Samaria. From that point on, while the southern kingdom often went astray, the northern kingdom, based in Samaria, always was off-beam and fell into idolatry.

Then in the year 722 B.C. the Assyrian army swooped down on Samaria and defeated the northern kingdom. That was it for them. The northern tribes were dispersed, scattered and driven out. The Assyrians brought in other peoples to settle there, which diluted the national and ethnic identity of the people who remained. The result of this was the rise of the Samaritans and the animosity of the true-blue Jews against them. The Samaritans were looked down upon as half-breeds, both ethnically and religiously, which they were.

But now here, among the ten lepers whom Jesus had cleansed, **“was a Samaritan.”** One of these men was a leper and a Samaritan? You can't get much more marginalised than that! Yet Jesus had mercy on him. He cleansed him. Being filled with gratitude and with faith in this Jesus, the healed Samaritan **“came back, loudly glorifying God. <sup>16</sup> He fell on his face at Jesus' feet, thanking Him.”**

As a Samaritan, the healed man couldn't go to the priests in Jerusalem. Nevertheless, he does go to *The Priest*, namely, Jesus Christ. Christ is our great High Priest who intercedes for us with God.<sup>4</sup> He offers up the perfect sacrifice, the once-and-for-all sacrifice, to cleanse us from all our uncleanness, to heal us in both body and soul.

That's what Jesus has done for us. By going to Jerusalem and offering Himself up there in our place, on the cross, Jesus has bridged the gap between

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<sup>4</sup> Romans 8:34

God and us. Our sins had separated us. Jesus restores us. The priestly sacrifice that Jesus offers is complete and perfect. Perfect righteousness, to cleanse us from our terrible sin disease. The Apostle John wrote how “*the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanses us from all sin*” (1 John 1:7).

And this is cleansing for both body and soul. Because our sins are forgiven, now death has no power over us. In the resurrection of Christ, we see a vision of our own future, that is, in the resurrection of the flesh on the Last Day. Our bodies, now afflicted with illness and infirmity, now subject to aging and decay, our bodies now wracked with disease and death - these bodies of ours will be raised up whole and perfect and just right for enjoying eternal life. That is the promise held forth by the cleansing of the lepers. Wholeness, forever.

Dear friends, in this life, you and I have been restored to the community of God, the people of God, the church. We are not marginalised. *It doesn't matter who you are or what you have done or how far you have gotten off-track*. We are all welcome here in the church. This is a place of restoration and reconciliation. So, we repent of our sins and receive God's forgiveness and are joined to the people who live by forgiveness. This is a place of hope and healing and wholeness, a place of care and mercy and compassion. This is where Jesus lives.

Cleansing for lepers, Salvation for Samaritans. Mercy for the marginalised. This is what we find in Jesus Christ our Saviour. Healing in both body and soul for sinners like you and me. This is why we call on Him in all our troubles. “**Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!**” and we trust in Him because it is faith in Christ, this faith that makes us well. “**Get up and go! Your faith has saved you.**”

We give thanks to God for His great mercy shown in His only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who, travelled to Jerusalem to complete the work of our redemption. Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

**PRAYER FOR THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

O God our Father, Lord of all, the creator and sustainer of all things in heaven and on earth, we bow before You in worship, and bring before You our praise and our prayers. In the name of Your only Son Jesus Christ, we ask You to forgive us our many sins, and to rescue us from what we deserve because of them. Come into our lives with Your power, and save us from the temptations and dangers that threaten us.

We recognise our own weakness and know we need Your help. Without Your strength we can do nothing. Therefore, give us the power and blessing of Your Holy Spirit, so that we may stand in the grace You gave us in Baptism, and that we may live a life that measures up to the standard You set when You called us to faith. Inspire us with the Gospel about Your delivering up the Son of Man into the hands of sinful men. Because we humbly receive all spiritual blessings from You, take away our stubborn self-wills, and lead us to do Your perfect will. Take away our pride and conceit, and make us humble. Take away our critical and grumbling spirit, and make us content. Take away our resentment and anger, and make us gentle and patient. Help us in love to put up with each other's faults and weaknesses, as people who have been made rich by Your love.

Pour out Your blessing on Your Church, O God. By the Spirit's power, make us one in heart and mind, in the peace of Christ. Enable us to grasp the Church's oneness in Christ in the truth of the Gospel. Take away from us our pride and sinful desire for pre-eminence. Inspire us by Jesus' humble service to us to serve You gratefully through serving our neighbours. Give us opportunities to demonstrate the confession of the Gospel before the world, that people may be drawn to Your Son and rejoice in Your salvation.

Give Your guidance and blessing to all lawful authority, especially to our King and his representatives, and the parliaments of our Commonwealth and State. Give them wisdom and sound judgment, that godliness may rule and evil be kept in check.

Be the guardian of our homes and families. Make them places where Your Word is treasured, where faith in You produces love, and where love expresses itself in service to You and others.

Touch with Your healing power the sick, the sorrowing, and the suffering. Hear their cry, and remember them in Your mercy. Show them that You are the ever-present source of help, and the saviour of all people, especially of those who believe.

These things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. Amen.

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### How to deal with Stress

“Life was never meant to be easy!” so they say, and stress is part of the inescapable reality of living our lives. Sometimes we feel pushed to the limit by our circumstances. So, people will find all sorts of avenues to pursue, as a way to handle stress. Gardening, watching a movie, listening to music, etc. But another stress reliever (and probably the best!) is God’s Word! In Psalm 119:143, the writer declares, “Distress and hardship have overtaken me, but Your Commandments are my delight.” The New Living Translation begins the verse, “As pressure and stress bear down on me.” Isn’t that what it feels like? Stress bears down on us. It’s an oppressive weight.

The second half of the verse reveals the psalmist’s strength: “But Your commandments are my delight.” In Psalm 119, the psalmist uses a variety of synonyms for Scripture, words like commandments, rules, testimonies, words, promise, precepts, law, and statutes. The psalmist delights in God’s Word. In stressful times, we can delight in God’s Word.

Consider everything that goes into your mind. Disastrous events dominate TV newscasts and online news feeds. You may hear negative comments from people around you. Our minds can be flooded with news and words that drag us down.

What if you tipped the balance more toward God’s Word? What if more of your mental input came from the Bible and less from the world? Philippians 4:8 says, “Finally, my fellow-Christians, keep your minds on all things that are true, all things that are noble, all things that are right, all things that are pure, all things that are lovely, all things that are appealing and anything that is excellent and praiseworthy!” The following verse promises that “the God of peace will also be with you” (Philippians 4:9).

If you want more stress, fill your mind with stressful words - the latest crime report, the political banter, anything negative and unnerving. Or you can choose the alternative: combat stress with God’s life-giving Word. Our emotional capacity is limited. Therefore, seek fewer toxic influences and more uplifting content.

God’s Word shapes our thoughts and actions. “Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Psalm 119:105). God’s Word leads us in a more graceful path. His Word teaches us His ways. Through His life-giving Word, He liberates us from an onslaught of negativity and frees us to live more optimistically and joyfully.

One of the most vivid New Testament passages about stress is in 2 Corinthians 4, known as the “jars of clay” passage. Paul described believers as fragile clay vessels filled with a great treasure! Paul knew about fragility. Two chapters later, he listed his resume of trials. Talk about stressful! Beatings, imprisonments, riots, sleeplessness, hunger, sorrow. The apostle was just getting warmed up. He goes into greater detail in

chapter 11. Imprisoned, flogged, stoned, shipwrecked, cold, naked, concerned about the churches. He shouldered major stress.

But he persevered. The apostle testified, “In every way we are hard-pressed but not crushed. We are perplexed but not in despair. We are persecuted but not forsaken. We are struck down but not destroyed” (2 Corinthians 4:8-9). Hard-pressed. We feel pressure. But we're not crushed!

In Christ, we're not crushed. Do you know why? Because Christ fills us! We're not empty vessels. We are “always carrying around in our bodies the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our bodies” (v. 10). If you're a believer, you're always carrying Jesus within you. A vessel filled with a firm substance can be cracked but not crushed - and nothing is more solid than the Saviour!

A godly perspective sustained Paul in his severe trials. In the midst of hardships, he knew that God was with him. Paul believed that God would not forsake him. Paul trusted that God would accomplish the purposes He intended, no matter how bleak the situation.

None of us would choose hardship for ourselves. The positive by-product of challenges is that once we've endured them, we see how God's sustaining grace carried us. Personal experience convinces us of God's faithfulness. As Paul wrote in what is presumed to be his final letter, “The Lord will deliver me from every evil deed and save me for His heavenly kingdom” (2 Timothy 4:18). Paul responded to his trials confidently because God had brought him through previous adversity.

God will guide us through stressful times. With that assurance, we can approach challenges with greater calm and composure. By His grace, the Lord equips us with faith-building tools for combatting stress: prayer, Scripture, and a God-shaped perspective. The pressures of life may be unrelenting, but so is the love of God for you! Even if you look back with disappointment on previous defeats in the battle against stress, today is a new day! With the Lord's help, you can respond to challenges more gracefully today than you did yesterday. His sustaining grace makes it possible!

Renovation work has commenced on the church hall in Toowoomba. Once work is completed (which should be in a couple months, depending on weather etc), Bethlehem Toowoomba would like to hold a concert, in thanks to all who have supported the project. Therefore, they are looking for items. If you as an individual, or even as a group, would like to perform (skits, jokes, musical items, singing, anything!!), please contact Barry Zischke on 0427 600073, or [bjzisc@gmail.com](mailto:bjzisc@gmail.com).

A tentative plan has been set for a concert to be held at Bethlehem Toowoomba (for more info on the concert, see announcement below). The following is the program:

**Sunday, 20 November.**

9.30am AELC HC service at Bethlehem Toowoomba.

Shared lunch and fellowship after service

12.30pm Concert    Cup of tea after the concert

**COMING SERVICES**

**PLEASE ALWAYS CHECK YOUR BULLETINS FOR ANY UNEXPECTED CHANGES –  
THEY CAN HAPPEN!!!**

<b>16 October 19 Pentecost</b>	<b>23 October 20 Pentecost</b>	<b>30 October Reformation Day</b>
8.30am OAK HC 9.00am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.15am GRN HC 9.00am MARBURG LR	8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA HC Harvest 9.00am GRN LR 10.45am AUB HC Harvest 9.00am LOWOOD LR	10.00am TMBA HC AELC Service
<b>Sunday, 16 October</b>		
READINGS: Genesis 32:22-30;	2 Timothy 3:14-4:5;	Luke 18:1-8
HYMNS: 422 136 425 (308 842) 405		
<b>Sunday, 23 October</b>		
READINGS: Genesis 4:1-15;	2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18;	Luke 18:9-17
HARVEST READINGS: Deuteronomy 26:1-11; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15;		Luke 12:13-21
HYMNS: 400 170 313 600 HARVEST: 564 814 (809 LSB) 563 293 568		

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Tonight, 7.30pm. Choir practice at Oakey.

Tuesday, 11 October, 7.30pm. Men's Fellowship at Oakey. Opening devotion: Don.

Saturday, 15 October. 10.30am. The book club is meeting at the manse.

**OCTOBER BIBLE STUDIES:**

Friday the 21<sup>st</sup>, 7.30pm at Greenwood.

Thursday the 27<sup>th</sup>, 10.00am at Lowood.

Friday the 28<sup>th</sup>, 7.30pm at Oakey. (Oakey/Aubigny combined)

**TOOWOOMBA HALL PROGRESS:**

As work continues on the hall renovation at Bethlehem Toowoomba, a couple unexpected costs have arisen (as can be expected). The hall needed rewiring and termite damage has been exposed. The cost to remedy these issues have added roughly another \$13,000 to the final cost, which will be around \$113,000. So far, \$100,000 has been raised, leaving a shortfall. If anyone would like to help with these costs, please consider making a donation, or a loan to Bethlehem. Contact the chairman, Barry Zischke on 0427 600073.