

Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church
BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA, OUR SAVIOUR LOWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,
ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, TRINITY MARBURG, TRINITY OAKEY
15 January, The Second Sunday after the Epiphany

HYMNS: 46 39 271 368

INTROIT: Psalm 40:1-11

I have been waiting eagerly for the LORD, and He has bent down to me and heard my cry for help.

He has lifted me out of a desolate pit, out of the muddy clay. He has set my feet on a rock, and He has made my steps secure.

He has put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many people will see it, be afraid, and trust in the LORD.

Blessed is the person who has placed his trust in the LORD, and who has not turned to arrogant people, or to those who turn aside to falsehood!

O LORD, my God, You have done many things, Your wonderful works, and Your plans for us. No one can be compared to You. If I were to report and speak about them, they would be too many to recount.

You have not taken pleasure in sacrifice and offering. You have opened up ears for Me. You have not asked for a burnt offering or a sin offering.

Then I said: "Look! I have come. It has been written about Me in the scroll of the Book.

delight to do Your will, O My God, and Your Teaching is inside My inner being."

I have announced the good news of righteousness in the great assembly. Look! I shall not keep my lips closed, O LORD. You Yourself know it.

I have not concealed Your righteousness inside my heart. I have spoken about Your faithfulness and Your salvation. I have not hidden Your mercy and Your truth from the great assembly.

You Yourself, O LORD, will not withhold Your compassion from me. Your mercy and Your truth will continually protect me.

COLLECT: Almighty and everlasting God, because You govern all things in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the prayers of Your people, and grant us Your peace through all our days; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

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.

READINGS:

Isaiah 49:1-7 I will also make You a Light for the Gentiles.

1 Corinthians 1:1-9 He will keep you strong to the end.

John 1:29-42a Look! The Lamb of God.

Isaiah 49:1-7

¹ “Listen to Me, coastlands! Pay attention, distant nations! **The LORD has called Me from the womb.** Before My mother gave birth to Me, He made mention of My Name. ² He has made My **mouth** like a **sharp sword** and has hidden Me in the shadow of His hand. He has made Me into a polished arrow and has hidden Me in His quiver. ³ He has told Me, ‘You are My Servant, Israel, through whom I shall glorify Myself.’ ⁴ However, I Myself said, ‘**I have laboured in vain.** I have spent My strength uselessly and for nothing.’ Yet surely My just cause is with the LORD, and My recompense is with My God. ⁵ Now the LORD has spoken — the One who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob back to Him and to gather Israel to Him, and that I may be glorified in the sight of the LORD. My God has also become My Strength —. ⁶ He has said, ‘It is too insignificant for You to be My Servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back those in Israel whom I have preserved. I shall also make You a **Light for the Gentiles, so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.**’”

⁷ This is what the LORD, who redeems Israel, and who is his Holy One, has said to the One whose soul is held in contempt, and whom a nation loathes, to the Servant of rulers: “Kings will see You and rise up, and princes will see You and bow down, because of the LORD, who is faithful, who is the Holy One of Israel, and who has chosen You.”

1 Corinthians 1:1-9

¹ Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, together with Sosthenes, our fellow-Christian, ² to the church of God at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called, holy people, with all those

everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours: ³ Grace and peace to you from God, our Father and the Lord, Jesus Christ! ⁴ I am always thanking my God for you for the grace of God, which has been given to you in Christ Jesus. ⁵ For in Him you have been made rich in every way, in all speech and all knowledge, ⁶ just as the testimony about Christ has been confirmed in you. ⁷ Therefore, you do not lack any charismatic gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. ⁸ He will also make you firm until the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God, who has called you into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

John 1:29-42a

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look! The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is the One about whom I said, ‘A Man is coming after me who has been ahead of me, because He has existed before me.’ ³¹ I myself did not know Him, but the purpose for which I have come baptising with water is that He may be revealed to Israel.”

³² John testified: “I have seen the Spirit coming down from heaven like a dove, and He has remained on Him. ³³ I did not know Him, but He who has sent me to baptise with water told me, ‘The One on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the One who baptises with the Holy Spirit.’ ³⁴ I have seen it and have been testifying that this is the Son of God.”

³⁵ On the next day John was again standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶ and looked at Jesus as He was walking along and said, “Look! The Lamb of God!”

³⁷ When the two disciples heard him saying this, they began to follow Jesus.

³⁸ Then Jesus turned around and, when He saw them following Him, He asked them, “What are you looking for?”

They asked Him, “Rabbi” (which is translated as “Teacher”), “where are You staying?”

³⁹ He told them, “Come! You will see.”

So, they came, saw where He was staying and stayed with Him that day. It was about the tenth hour. ⁴⁰ Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, was one of the two who had heard what John had said and began to follow Jesus.

⁴¹ Andrew first found his brother Simon and told him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated as “the Christ”). ⁴² He brought Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked straight at him and said, “You are Simon, the son of John.

LOOK! THE LAMB OF GOD, WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD!

Sermon for the Second Sunday after the Epiphany, 2023 John 1:29

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 John 1:29: **The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look! The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”**

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

Dear friends in Christ,

“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look! The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”

John’s message speaks *to all people* down through the centuries and is one of the most *powerful expressions* of the Gospel in the Bible. In fact, within the full meaning of these words are all the sentences of all the Creeds of the Church. So let us spend this morning breaking down this sentence to grasp *the whole meaning* of John’s words.

John begins by saying, **“Look!”**

We can picture in our minds John pointing at Jesus as He comes toward him. “*Look*” is an epiphany word that means, “*you who are listening to me, take notice!*” John uses this word to show Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour to his listeners and us. He had already received an epiphany from God. Last week we learned that after John baptised Jesus, the heavens opened, the Spirit descended like a dove, and the voice declared that this Jesus *was* God’s beloved Son. Now John is proclaiming this epiphany to his listeners. He is doing the work of a prophet and pointing to Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Saviour of the world.

As a faithful preacher, the Apostle Paul, in his Letter to the Corinthians, also pointed people to the Lamb of God when, applying the same words of

promise that the LORD had spoken through Isaiah¹ many years before, impressed on them the importance and seriousness of God's offer of grace given through Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God when he said, "*Look! Now is the favourable time. Look! Now is the day of salvation*" (2 Cor. 6:2). The Old Testament had prophesied the coming of the day of salvation for the Gentiles, the time when the message of God's grace would be brought to them. That time has come. John had pointed people to the Lamb of God, as did Paul. Any faithful preacher today will do the same in pointing his hearers to Jesus.

Next John says, "**The Lamb of God...**"

Although some sacrifices required bulls, goats, or birds, the *lamb*, more than any other, was the animal required by most of the sacrificial regulations of the ceremonial law.

John calls Jesus the "**Lamb of God.**" The word "*Lamb*," as it is used in John's sentence, brings to mind the continuous flow of blood from the altar in Jerusalem. Consider the multitude of regular sacrifices: the morning and evening sacrifices, the purifications, the sin and guilt offerings, and so forth. Then there are the many festival sacrifices: the Feast of Booths, the Pentecost, the First-Fruits, and let's not forget the Passover. When John says the word "*Lamb*," the image of *all* these sacrifices comes to mind.

All devout Jews knew that they were the ones who should be sacrificed. They knew that they had earned God's eternal wrath with their sins. Just as they knew that sheep are helpless regarding the things of this world, so they also knew that left to themselves, they were equally helpless regarding the things of God. This image was so strong that God often referred to the people as His sheep, with Himself as their Shepherd. They understood that the sacrificial Lamb was taking their place. Now John was saying that this Man who was the Shepherd had become a lamb *in order to become the sacrifice for them*. The word "*Lamb*" reminds us of the sacrifice that was made in our place. Jesus is the Lamb of God who has come to give Himself as the sacrifice to win forgiveness for a sinful world. He is the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy, "*Through His knowledge, My righteous Servant will justify many*

¹ Isaiah 49:8

and bear their iniquities. Therefore, I shall divide Him a portion among great people, and He will divide the plunder with strong people, because He poured out His life to death and was numbered with wrongdoers. Nevertheless, He has carried the sin of many people and intercedes for the wrongdoers” (53:11-12).

Next, John says that this Lamb of God... **“takes away the sin of the world!”**

The words **“the sin”** gather the stench of sin into one disgusting mass of evil. It includes all the wars and murders and rapes and thefts. It includes all the sinful thoughts, words, and deeds that anyone at any time has ever had. It includes the sinful nature that we were born with. It includes all our gossip, complaints, grumbling and worry. It includes every lie we have ever told to our parents, our teachers, our spouses, our children, our pastors, ourselves, and yes, even the lies we have told to God. It includes our thoughts as our eyes lingered a little too long on that member of the opposite sex. It includes everything putrid and vile that you, I, or anyone else has ever thought, done, or said that flew in the face of God’s holy Law and earned us eternal damnation.

The words **“of the world”** mean that the work of God’s Lamb, Jesus Christ, namely our salvation, is good for the whole world, not just those who believe. *“God so loved **the world**, that He gave His only Son....”* (John 3:16). The word for “world” is the root for the word “cosmos.” Christ’s redemption is for people of all nations and times who call upon Him. There is no greater blessing than that *“God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them”* (2 Cor. 5:19). There is no sin anywhere by anyone that this Lamb of God does not take away. When God spoke to Abraham, He renewed His promise that in him *“all the families of the earth will be blessed”* (Gen. 12:3) and reaffirmed this promise a little later after Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac. God said, *“because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I shall certainly bless you. I shall certainly also make your descendants as many as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will possess the city-gates of their enemies. In your Descendant*

all the nations of the earth will be blessed, because you have listened to what I have said” (Gen. 22:16-18).

The Lamb of God has taken the load, the curse, the damnation of the total massive amount of sin onto Himself. He lifts the awful burden from us and carries it to the cross, where our sin is crucified with the Lamb. There, our sin is put to death. This one act of lifting and carrying away our sins is good for all time.

The path that Jesus took when He carried the sin of the world began when He was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary. There He put on humanity and humbled that humanity under the authority of the Law. John’s words tell us that it is Jesus’ vocation to carry away the sin of the world. John’s words tell us that Jesus was already carrying the sins of the world when he made His declaration, **“Look! The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”**

When John said these words, he considered the taking away to be a done deal already. The forgiveness of sins that comes because of the Lamb’s sacrifice was already available to all. All the saints of the Old Testament received salvation because this Lamb’s sacrifice is good for all time and all places, and all people. God’s promise is as if John had already heard Jesus declare His victory from the cross with the words, *“It is finished”* (John 19:30).

This Lamb that John points out is the one and only Saviour. There is no other. All the different faiths of the world tell us that we must earn our own salvation, but as soon as we are honest, it is easy to see that *no one can earn his own place in heaven*. No one is good enough. People can lead lives of desperation in their sin; they can wear their conscience down to a pulp so they do not feel their sin, but they can’t save themselves. Only **“the Lamb of God”** can do that.

“Look! The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” John says, and we respond to John’s declaration in the Divine Service. God reveals the presence of the Lamb in the sacrament, and we ask for mercy every time we approach this altar and sing, *“O Christ Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.”* Whenever we partake of the Lord’s Supper, we eat the flesh of the Lamb and drink His true blood. We

also join with the angels, archangels, and all the company of heaven in glorifying God with the words, *“Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts; heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosannah in the highest.”*

“Look! The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” This is a sentence that will stand forever. Long after this world is gone - long after the world as we know no longer exists - long after the creation of a new heaven and a new earth - we shall gather before our Lord and say, *“Worthy is the Lamb who has been slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing!”* (Revelation 5:12), and we shall sing a new song saying, *“You are worthy to take the scroll and open its seals, because You have been slain, and by Your blood You have purchased people to be God’s own out of every tribe, language, people and nation. You have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they will reign on the earth”* (Revelation 5:9-10).

When John the Baptist saw Jesus, pointed at Him, and said this short sentence, he said more than we can possibly explain this morning. When God inspired John the Evangelist to quote John the Baptist, God gave us something to think about and to comfort us for the rest of our lives and on into eternity. **“Look! The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”** Amen.

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

PRAYER FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Almighty and ever-living God, You have given the light of Your truth in Jesus Christ that we may be rescued from the darkness of sin and unbelief, and have life in His name. We thank You that You have made us alive through faith in Him, and lavished on us so many gifts of Your grace. Grant that we may treasure in our hearts the truth that Jesus, Your unique Son, is our revealer of Your will, our sacrificial Lamb, our Messiah, our King, and the Son of Man, who was rejected, crucified, and rose again for us.

Heavenly Father, make us who are Your people shining lights in this world's darkness. Send out preachers and teachers of Your Word, that many more may know Your mercy and love in the gift of Your Son and His Gospel of grace and forgiveness. Strengthen all of us in the fellowship of Your Church to join hands in love and zeal to do the work set before us. We praise you for Your various spiritual gifts. Grant that we may use them for the common good of the members of Christ's body. Make us loyal in serving our Lord, patient in every trouble, and joyful in our promised hope. Make us eager to hold on to what is good, to help our fellow Christians, and be ready to share with all people in need. Free us from the deceptive designs of Satan and every kind of falsehood, and give us the ability to distinguish false spirits. Grant that we who have been called out of darkness into Christ's marvellous light may in this way proclaim His saving love and power.

Bestow a special measure of Your grace on our homes.

Give stability, peace, and tranquillity to the nations of the earth. Deliver people everywhere from famine, disease, fire, flood, storm, earthquake, and every danger. In every test that You send, help all people to lift up their eyes to You, and to know Your power and care.

We ask Your mercy on all who are in any special need of body or soul. Show them the comfort of Your love; give them hope instead of despair, joy and gladness instead of grief, and a song of praise instead of sorrow.

Save us all from the dangers that surround us. Defend us, in body and soul, until that moment when we see the ascending and descending angels linking earth and heaven permanently, when You call us from this life to live in Your presence for ever. All this we ask in the name of Jesus, Your Son. Amen.

Article: Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God

One of God's attributes is that He is just. A price must be paid for the sin of the world. It must be a full price. Sin must be punished as it deserves to be punished, as an offense and a rebellion against the holy, just, and all-powerful God. God cannot suffer injury to His justice and still be God. God, however, also is gracious, loving, and merciful. Those are His attributes as much as justice is. In His grace, love, and mercy He longs for our rescue. But how can His justice be satisfied if He shows mercy and rescues us? And how can grace and love and mercy be satisfied if He treats us as we deserve and as justice therefore demands?

All man-made religions look to man for a solution to the problem. The offered solutions however are nothing but vain self-delusion that only makes the problem worse by keeping people away from the only real solution. Man-made and man-centred solutions offer the false hope that sinful human beings can perform for God some extraordinary work that will satisfy His justice and cancel out sin. Or, they imagine that if we just do the best we can (ignoring the all too obvious fact that there isn't anyone who always or probably ever does the best he can!), God should be satisfied with us and reward us with heaven. Even if a perfect work were possible for us or if we really did the best we could, such works would be less than the bare minimum demanded by God in the first place; perfection is what He is, and constant perfection is the minimum that He can accept. Not even a perfect work from us, therefore, could cancel out other imperfect works, much less blatant and deliberate sins.

Even conscience rejects and condemns such a one-sided and self-justifying delusion, especially in the day of tribulation or in the hour of death. At such times conscience cries out loudly and will not be silenced easily: "*God is just and I am getting what I deserve!*" The answers of human reason and emotion will give no assurance to an accusing conscience or certainty to the doubting soul when it feels the sting of adversity or ponders the hour of death and considers what it deserves for its sins.

Thus, if there is a solution for the problem of sin and sinfulness that is sure and certain, it must come from God Himself. He is the judge of all the earth. He alone must find the way to solve the desperate problem that we cannot solve. He alone must show the solution to the dilemma of an apparent irreconcilable opposition in His own attributes of justice on the one hand and love on the other.

To God be eternal thanks and praise and adoration! He did find a solution for our desperate and hopeless condition. He did find a resolution that satisfies perfectly both His own justice and His grace, love, and mercy. The solution and the resolution revealed and given to us in His Word is summed up in one sublime name: JESUS CHRIST! To satisfy divine justice, He as the holy and spotless Lamb of God endured fully the punishment for the sin of the whole world (John 1:29). The punishment of death and the torments of the damned meted out to Him on the cross have a weight and a value, have merit that exceeds the weight and guilt of the sin of the whole world! In Him - and in Him alone - divine justice was satisfied. At the same time divine love and grace and mercy toward us have reached their sublime peak and are satisfied as well by that one supreme and all-sufficient sacrifice.

Children's Message:

Today, our Gospel reading comes from John. From this Gospel, we see John the Baptist point to Jesus and say, "Look!" - see there, look at Him - "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (v 29). That means that Jesus has died on the cross to take away your sins - in fact, everybody's sins, the sins of everybody in the whole world. Say it with me: Jesus died on the cross to take away your sins.

Now one of the people who heard John the Baptist say that, that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, was named Andrew. Andrew later became one of Jesus' twelve disciples, one of the apostles. But already right now, he was really excited to learn that Jesus would take away his sins. What do you do when you're really excited about something? One thing we often do when we're excited about something is tell somebody. We probably don't want to keep it a secret, do we! We want to tell somebody.



Behold
the
Lamb of
God, which
taketh away
the sin of the
world.

John 1: 29



Well, Andrew had a brother named Peter, and guess what Andrew did? Andrew told his brother Peter that Jesus was the one who would take away his sins. Some of you have brothers. Could you tell your brother about Jesus? What could you say? You could say this: "Brother, Jesus died on the cross to take away your sins." But some of you don't have any brothers.

Does that mean you can't tell anyone about Jesus? Do some of you have sisters? Could you tell them about Jesus? What could you say? You could say this: "Sister, Jesus died on the cross to take away your sins." Or maybe you've got a mum or dad. You could say, "Mum, Jesus died on the cross to take away your sins. Dad, Jesus died on the cross to take away your sins." What about friends? "Friend, Jesus died on the cross to take away your sins." You get the idea. Remember, Jesus died on the cross to take away the sins of the world. The whole world. Everybody in the world. So you can tell anybody in the world! Jesus died on the cross to take away your sins. *Thank You Jesus, for taking away my sin. Amen.*

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

22 January 3 Epiphany	29 January 4 Epiphany	5 February 5 Epiphany
9.00am OAK & GRN combined at Oakey HC 9.00am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am LOWOOD LR	10.00am HC AUB AELC Service.	8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am MARBURG HC & Bible Study
22 January		
READINGS: Isaiah 9:1-4; 1 Corinthians 1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-25		
HYMNS: 504 217 366 (157 51) 341		
29 January		
READINGS: Micah 6:1-8; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Matthew 5:1-12		
HYMNS: 828 (tune 270) 239 494 323 287 443		

AGM Dates:

Oakey –

Toowoomba – Sunday, 12 February, 2.00pm.

Greenwood –

Aubigny –

Marburg –

Lowood –

Parish -

Weekly sermons and bulletins are available at 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, and a text sent out to members.

If you are unsure, please contact pastor.