

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

30 July – Mission Day

HYMNS: 221 215 45 65 287 [293 if needed] 845 (tune 391)

INTROIT: Psalm 96

Sing to the LORD a new song! Sing to the LORD, all the earth!

Sing to the LORD! Bless His name! Proclaim His salvation from day to day!

Declare His glory among the nations, His marvellous deeds among all the peoples!

For the LORD is great and very worthy of praise. He should be feared above all gods.

For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD has made the heavens.

Splendour and majesty are before Him. Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

Ascribe to the LORD, families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name! Present an offering and come into His courts!

Worship the LORD in holy splendour! Tremble before Him, all the earth!

Say among the nations: "The LORD reigns. The world also is firmly established. It will not be moved. He will judge the peoples justly!"

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice! Let the sea, and all that fills it roar!

Let the fields and everything in them be jubilant! Then all the trees of the forest will shout with joy before the LORD.

For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with His truth.

COLLECT: Almighty God and Father, You have called mankind into the fellowship of Your Son. Let Your Word be spread throughout the world, so that Your gospel may be proclaimed to all people, and all nations may praise and serve You. We ask this through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

Welcome to all worshipping with us!

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 62:1-7 The glory of God's people.
Romans 10:11-17 Faith comes through preaching Christ.
Luke 24:44-53 Our task: preaching repentance and forgiveness.

Isaiah 62:1-7

¹ For Zion's sake I shall not keep silent and for Jerusalem's sake I shall not remain quiet until her righteousness goes forth like a bright light and her salvation burns brightly like a torch. ² The nations will see your righteousness, and all the kings your glory. You will be called by a **new name**, which the mouth of the LORD will designate. ³ Then you will be a splendid crown in the hand of the LORD and a royal headband in the palm of your God. ⁴ You will not be called "Deserted" any longer, and your land will not be called "Desolation" any longer but you will be named "Hephzibah," and your land will be named "Beulah." For the LORD delights in you, and your land will be married. ⁵ For, as a young man marries a maiden, so your sons will marry you, and your God will rejoice over you as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride.

⁶ "I have stationed watchmen on your walls, Jerusalem. They will never be silent by day or by night."

You who profess the LORD, do not take any rest! ⁷ Do not give Him any rest until He establishes Jerusalem and makes it something that is praised in the earth!

Romans 10:11-17

¹¹ For the Scripture says, "**The person who believes in Him will not be put to shame.**" ¹² For there is no difference between Jew and Greek. For the same Lord is over them all and gives His riches to all who call on Him. ¹³ For "**Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.**" ¹⁴ How then are they to call on Him in whom they have not believed? Moreover, how are they to believe in Him of whom they have not heard? How are they to hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ How are they to preach unless they are sent? As Scripture has said: "**How beautiful are the feet of those who tell good things as Good News!**" ¹⁶ However, they have not all obeyed the Good News. For Isaiah asks: "**Lord, who has believed our message?**" ¹⁷ Therefore, faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ."

Luke 24:44-53

⁴⁴ He told them, “These are the very words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, namely, that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”

⁴⁵ Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, “This is what Scripture has said: ‘The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and, based on His name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.’ ⁴⁸ You will testify to these things.

⁴⁹ “I am sending you what My Father has promised. Wait here in the city until you are armed with power from above!”

⁵⁰ He led them out to where Bethany lay ahead of them. Then He raised His hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up to heaven.

⁵² They knelt in worship of Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.

⁵³ They stayed continually at the Temple, praising God.

THE ONGOING MISSION OF THE CHURCH**Sermon for Mission Day 2023****Romans 10:11-17, Luke 24:44-53**

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 two of our readings, Romans 10:11-17, and Luke 24:44-53:

¹¹ For the Scripture says, “The person who believes in Him will not be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no difference between Jew and Greek. For the same Lord is over them all and gives His riches to all who call on Him. ¹³ For “Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” ¹⁴ How then are they to call on Him in whom they have not believed? Moreover, how are they to believe in Him of whom they have not heard? How are they to hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ How are they to preach unless they are sent? As Scripture has said: “How beautiful are the feet of those who tell good things as Good News!” ¹⁶ However, they have not all obeyed the Good News. For Isaiah asks: “Lord, who has believed our message?” ¹⁷ Therefore, faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ.”

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

Dear friends in Christ,

Today we gather in celebration and thanksgiving to our Lord Jesus Christ for His gracious gifts to us, chiefly the forgiveness of sins, life, and eternal salvation that we have through faith in His name. These things He gives to us freely through the preaching of His Word and in His Holy Sacraments. Through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Spirit works to give us the gift of faith. It is for the use and spread of these, called the Means of Grace, that the true Lutheran Church, including our own church body – the Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church – and its congregations exist. For this we give all glory to God!

St. Paul wrote to the Romans that “**faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ.**” Apart from the Word and work of Christ, there can be neither faith nor salvation. Because God desires that all be saved and come to the knowledge of truth¹, He equips and commissions His Church to proclaim repentance and forgiveness of sins to all of the world. This work He began through the ministry of the Prophets and Apostles. St. Peter wrote that the prophets prophesied about the grace to come², the forgiveness that we would receive *through the suffering of Christ*, not to benefit themselves but those who would come after them - us. In our Gospel today, we head how Jesus commissioned the Apostles to proclaim His Word and opened their minds to the Scriptures and their mouths to preach repentance and forgiveness in His name to all nations.

As those who have benefited from the ministry of the Prophets and Apostles, and through the faithful pastors and teachers who have shared the Word of God with us, we too now reach out as congregations to benefit those around us. We gather here to listen to God’s Word and be forgiven our sins, to receive the very body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Through these things, He equips His Church with a life of mission, a life of calling to repentance and faith in Jesus to those around us.

¹ 1 Timothy 2:4

² 1 Peter 1:10

St. Paul wrote to the Romans, “*For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.*”¹¹ *For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.”*¹² *For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him.*¹³ *For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”* (Romans 10:10-11). What Paul wrote was in step with the will of God, who desires that all people be saved. In this section of his Letter, Paul is taking special care with his congregation in Rome by connecting them - Gentile Christians - to the children of Israel. Everyone knew, after all, that the children of Israel were God’s people.

Yes, Paul says, the Old Testament children of Israel are a special people. To them belong the adoption, the covenants, the Law, the Patriarchs...but, Paul writes, “*not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named”* (Romans 9:7). Yes, they are a special people - but not because of their connection in the flesh, but their connection to the promise given to Abraham that through Isaac shall his offspring be named. This promise is not about prolonging the line of Abraham for its own sake but about *extending the line through which the Messiah would be born*.

Therefore, Paul says, the children of Israel are a nation not because of their connection in the flesh but because of their common faith in the promise of Jesus. This is why the Church receives the name of the Children of Israel in the New Testament. Not all descendants of Abraham are children of Israel, and not all are children of Israel because they are descended from Abraham. Who then are the children of Israel? It is those who confess Jesus with their mouth and believe in their hearts. As Paul says, “**Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.**” There is no distinction among people in this regard, for “*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*” (Romans 3:23). No one is without sin. Everyone, from the unborn child just conceived to those with grey hair, carries in themselves the guilt of sin, yet Christ Jesus has given Himself as a ransom for all. He has died for the forgiveness of all people, which is to be received through faith.

Yes, “**faith comes from hearing.**” Paul also writes to the Galatians that not those who do the works of the Law are made righteous, but those who live by faith.³ Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Now here’s

³ Galatians 3:16

the rub, **“How then are they to call on Him in whom they have not believed? Moreover, how are they to believe in Him of whom they have not heard? How are they to hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ How are they to preach unless they are sent?”** Paul wrote about how people receive eternal salvation. It’s not because of who they are; It’s not because of works, no matter how loving; it is through faith in the grace of God - that rather than count our sins against us, He offered up His only-begotten Son in our place so that by faith we may be reckoned righteous in His eyes.

This faith comes from hearing, but how can people believe unless they hear? How can they hear without someone proclaiming? And how are people to proclaim unless they are sent? Jesus knows this. Therefore He sent out His Apostles. Luke writes how Jesus **“opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, “This is what Scripture has said: ‘The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and, based on His name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached to all nations.”**

Though before they did not understand, Jesus now opened their minds. Human eyes are blind to the reality of Jesus’ presence even when He stands directly in sight, and ears are deaf to His words even when He speaks them audibly *unless Jesus Himself heals the spiritual blindness and deafness*. Eyes and minds must be opened, and faith created by God to understand the mystery of the proclamation of His crucified and risen Son. Both salvation and its apprehension through faith are God’s work. So Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity, gave His disciples the key to all Scripture – that He, the Christ, should suffer for the forgiveness of sins and rise from the dead, and this message is to be proclaimed to all nations. Through the message of Christ’s death and resurrection, the Holy Spirit calls and brings people to faith.

Jesus sent out the Apostles to be pastors, to preach the Word of God and administer the Sacraments. Through preaching, the Holy Spirit calls people to faith. Through the washing of Holy Baptism, we are forgiven our sins and clothed with Christ’s righteousness; we are made the children of Israel. In the Lord’s Supper, we receive the Body and Blood of Christ for the forgiveness of our sins and the strength to love and serve those around us. Jesus sent out the Apostles so that people would hear about Him and call upon Him in faith, even as He continues to send pastors to do the same for us.

Jesus sends pastors to preach His Word in the congregation and administer the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, but that does not exclude any of you from the work of Christ in the Church. That is what Paul is writing to the Romans. There are too many people in the world for pastors to be the only ones sharing God's Word; therefore, we have banded together as congregations and as a church body. We have joined together to be a place where the Word of God can be taught among us purely and without fear and where we can receive the sacraments with frequency. By these things, Christ claims us as His own and leads us in a triumphal procession. Through preaching and the Sacraments, Jesus opens our minds and places His Word of forgiveness upon our lips.

He continues His work of mission among us in our daily vocations. God has placed us all in many positions in life. We are all children. Some of us are husbands or wives. Many of us have jobs or other activities that occupy us. Christ equips us to share His Word in all of these different places. It could be as overt as speaking God's Word directly or sharing a cup of cool water. Or it could be by inviting people to hear God's Word and receive the forgiveness of sins here in church. Mission work is an ongoing work of Christ, who desires that all people be forgiven their sins through faith. This is a vocation to which we are all called, and we can no more forsake it than we can forsake being a Christian. To do so would be neither right nor safe.

The Scripture says, "**faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ.**" It is not the one who lives by the works of the Law who is justified, but the one who believes that Jesus has died and risen again for the forgiveness of their sins. For us to believe this, Jesus has sent the Prophets, the Apostles, and pastors to preach His Word and administer His Sacraments. Through His Word and Sacraments, He opens our minds to share His Gospel with those around us, that they, too, may believe. May He continue this work among us - in our lives and congregations. Amen.

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

PRAYER FOR MISSION FESTIVAL

Loving God and Father, we praise You for Your great mercy in looking on the sin and misery of a fallen world and giving Your only Son Jesus Christ as the Saviour of all people. We thank You especially that You have called us into the kingdom of grace, and brought us to know the truth. We rejoice that by faith in Your Son we have forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation, and we are members of Your eternal family, the Church.

Have mercy, O Lord, on the millions of our fellowmen still living in darkness and under sentence of eternal death. Since You have commanded Your Church to testify to Jesus' fulfilment of the Old Testament, that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead, give us and all Your children increased love and zeal for the task of spreading the message of forgiveness in Jesus' name throughout the world. Fill us with Christlike compassion for all who are helpless and hopeless, outside Your kingdom. Teach us to love them not merely in words, but in deeds of true service. Make us willing to give both of ourselves and of the blessings You have poured on us. Do not let us grow weary in well-doing, but enable us to work while it is still day, before the night comes when all work must cease. Give us the courage to speak on the basis of Jesus' resurrection as the apostles did.

O Lord, truly the harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Send out labourers into Your harvest, and uphold all those whom You have sent. Open new doors for the spreading of the Gospel, and give success to all earnest efforts to share it with others. Pour out Your Spirit so that many may accept the joyful message of life in Christ; make Your way known upon earth, Your saving power among all nations.

Bless the work of the AELC here in Australia and the ULMA in the United States. We especially commend to You this day our congregations' outreach in the community and our ministry of welfare, love, and concern.

We commit ourselves and all our fellowmen to Your fatherly care and mercy. Be gracious to us in every need, and do not withdraw Your saving love from us. Direct us by Your Spirit that we may daily grow in grace, until we finally come to perfect happiness and full redemption in Your eternal kingdom of heaven, and with all Your chosen people praise Your name for evermore. Hear us because of Your limitless love in Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Article: The Comfort of Election for the Mission of the Church

The doctrine of election or predestination is of great comfort to Christians. This doctrine tells us that our salvation is in God's hands. If salvation were in our hands, we would never be saved. Thus, we are comforted that it is up to God and His great love and mercy, which He has shown us in sending His Son to suffer and die for us. We cannot believe in Jesus Christ our Lord or come to Him by our own reason or strength, but the Holy Spirit calls us to faith by the Gospel, and keeps us with Jesus Christ in that one true faith (Small Catechism II.3).

God does not elect without calling and justifying. *"Those whom He predestined He also called, and those whom He called He also justified, and those whom He justified He also glorified"* (Rom. 8:30). Thus, election always comes with God's declaration of righteousness and with eternal life. God's election always results in faith and eternal salvation.

This is of great comfort to the church as she seeks to make disciples of all nations by baptising them and teaching them to keep all that Jesus has commanded (Matt. 28:19). It is of great comfort even as the church reaches out with God's Word and the world rejects Word.

The doctrine of election is not an excuse for the church to be lazy in teaching the Gospel purely or in administering the sacraments rightly. Quite the opposite. It provides comfort that even if the world rejects the pure teaching of the Gospel and is offended by the right administration of the sacraments, it is still those means of grace through which the Holy Spirit calls the elect to faith.

The comfort of election is wonderful because it constrains the church from wandering away from the pure teaching of the Gospel and the right administration of the sacraments to seeking God to work apart from His Word and sacraments (enthusiasm). If the Word of God is rejected, the doctrine of election leads the church away from trying to make disciples of all nations through means other than those instituted by Christ.

Without a proper understanding of the doctrine of election, the church is more likely to seek alternatives to the means of grace for drawing sinners into the church. Bait and switch strategies become a popular trap as churches try to draw people in with ploys and manipulations. Draw in the crowds by luring them in with some marketing event or gimmick, and once they take the bait, complete the strategy by switching to try to get them to join the church. Bait and switch strategies seldom work because today's "consumer" is aware of such manipulations, and gets turned off by someone offering one thing and then giving them something else, or pretending to be their friend while in reality holding a hidden agenda. What often ends up happening is the church ceases to complete the strategy, and ends up only

baiting people, and then simply giving them what they want, trying to appeal to their felt needs.

Give them entertainment to hook them. Give them a rock band to appeal to them. Commune them without teaching them so that they are not offended. Create novel spectacles never seen before in church, whether it be ribbon sticks, streamers, or liturgical dance. Such a church feels pressure and guilt to somehow, someday, anyway lure in people. Such a church feels the results of their outreach are in their hands. They don't trust the Word of God to bring sinners to repentance, so they forget about repentance altogether, and just lure people in with whatever means necessary. Such a church over time ceases to be a church of God and becomes a church of man.

The world doesn't accept God's Word because their works are evil (John 3:19). If the church fails to tell sinners their works are evil, the church is not fulfilling the command of Christ to teach the nations all that He has commanded. If the church fails to use the means of grace to bring sinners to faith, then the church is using human ploys to lure people into an assembly that is not the church. Numbers may grow, and the marketing gimmicks may be considered "successful," but the outward marks of such a gathering are not the pure teaching of the Gospel of the right administration of the sacraments.

The church is to scatter the seed of God's Word and water what has been planted, but God gives the growth (Luke 8:4-15; 1 Cor. 3:6). Yes, the Word will be rejected by many. It will fall onto the path, and onto rocky or thorny ground. If, because of this, the church decides to start sowing weeds instead, sure, there will be growth. Weeds will grow and spread and can even choke out whatever good seed is growing. But what will be growing is not the church of God, but the fruit of the devil. Only God's Word can create faith so that it takes root and grows and yields a hundredfold.

Either we believe that the means of grace have the power promised by God to save, or we do not. If we do, we can abandon everything else to reach out to the world. If we do, then we continue to preach the Gospel purely and administer the sacraments according to the institution of Christ despite what the results are; despite the rejection of the Word by the world. If we do, then we are comforted that salvation is in God's hands, not ours.

Let us cling to the comfort of election. God will call and justify those whom He has elected from the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4). Thus, as the church reaches out with the Word of God, we can do it without guilt and anxiety if the world rejects it, and we can rejoice when it is received with great joy by the elect, as salvation is in the hands of God, where it is sure and certain. We stand comforted because salvation is up to a loving and merciful Father who desires all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4).

Children's Message:

Do you ever have special jobs to do for your parents? Perhaps they asked you to do the washing up while they are busy doing other jobs. What if they came back and found that instead of doing the dishes, you were playing instead? What might they say? They might ask why you did not do the job they left you to do.

Today I want you to reach for your Bible and read from the Gospel of Luke. I want you to read Luke 12:42-48. There, Jesus told a story about a man whose master left him with a big job to do - he was to take care of his master's other servants by giving them their food. What do you think the master would expect to find when he came back home? The man should be doing his job. If the man was taking good care of the other servants, what do you think he would get? Maybe he would get a reward. If he was not doing his job, what do you think would happen to him? Yes, he may be sent away.

Jesus told this story to His disciples. After Jesus went back to heaven, the disciples would have a big job to do for Jesus on earth. The man in the story had a big job to do in giving the other workers their food. The disciples were given the big job of giving other people the Good News of Jesus and His saving love for them.

Who are Jesus' disciples today?
You and I are Jesus' disciples. God gives us a job to do too. What job do you and I have to do for God today? He wants us to share the Good News of Jesus and His love with others.

How? God wants us to use His Word to bring others to faith in Jesus.



What an important job God has given us - the most important job there can be. God wants us to share the story of Jesus and His love with others. What are some things you can do to share Jesus' love? What can you say to share Jesus' love? Jesus will come again. We don't know when - only God knows that. What we do know is that when Jesus comes, He wants to find us doing His work, sharing the story of His forgiving love with others. Let us ask God to help us always be willing workers for Him, always ready for the day when He comes back to take all who believe in Him to live with Him in heaven. Dear Lord, thank You for letting us share with Your work on earth. Help us joyfully share the Good News of Your life and death on the cross. Let us always be ready for the day when You come back to earth. Amen.

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

6 August 10 Pentecost	13 August 11 Pentecost	20 August 12 Pentecost
8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA LR 9.30am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am LOWOOD HC	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 9.30am GRN LR 10.45am AUB HC 9.00am MARBURG LR
Sunday, 6 August		
READINGS: Isaiah 55:1-5; Romans 9:1-13; Matthew 14:13-21		
HYMNS: 526 560 268 (284 282) 466		
Sunday, 13 August		
READINGS: Job 38:4-18; Romans 10:5-17; Matthew 14:22-33		
HYMNS: 524 420 310 (148 282) 301		

Wednesday, August 2, 10.00am. Women's Guild at Marburg. Opening devotion: Fay. Choose a Bible verse from Leviticus 25-28. Item of Interest: An item of fancy work.

Sunday, August 13, 1.30pm. Seminary Committee meeting at Bethlehem Toowoomba.