

Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church
BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA, OUR SAVIOUR LOWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,
ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, TRINITY MARBURG, TRINITY OAKY
13th April Palm Sunday

HYMNS: 9 86 733 7 61 87

INTROIT: Psalm 118:19-29

Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures for ever.
Let Israel say: "For His mercy endures for ever!..."

Open to me the gates of righteousness; I shall go through them; I shall give thanks to the LORD.

This is the gate of the LORD, through which righteous people will enter. I shall give thanks to You, for You have answered me, and You have become my Salvation.

The stone that the builders have rejected has become the Chief Cornerstone.

This has been the doing of the LORD; it is marvellous in our eyes.

This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

I beg You, O LORD, save me! I beg You, O LORD, give me success!

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you people from the house of the LORD.

God is the LORD, and He has given us light. Tie the festive procession together with branches of trees as far as the horns of the altar.

You are my God, and I shall praise You; You are my God; I shall honour You highly.

Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, for His mercy endures for ever!

COLLECT: Almighty and everlasting God, You sent Your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon Himself our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross. Mercifully grant that we may follow the example of His great humility and patience and be made partakers of His resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ, 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 ddaelc@gmail.com.

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

READINGS: Deuteronomy 32:36-39

³⁶ “For the LORD will vindicate His people and have compassion on His servants, when He sees that their strength has gone away and that no one is left, either anyone imprisoned or anyone free.

³⁷ “Then He will ask: ‘Where are their gods, the rock in which they have taken refuge, ³⁸ who used to eat the fat of their sacrifices and used to drink the wine of their drink offerings?’ Let them rise and help you! Let them be your refuge!

³⁹ “See now, that I, even I, am He and that there is no god besides Me. I shall kill, and I shall make alive. I have wounded and I Myself shall heal, and there is no one who can deliver from My hand.

Philippians 2:5-11

⁵ Have the same attitude as Christ Jesus had! ⁶ Although He was in the form of God, yet He did not consider His equality with God as a prize to exploit. ⁷ Instead, He emptied Himself, took on the form of a slave and became like other human beings; and, when He was found in the appearance of a human being, ⁸ He humbled Himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. ⁹ That is why God also has very highly exalted Him and given Him the name that is above every other name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus everyone in heaven and on earth and under the earth may kneel, ¹¹ and that everyone may confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

John 12:12-19

¹² On the next day, the large crowd that had come for the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³ They took branches of palm-trees, went out to meet Him and began to shout, “Hosanna!” “Blessed is He who is coming in the name of the Lord!” and “the King of Israel!”

¹⁴ Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as Scripture has said: ¹⁵ “Stop being afraid, daughter of Zion! Look! Your King is coming, sitting on the colt of a donkey.”

¹⁶ His disciples did not understand these things at first, but, when Jesus had been glorified, they remembered that these things had been written about Him and that they had done these things to Him. ¹⁷ Therefore, the crowd that had been with Him when He had called Lazarus out of the tomb and had raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. ¹⁸ This was also a reason why the crowd went to meet Him, that they heard that He had performed this miraculous sign. ¹⁹ Therefore, the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are not achieving anything. Look! The world has gone after Him.”

HOSANNA! SING PRAISE TO THE LORD!

Sermon for Palm Sunday, 2025

John 12:12-19

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 read before, John 12:12-19:

On the next day, the large crowd that had come for the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³ They took branches of palm-trees, went out to meet Him, and began to shout, “Hosanna!” “Blessed is He who is coming in the name of the Lord!” and “the King of Israel!” ¹⁴ Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as Scripture has said: ¹⁵ “Stop being afraid, daughter of Zion! Look! Your King is coming, sitting on the colt of a donkey.” ¹⁶ His disciples did not understand these things at first, but, when Jesus had been glorified, they remembered that these things had been written about Him, and that they had done these things to Him. ¹⁷ Therefore the crowd that had been with Him when He had called Lazarus out of the tomb and had raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. ¹⁸ This was also a reason why the crowd went to meet Him, that they heard that He had performed this miraculous sign. ¹⁹ Therefore the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are not achieving anything. Look! The world has gone after Him.”

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

Dear friends in Christ,

Jesus Christ was no ordinary man. He was in the form of God because He *is* the eternal Son of God, enthroned in the heavens. He *is* all-powerful and all-knowing, limitless in might and fully deserving of all worship and glory. To call Jesus ‘God’ *is not* robbing the Father of His glory since Jesus is equal to the Father and is, therefore, fully God, too.

But being fully God, what does Jesus do? Paul said in our Second Reading that “*He did not consider His equality with God as a prize to exploit. Instead, He emptied Himself, took on the form of a slave, and became like other human beings*” (Phil. 2:6-7).

Jesus was well aware of the fact that He is God. He knew perfectly that He possessed all the majesty of God from all eternity and that He possessed it fully also during the days of His earthly ministry. But Jesus did not consider this something to be exhibited or displayed for His personal self-advancement and glory.

In Paul’s day, victorious generals and other public figures would frequently honour themselves and their achievements by using their moment in the sun to erect monuments to themselves and their achievements.

Jesus, though He was God in very nature, did not appear on earth to glorify Himself. He did not look for His own advantage. Nor did He arbitrarily use the divine privileges and powers He possessed to satisfy passing fancies or to gain earthly fame and power. If such had been why He assumed His human nature, it would have been useless for Him to assume it. The mission He received from the Father simply could not be combined with a gaudy display of divine majesty. So there was no such display. When He who is in very nature God came to this earth, He fully considered the mission and the work for which He had assumed His human nature. He considered us, and He humbled himself.

The divine nature was always there, and all that His deity bestowed on His human nature was always His as the God-man. But during His earthly life and ministry, Jesus emptied Himself of the full and constant use of all the prerogatives of His divinity. He laid aside the unlimited exercise of His power and did not always use or demand His rights as God. Instead, he took on “*took on the form of a slave.*” It was as if He covered the glory of His divine majesty with the tattered rags of a beggar. He became altogether lowly. He took on the nature of a slave while He retained, but did not always use, the full power and majesty of God. Thus, He would go the way of the cross and die as our Substitute.

Jesus had arrived at Bethany on Friday. The dinner, the anointing, and the gathering of the crowd took place after His arrival. John writes that **“On the next day, the large crowd that had come for the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³ They took branches of palm-trees, went out to meet Him, and began to shout, “Hosanna!” “Blessed is He who is coming in the name of the Lord!” and “the King of Israel!”** The people welcomed and praised Jesus as their king; and by their words even acknowledged Him as the Messiah. So obviously, there was ‘glory’ for Jesus on Palm Sunday.

But what kind of glory were the people looking for in Jesus on that first Palm Sunday? They obviously hailed Him as the Messiah. They praised Him with words from an Old Testament psalm of praise, Psalm 118, *“Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!”* (cf. Psalm 118:25-26). They hailed Him as **“The King of Israel.”** But *what kind* of Messiah-King did these people expect Jesus to be? Obviously, we can’t look into the hearts of these individuals. Still, we do know that many of the Jews of Jesus’ day, including many of the religious leaders of the Jewish people, were looking for an *earthly Messiah* who would return the kingdom of Israel to heights even greater than its former glory under King David and King Solomon. We also have this description of the crowd in our text: **“Therefore, the crowd that had been with Him when He had called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. ¹⁸ This was also a reason why the crowd went to meet Him, that they heard that He had performed this miraculous sign.”** These people had seen or heard about Jesus raising someone from the dead. Many of them had seen or heard about Jesus feeding the thousands, healing the sick, and restoring the paralysed and lame. *“Think about what kind of unstoppable army a man like this could raise up against the Romans,”* the people may have thought! But that was not the kind of Messiah-King Jesus came to this earth to be. You can imagine the disappointment of many of these people when this became obvious. Even the **“disciples did not understand these things at first.”** You can perhaps understand a bit more why, by the end of the week, even His own disciples deserted Him; one of them betrayed Him,

and another flat-out denied Him repeatedly. Perhaps it also helps explain why the chants of the crowd in Jerusalem went from shouts of hosanna and praise to shouts of hatred and “Crucify Him!” in just a matter of five short days.

Would we have reacted differently if we were part of that Palm Sunday crowd? Living under the rule of the Romans was tough. Even today, would it not be wonderful if there was someone who would come along and free us from the tyranny of governments we live under? Someone who would put people first and do all to protect and keep them? The people who welcomed Jesus soon became disappointed when they realised Jesus was not the kind of Messiah they were looking for. They were hoping Jesus would be their ‘problem solver’ or ‘miracle worker.’ In their own eyes, when they saw neither in Jesus, they soon turned against Him when, in reality, the ‘problem solver’ was solving the greatest problem of sin and death through His death and resurrection. He solves all our problems in life and works all things out for our good, but He doesn’t always solve our problems in the manner or in the timing which we want them solved. And as a ‘miracle worker,’ He has worked in us through the phenomenal miracles of conversion and sanctification through the Holy Spirit, but He doesn’t always perform the greedy, materialistic miracles that we all too often ask Him for. We want peace and joy from Jesus, but do we want the spiritual peace of forgiveness and joy of eternal life that He came to bring us? Often, we are unwilling to wait for the full story to be told. We are focused on the moment, on escaping the perils and troubles that face us at this very moment. When our moments are not filled with good times, rest and relaxation, or when Jesus seems far away, we become disappointed in Him, and our faith evaporates. That’s what began to happen to many during the week before His crucifixion.

John wrote how the **“disciples did not understand these things at first”** and then went on to say, **“but when Jesus had been glorified, they remembered that these things had been written about Him, and that they had done these things to Him.”** What was John speaking of when He said Jesus was *“glorified”*?

John was talking about Christ's resurrection and ascension into heaven, which happened *after* Palm Sunday. The disciples had to wait to understand Jesus' true glory. They had to look past the 'here-and-now' and see through what was obvious to their eyes and physical senses to see the 'hidden glory' in the Saviour's Entry into Jerusalem. And so do we.

There is a clue to Jesus' "hidden glory" in the "**young donkey**" He rode into Jerusalem. The donkey symbolises Jesus' humility and points to the real reason why He came to Jerusalem. John refers to this when he shows how Jesus' actions were a fulfilment of the words of the prophet Zechariah who had said: "*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey*" (Zechariah 9:9). Jesus came in a 'lowly' way, riding on a young donkey; He came to bring salvation to all mankind through His suffering and death. His true glory - the "hidden glory" of Palm Sunday - is found in what Jesus came to do: suffer, die, and rise again!

This true glory of Jesus won our glory so that when Jesus comes again in His full glory and power on the Last Day, we shall be taken to eternal glory in heaven. He entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday in order to suffer, die, and rise again as our Saviour King so that when He comes again as the King of Kings, we too shall be glorified with Him!

What does this 'hidden glory' of Jesus on Palm Sunday mean for us today? Does it help us out in a practical way with our everyday lives and problems? Yes! It does! If we can understand and come to grips with the fact that Jesus willingly marched toward His own death on Palm Sunday to overcome death for us, then everything else is viewed from the perspective of eternity. Jesus Himself said, "*In this world you will have trouble, but fear not for I have overcome the world*" (John 16:33). Jesus never once gave the impression that if we trust in Him we shall be automatically transported to an island of ecstasy, but He did promise us that He was going to prepare a place for us where there would be neither sorrow, death, defeat, or mourning.¹ Maybe life is difficult for you right

¹ John 14:2-3; Revelation 21:1-4

now. Perhaps things are so painful that you are questioning His love for you. If that is the case, look again at the ‘hidden glory’ found in Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem. Realise that the Saviour who gave His life for you *loves you with a depth of love that is unfathomable*. See Him as He goes to the cross on your behalf and in your place. Realise His love is so great that you can be sure He would not allow any needless suffering in your life. The trials that come now are purposeful and designed to lead you into something good. Understand that when Jesus marched into Jerusalem, ***you were on His mind***. He rode that humble donkey as God’s chosen sacrifice ***for you!*** The death He willingly suffered was a sacrifice He made to take away your sins and make you part of His family. He knows you and loves you. The question is: Will you continue to be “disappointed” with your Messiah-King when He doesn’t fit your idea of a Saviour, or do what you ask Him to do when you ask Him to do it? Or will you give Him the praise and worship that your humble yet glorious Saviour-King deserves?

May we always sing our “Hosannas!” and waive the palm branches of our lives in praise to Jesus! Amen.

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

PRAYER FOR THE SIXTH SUNDAY IN LENT (PALM SUNDAY)

Heavenly Father, we come into Your presence with thanksgiving and joy. You are a great God. You rule over the whole earth from the deepest seas to the highest hills. We bow down and worship You, for You are our Maker. We are the people You care for, and the flock for which You provide.

We thank and praise You especially that You have sent to us the living Word, Jesus Christ, Your Son. We praise You that He willingly accepted the disgrace of dying on the cross for us. Grant that we may keep our eyes fixed on Him, and may not grow weary in doing good, become discouraged, or murmur when we are chastened and corrected. Uplift us with the assurance that, as we share in Jesus’ sufferings, so we shall also share in His resurrection to eternal life.

Save us, then, O Lord, not by any good deeds that we have done, but by Your mercy, through the new birth given in our baptism and the new life created by the Holy Spirit. Rescue us from all sin, and purify us to serve and praise You.

Put Your will into our minds, and write it into our hearts. Put Your song into our spirits, that we may proclaim with joy: “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!”

Give us the power to seek out those who are still strangers to Your salvation. Send workers to preach Your Word in truth, and to proclaim the name of Jesus as the only name under heaven through which people can be saved. Prosper the witness of all Your children throughout the world, that all may know You.

Give to this congregation, and to all who worship here, joy and energy as we serve You. Give us all willing minds and pure hearts that we may do our utmost to build and strengthen Your kingdom.

We pray for all who are burdened by sickness, sorrow, pain, anxiety, and fear of death. Be with them as they pass through troubled waters. Give them the faith that knows that You will deliver them in Your wisdom and love.

Lord, You are able to keep us from falling and to bring us faultless and joyful before Your glorious presence. To You, the only God, our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, might, and authority, in all ages past, and now, and for ever and ever! Amen.

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.**

WEEKLY ARTICLE – **Satan is not Passive**

When God moves, people respond, but don't expect Satan to sit by passively. So it was when the crowds and enthusiasm increased around Jesus. His enemies noticed and began plotting His arrest and execution. Satan even entered Judas, one of Jesus' inner circle, to betray Him (Luke 22:3). To those who came out to the Garden of Gethsemane to arrest Him, Jesus said, "*This is your hour, and the power of darkness*" (Luke 22:53). Darkness is Jesus word for all things Satanic.

Martin Luther knew the presence of the devil and the power of darkness. Satan's presence and attacks were so real to him that Luther once threw at him a bottle of ink which Luther was using to transcribe the Scriptures into the language of the people. Satan and his demonic hordes always oppose the spread of God's Word.

I used to not take too seriously the presence and power of the devil and the demonic. But not anymore. The devil is very real, never asleep, and always looking to deceive, discourage, divide, and destroy. I'm now convinced that any faithful pastor especially has a target on his back, and his wife and family do, too. In fact, anyone God is using to advance His Kingdom will experience a stronger experience of the reality of the supernatural forces of evil.

It's not for nothing that Jesus and His apostles use military metaphors to describe Christian life and ministry. "*Put on the full armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil... the spiritual forces of evil... that you may be able to withstand in the evil day... Stand, therefore... praying at all times in the Spirit... also pray for me*" (Ephesians 6:10 ff.) And again, "*Let anyone who thinks that he stands, take heed lest he fall*" (1 Corinthians 10:12). As Jesus cautioned His disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, "*Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation*" (Matthew 26:41).

The good news is "*God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation He will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it*" (1 Corinthians 10:13). "*The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you*" (Romans 16:20).

And for those times that Satan got the better of you, go to the cross and be cleansed by the blood of our Saviour (1 John 1:9).

Children's Message:

Soon, in just one week, we'll be celebrating Easter. Does anyone remember what happened on Easter? On Easter, we celebrate that Jesus, who had died for us, rose from the dead. He rose up out of His grave, appeared to many people, ate, and drank; He was alive again after being dead for three days. We'll soon be saying, "Alleluia! Christ is risen!" That's what Easter is all about.

However, today we first celebrate Palm Sunday. On Palm Sunday, we think about the time when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. This was an important day because when Jesus went to Jerusalem, the events leading up to His death and resurrection would begin. People waved palm branches to honour Jesus.



Palm Sunday is remembered in the church as the beginning of what's called Passion Week. The rest of this Passion Week—tomorrow and through this Saturday—we read the Bible and think about all the other events that week when Jesus died and rose for us. He had a final meal, the first Lord's Supper, with His friends on Thursday. He went to a garden and prayed late, late Thursday night. On Friday, He was hurt and punished for things He didn't do, and then He died. He went through all these things to save us from sin. Finally, He rose again from the dead on Sunday.

During Passion Week, Jesus said, "*When I am lifted up from the earth, [I] shall draw all people to Myself*" (John 12:32). What this means is that Jesus was lifted up on a cross to die for us. Do you see how we also lifted up this cross for everyone to see? Jesus was lifted up so everyone could see how much He loves us. Jesus loves us enough to give up everything, even His life, to save us. This is what we think about, especially on Good Friday, later this week.

We are followers of Jesus. We love Him. We trust Him. That means we serve Him in our lives. We pray for ourselves and others. We go to church. We learn the Bible. We speak with kindness to others. We do what our parents ask. Jesus, our Saviour, was lifted up on a cross to bring us back to Him, and we serve and love Him and the people around us. *Lord Jesus, we thank You for loving us. Please help us this week to have stronger faith in You as we think about all You gave up out of love for us. In your name. Amen.*

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

16/17 April Maundy Thursday	18 April Good Friday	20 April Easter Sunday
Wed 16: 7.30pm TMBA HC Thurs 17: 7.00pm LOWOOD HC	8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR Matthew S 7.00am MARBURG HC 10.15am GRN HC	6.00am TMBA HC (Easter Sunrise Service) 8.30am OAK HC 9.00am GRN LR 10.15am AUB HC 9.00am LOWOOD LR
Maundy Thursday		
READINGS: Exodus 12:1-14; 1 Corinthians 11:23-32; John 13:1-17, 31b-35		
HYMNS: 71 295 84 325 293 69		
Good Friday		
READINGS: Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9; John 19:17-30		
HYMNS: 440 450 436 (625 615) 448 (All hymns for Good Friday taken from the LSB)		
Easter Sunday		
READINGS: Toowoomba only: Job 19:23-27; 1 Corinthians 15:51-57; John 20:1-18 Isaiah 65:17-25; 1 Corinthians 15:19-26; Luke 24:1-12		
HYMNS: (All hymns taken from the LSB) Toowoomba: 467 488 477 482 484 490 457 Oakey & Aubigny: 477 488 469 482 484 490 457 Grn & Lowood: 477 469 482 457		

Easter Monday, 21 April, 10.00 am. Parish Sunday School Picnic at St Johns Aubigny. All are invited to attend. This year is the 100th anniversary of the Sunday School Picnic being held by St Johns! Could each family please provide a plate to share and also something for dessert? If you would like to bring along any games/puzzles (eg. how many jellybeans in a jar etc) please do! Also, there will be the usual colouring competition with prizes for each age group, so children, please take home with you today a colouring-in page.

Pastor is taking holidays from 21 April to 5 May.