

THE AUSTRALIAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH (AELC)

BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA, OUR SAVIOUR LOWOOD, ST JOHNS AUBIGNY,

ST PAULS GREENWOOD, TRINITY MARBURG, TRINITY OAKY

1 February 2026

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

A warm welcome to all those who are worshipping with us today!

While the wisdom of this world promotes prosperity, Jesus teaches humility. Those characteristics that the world might look down on, God calls blessed. While we may be persecuted for these things, God reminds us that our reward is in heaven. For what may seem wise to the world is truly foolish, and what seems foolish to the world—Christ crucified—is wise. Just as He redeemed the Israelites and calls them His own people, so also has He rescued us from our sin.

In preparation of worship, please prepare by

- **Praying a prayer before worship found on page 308 in your LSB hymnbook**

Hymns (LSB): 570 842 830 794

Verse of the Day

Alleluia. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Alleluia.

Matthew 5:3

Stand

Invocation

R In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Matthew 28:19b; [18:20]

Hymn 570

Confession of Sins and Absolution

LSB 184-185

R Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, asking Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

[Hebrews 10:22]

Kneel/Sit

R Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

Psalm 124:8

R I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,

C **and You forgave the guilt of my sin.**

Psalm 32:5

R Almighty God, our maker and redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. Therefore, we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C **O most merciful God, who has given Your only Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us forgiveness of all our sins; and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of You and of Your will and true obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

The Reader stands and faces the congregation

R Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and has given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in His name He gives power to become the children of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit. He that believes and is baptised shall be saved. Grant this, Lord, unto us all.

Mark 16:16; John 1:12

C Amen.

Stand

Introit & Glory to the Father

Psalm 15

¹O Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent?

Who shall dwell on your holy hill?

**²He who walks blamelessly and does what is right
and speaks truth in his heart;**

**³who does not slander with his tongue
and does no evil to his neighbour,
nor takes up a reproach against his friend;**

**⁴in whose eyes a vile person is despised,
but who honours those who fear the Lord;**

who swears to his own hurt and does not change;

**⁵who does not put out his money at interest
and does not take a bribe against the innocent.**

He who does these things shall never be moved.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

The Gradual - Psalm 117:1-2a; 96:8

R Praise the Lord, all nations!

Extol him, all peoples!

For great is his steadfast love toward us,
and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
bring an offering, and come into his courts!

The Lord Have Mercy (Kyrie)

Mark 10:47



C Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -



on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

Gloria in Excelsis

R Glory be to God on high

Luke 2:14; John 1:29
LSB SETTING 4, 204



C 1 To God on high be glo - ry And peace to all the earth;
2 To You, O sole-be - got - ten, The Fa - ther's Son, we pray;
3 For You a - lone are ho - ly; You on - ly are the Lord.



Good-will from God in heav - en Pro - claimed at Je - sus' birth!
O Lamb of God, our Sav - ior, You take our sins a - way.
For - ev - er and for - ev - er, Be wor - shiped and a - dored;



We praise and bless You, Fa - ther; Your ho - ly name, we sing—
Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus; Re - ceive our heart - felt cry,
You with the Ho - ly Spir - it A - lone are Lord Most High,



Our thanks for Your great glo - ry, Lord God, our heav'n-ly King.
Where You in pow'r are seat-ed At God's right hand on high—
In God the Fa - ther's glo - ry. "A - men!" our glad re - ply.

⁶“With what shall I come before the Lord,
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?

⁷Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”

⁸He has told you, O man, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

¹⁸The word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

²⁶For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

²⁷But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom and our righteousness and sanctification and redemption. ³¹Therefore, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand


Alleluia



Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

Holy Gospel

R The Holy Gospel according to **Matthew 5:1-12**.



Glo - ry be to You, O Lord.

¹Seeing the crowds, [Jesus] went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

²And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

³“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

⁵“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

⁷“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

⁸“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

⁹“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

¹⁰“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

R This is the Gospel of the Lord.



Praise be to You, O Christ.

Apostles' Creed

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Hymn 842

Sermon (*the congregation stands to hear the text and then sits*)

THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAKING CHRISTIANS LIES SQUARELY ON THE SHOULDERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Sermon for the 4th Sunday after Epiphany 2026

1 Corinthians 1:18–31

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 Second Reading from before, 1 Corinthians 1:18-31:

¹⁸ For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written,

**“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I shall thwart.”**

²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. ²² For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹ so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰ And because of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

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

Dear friends in Christ,

One of the privileges we have as Christians is telling others we meet about Jesus, and “*the hope of glory*” (Col. 1:27) we have in Him.

When telling others about Jesus, our goal is *always to lead them to the cross*, so that they, too, may repent of their sins and believe the Good News of salvation that comes through Christ.

But it is not always easy, is it? Often, we are a little timid about telling others about Jesus. We would rather remain quiet and “not rock the boat” with others, especially those we meet in our daily lives who, from their words and actions, show they care little about religion. They become quite stirred and defensive if the name Jesus comes up in conversation.

However, not everyone is like that. There are those who, when the opportunity arises, and you mention Jesus to them, will listen and appear to be receptive to your words. They are like the men to whom the Apostle Paul addressed at Mars Hill in Acts 17. They listened to what he had to say about the God of creation, who sent His Son, Jesus, and responded, “*We shall hear you again about this*” (Acts 17:32). In a polite way, they put an end to Paul’s address by vaguely suggesting that perhaps he could finish at another time. Whether that other time came, we aren’t told, but so often, when we talk about Jesus to others, and the discussion can continue at a later time, that other time never comes.

So, it is. While we may have polite conversations with others, in the end, it often feels as if we have achieved nothing, and we begin to think, “*What is the point?*” We know we are commanded to tell others about Jesus, but when we see that our evangelising isn’t achieving anything, it is so much easier to keep our mouths shut. But then we feel guilty because *we know we ought to tell others about Jesus, especially when the opportunity arises*.

If you feel that way, the Apostle Paul has some good news for you, and he mentions the Jews and the Greeks to make his point. He says, “¹⁸ **For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.** ¹⁹ **For it is written,**

**“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I shall thwart.”**

²⁰ **Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?** ²¹ **For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.** ²² **For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom,** ²³ **but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles.”**

How can this be good news?

By nature, people expect something else from God than the simple offer He makes, namely, “**the word of the cross**,” which is nothing more than pointing them to Christ crucified. The Jews were such people. Paul wrote how the “**Jews demand signs**.” “*Show us a sign*,” they demanded of Jesus, “*then we’ll believe You are the promised Messiah*.”

Jesus *did* give them signs. He healed the sick; He opened the eyes of the blind; He raised the dead; He preached the gospel to the poor. But they wanted a different kind of sign, because *they wanted Him to be a different kind of Messiah*—the liberator of their nation from the hated Romans, rather than the Saviour from sin.

The Jews were also familiar with miracles in their history: the crossing of the Red Sea, the destruction of the walls of Jericho, and the destruction of Sennacherib’s army.

Then there were the Greeks. The Greeks’ religious history did not feature miracles. Rather, Paul said how they “**seek wisdom.**” They wanted a religion that challenged their intelligence. They wanted philosophy, not a story about a crucified Jew who made great claims about saving the world. Such people scorned the gospel of a crucified Christ. Christ was a “**folly to Gentiles**” —to the Greeks and other unbelievers. They laughed at the idea that God revealed that His Son became a human being. They ridiculed the thought that “**the word of the cross**” could make people better. They considered the claim that Jesus was the only true God and Saviour a piece of foolishness. In their opinion, religion should be something scholarly and learned, something to reason out.

Returning to the Jews, this same gospel was also “**a stumbling block.**” They were scandalised by a religion that declared that a man executed as a criminal was their God. They were insulted when they were told that they, God’s chosen people, were guilty of crucifying the Son of God. Even today, very few Jews get over this stumbling block.

The point is that Paul teaches how people respond in different ways when they are told about Jesus, and not all responses are positive. Actually, when Jesus says in Luke 12:29, “*Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom,*” we get the impression that there will only ever be a small number of disciples in the midst of the great mass of nations in the world.

But how can this be good news for us? Isn’t it bad news when we speak up for Christ and get no or very little response? Doesn’t this mean we have failed in our duty in pointing others to Christ and making them Christians? Well, no, it is good news because the Scriptures place the responsibility for making Christians not on us, but *squarely on the shoulders of the Holy Spirit.*

A little later in this same Letter to the Corinthians, the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write, “*However, an unspiritual person does not receive the things of the Spirit of God. For they are foolishness to him; and he cannot know them because they are discerned spiritually*” (1 Corinthians 2:14). Apart from the Holy Spirit, people are spiritually blind and dead. We can certainly plant the seed—we are called to do that—but the growth happens ***only by the Holy Spirit’s power through the Word proclaimed***. Paul writes how “**It pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.**” These words teach us that it is God who saves. Our Lutheran Confessions rightly state, “*It is God’s will that His Word should be heard and that a person’s ears should not be closed (Psalm 95:8). With this Word the Holy Spirit is present and opens hearts, so that people (like Lydia in Acts 16:14) pay attention to it and are converted only through the Holy Spirit’s grace and power, who alone does the work of converting a person.*”¹

It was the Holy Spirit who led the Corinthian Christians to understand that they had been saved through “**the word of the cross.**” Had the learned Jewish scribes or the Greek debaters discovered that? No! All these brilliant people had proved to be were fools, for with all their wisdom they rejected the only way of salvation there is: Jesus of Nazareth, dying on the cross for our sins. All God had to do to show how foolish they were was to reveal His grace in His Son, Jesus Christ, and then wait for their knee-jerk reaction. They would automatically reject God’s grace in Christ.

It wasn’t just by chance that the worldly-wise rejected Christ, despite all they knew about so many things. God, in His wisdom, saw to it that the world would never find God through human brilliance. God’s way had nothing to do with human wisdom. He was pleased “**through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.**” *How much clearer could it be?*

Through “**the word of the cross**” is the way God has obtained His victory over sin, death, and the power of the devil. Salvation comes through the cross of Christ. The Son of God took on full humanity in the womb of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. He humbled Himself under the Law and fulfilled it for us.² Then He passively endured the punishment we deserved as He allowed mere men to nail Him to a cross. After He had suffered the full punishment for our sin, He died, and His friends laid Him in a tomb.

¹ Epitome of the Formula of Concord, II 5

² Matthew 5:17-20

This is the Christ crucified that Paul preached to the Corinthians. This is the Christ crucified that faithful pastors still preach today. All the religious power and wisdom of God are delivered *via the preaching of Christ crucified, a stumbling block and foolishness to unbelief*. Through this Word of Christ comes victory and life!

Jesus Christ did not remain in the grave after He had paid for all our sins. Instead, He rose. He taught His disciples for forty days after His resurrection. Sometime during those forty days, Jesus appeared to His disciples and said to them, “*This is what Scripture has said: ‘The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day; and on the basis of His name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem’*” (Luke 25:46-47). This proclamation of repentance and the forgiveness of sins is “**the foolishness of God (that) is wiser than men, and the weakness of God that is stronger than men.**”

When we confess this message to others, we do not have to worry about how eloquent we speak or how persuasive we are. In fact, Paul says, “**not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.**” You don’t have to be anyone special. No human being is eloquent or persuasive enough to bring a single person into the family of God. The Holy Spirit does that. By all means, tell the people whom you meet about this Man who is Christ crucified, and invite them into the Lord’s house, but let the Holy Spirit worry about making them into Christians through His means, namely, *Word and Sacrament*. Jesus once said, “*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,* ²⁰ *teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you*” (Matthew 28:19-20).

We do this when we confess our faith to the people we meet in our lives and invite them into the Lord’s house to worship with us, where we, like the early Christians in Acts 2, devote ourselves “*to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.*” In other words, we gather around Word and Sacrament.

We have the Word of God. We have the Holy Sacraments. Through these, as through means, we have the Holy Spirit. We have the promise of God that the means of grace will bear fruit, sometimes in a greater harvest, sometimes less, *as God wills*. Let these things suffice—the things of God—to fulfil the mission of making disciples. For above all else we have a risen, glorified, ascended, ruling, and soon-to-return Lord Jesus Christ, whose words of promise ring down the ages in good times and in bad: “*I shall build My church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it*” (Matthew 16:18). We can tell the people whom we meet about Jesus,

but the mission is fulfilled because of God's promise, not our own efforts. His promise is sure, "For, as the rain and the snow come down from the sky and do not go back there without watering the earth and causing it to bring forth and to sprout, so that it gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so My Word will be, which goes out of My mouth. It will not return to Me without results, but it will accomplish what I desire and be successful in what I have sent it to do" (Isaiah 55:10-11).

May God continue "through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe" that through it, the Holy Spirit may move more and more to repent and be saved. Amen.


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

Hymn & Offering *(the Offering may be received during or after the hymn)*
Hymn 830

Stand

Offertory

LSB 192
Psalm 51:10-12



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -
way from Your pres - ence, and take not Your Ho - ly Spir - it
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Your sal - va -
tion, and up - hold me with Your free spir - it. A - men.

Prayer of the Church

[1 Timothy 2:1-4]

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

Lord, You have called us to good work in our various vocations. Give us courage that we may never be ashamed of Christ and Him crucified, but be free to boast in the Lord within our callings.

God of all wisdom, You tell us plainly that the Word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but it is Your power to all who are being saved. Strengthen the faith of pastors and congregations, that they would not turn to man-made wisdom but boldly proclaim Christ and Him crucified.

Heavenly Father, You sent Your Son as the Saviour of the world, that all the families of the nations might worship before You. Bless the families of this congregation with Your grace and protection, that they may remember You in both joy and trouble and worship before You forevermore.

O Lord of lords, You rescued Your people from Egypt and confounded Balak, king of Moab, for their protection. Guide the decisions and actions of all earthly authorities, that Your people may live in peace and quietness.

Almighty God, when Christ returns in His glory, You promise to wipe away every tear from every eye. Comfort those who mourn. Heal and deliver, according to Your good and gracious will, those troubled by sickness and affliction.

Holy Father, You know the way of the righteous. Preserve Your people from walking in the counsel of the wicked, from standing in the way of sinners and from sitting in the seat of scoffers. By Your grace, cause them to delight in Your Holy Word.

All these things and whatever else You know that we need, grant us, Father, for the sake of Him who died and rose again and now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

LSB 196

Matthew 6:9-13

**Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,**

**Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass
against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever
and ever. Amen.**

Benediction

LSB 202
Numbers 6:24-26

R The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.



C A-men, a-men, a - men.

Sit

Hymn 794

Acknowledgments

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Article: Live Like You Are Dying

Have you ever tried to live your life like you were dying? Paul tells us we should in Colossians 3:3-5: “*For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.*”

When it comes to using money, do you act as if you’re dead? The widow with her two small copper coins, which make a penny, gave to God as if she were dying.

She gave all she had to Him, her entire livelihood, not holding back, not hoarding or living selfishly, but simply trusting in the Lord (Mark 12:42-44). And the God who made the world with just a word, who doesn't need a single bit of money, saw her act of sacrificial giving and called her blessed.

When it's time to gather family around the Word of God today, will you live like you are dying? The Christian dying does not speak of cricket or football, or work, or fortunes made. Instead, they always speak of Jesus, His Word, and His Spirit, close to them. As they draw into His presence, He is far more precious than life! So when you have come to listen, do you choose to listen well? Or do you tune out God's Word in tiredness? Do you skip the Bread of Life to sleep, or play, or scroll and swipe?

When you interact with others, do you speak of Jesus as if you were dying? If you're dead, no scorn can touch you, no persecutor's torments hurt. No jail can keep the dead locked up. "We died before we came here!" declared Stephen Foreman³ — and then he died in a foreign country, shot for giving God his all. Dying hurts the ones who are left behind, but once we're dead, no man can touch us.

"When Christ, who is our life, appears, we shall also appear with Him in glory" (Colossians 3:4). Now, we're living, yet in some way we have already died! Christ has died, and we are buried with Him—dead to sin and sin's dominion. Alive to Christ, to God and heaven! We are free to truly live. We enjoy our lives on earth, but do so as if we were dead. No hell can touch us, no sin can claim us, no sorrow can truly overwhelm our souls. For when we're God's, and He is ours, whether we live or die, *we are the Lord's*.

³ Stephen Foreman and his wife, Emily, left the United States to work as missionaries in a North African country where Christianity was illegal. He was 39 years old when he was murdered in 2009 by al-Qaeda operatives. The story of his life and death is told in his wife's memoir, *We Died Before We Came Here: A True Story of Sacrifice and Hope*. Following his death, his wife continued their mission work, and the couple's story was used to inspire other believers.

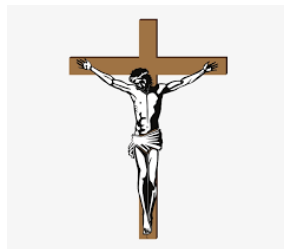
Children’s Address:

Look at our pictures today. We have 2 crosses. One cross is empty; the other shows Jesus hanging on the cross. These are just 2 examples of the many pictures we see of the cross.



The cross is an important symbol because it’s a visible, physical reminder of the place Jesus died for the sins of the world. In this morning’s Second Reading, the word “cross” is used as a one-word summary of that truth. In one word, it tells us how God chose to rescue the world.

Paul says, though, that the preaching of the cross, Jesus’ death, seems like foolishness. After all, you can’t help anybody once you’re dead, right? But that is exactly how God chose to save the world: He sent His only Son from heaven to live as a human who got hungry, tired, and even sad. And then Jesus was badly hurt, and finally, He was crucified, and He died.



Lots of people would say that Jesus’ letting Himself be killed was foolish. As God’s people, though, we see it as the way God’s love was perfectly shown to us: Jesus took our place on the cross, dying the death we deserve. His death paid for our sins.

You know, when you were baptised, the sign of the cross was made over your head and heart as a reminder that the crucified Christ is your Saviour. Your baptism connects you to the cross of Jesus; the cross of Jesus reminds you of your baptism; both the cross and your baptism remind you that you are a forgiven and loved child of God.

Heavenly Father, when we see the cross, we remember that Jesus died for us. When we see the cross, we are reminded that we are connected with Him. When we see the cross, it reminds us that He is our Saviour and we are His people. Amen.

SERVICE TIMES

8 February 5 Epiphany	15 February The Transfiguration	18 February ASH WEDNESDAY
8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am MARBURG HC	8.30am OAK HC 9.00am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.15am GRN HC 9.00am LOWOOD LR	7.00pm LOWOOD HC (Wed) 7.30pm OAKEY Vespers (Thurs)

Sunday, 8 February

READINGS: Isaiah 58:3-9a; 1 Corinthians 2:1-12; Matthew 5:13-20

HYMNS: 904 578 426 (560 619) 702

Sunday, 15 February

READINGS: Exodus 24:8-18; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9

HYMNS: 414 413 (tune LH 65) 523 (575 628) 435

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wednesday, 4 February, 10.00am. Women's Guild at Bethlehem, Toowoomba.
Opening Devotion: Leanne. Choose a Bible Verse from Judges Chapter 7-11.
Item of Interest: Condiment Set (Salt & Pepper set). Matthew will lead guild.

Sunday, 8 February. Marburg/Lowood Elders meeting after service.

Annual Meeting Dates:

Aubigny: Today, after Divine Service.

Marburg: 8 February after Divine Service.

Greenwood: 15 February after Divine Service.

Oakey: 15 February, 1.30pm.

Toowoomba: 22 February, 2.00pm.

Lowood, 1 March after Divine Service.

WEEKLY READINGS

Sunday, February 1	Exodus 39-40 James 5	<i>Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation (2017) pp. 43-51, Introduction Questions 1 - 14</i>
Monday, February 2	Job 1-2 1 Corinthians 1	
Tuesday, February 3	Job 3-4 1 Corinthians 2	
Wednesday, February 4	Job 5-7 1 Corinthians 3	
Thursday, February 5	Job 8-10 1 Corinthians 4	
Friday, February 6	Job 11-13 1 Corinthians 5	
Saturday, February 7	Job 14-16 1 Corinthians 6	

Pastor Peter Ziebell: Ph. 0407583922 Email: paziebell@gmail.com

The Church Office of the AELC: Email: ddaealc@gmail.com

AELC Member Congregations Details

Contact: ddaelc@gmail.com

Congregation	Address	Giving
Bethlehem Toowoomba	41 Buckland Street, Harristown	BSB 638-070 Account 15877094
Our Saviour Lowood	63 Prospect Street, Lowood	BSB 633-108 Account 159171487
St Johns Aubigny	2 Aubigny Crosshill Road, Aubigny	BSB 014-675 Account 388228975
St Pauls Greenwood	617 Acland-Silverleigh Road, Greenwood	BSB 638-070 Account 6918247
Trinity Marburg	19 Edmund Street, Marburg	BSB 633-000 Account 146106893
Trinity Oakey	125 Hamlyn Road, Oakey	BSB 638-070 Account 7405138

About the AELC

The Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church (AELC) believes that the Holy Scriptures are the inspired, inerrant, infallible, and authoritative Word of God, and accordingly, believe that the Holy Scriptures are the sole source of what we believe, teach, and confess. We also subscribe to *The Lutheran Confessions of 1580*, *The Word Shall Stand* and *The AELC Statement of Faith* as correct expositions of Scripture, which address issues that have arisen throughout history by the Word of God. We teach nothing new and stand on Scripture alone as God's Word to us. We teach the message of Christ crucified for sinners. We teach that salvation is by God's grace alone, through faith alone in Christ alone.



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