

THE AUSTRALIAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH (AELC)

BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA, OUR SAVIOUR LOWOOD, ST JOHNS AUBIGNY,
ST PAULS GREENWOOD, TRINITY MARBURG, TRINITY OAKEY

March 29, 2026 – Palm Sunday

www.aelc.org.au

Welcome to all worshipping with us today! Please prepare by praying a prayer found on page 308 in the LSB hymnbook and have an Order of Service Booklet.

HYMNS (LSB): 441 86 (LH) 347 (573 622) 921

INTROIT (*read together*): Psalm 118:19–29

**Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the Lord.
This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it.
I thank You that You have answered me
and have become my salvation.
The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.
This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvellous in our eyes.
This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Save us, we pray, O Lord!
O Lord, we pray, give us success!
Blessèd is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
We bless You from the house of the Lord.
The Lord is God,
and He has made His light to shine upon us.
Bind the festal sacrifice with cords,
up to the horns of the altar!
You are my God, and I shall give thanks to You;
You are my God; I shall extol You.
Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;
for His steadfast love endures forever!**

**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

Hebrews 9:12a, c, 15a; Psalm 111:9a

[Christ] entered once for all into the holy places, by means of His own blood,
thus securing an eternal redemption.

Therefore He is the Mediator of a new covenant,

so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.

He sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever.

COLLECT (*prayed together*): **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 forever. Amen.**

Sunday of the Church Year: Palm Sunday

Crowds pursue Jesus to see Him, hear Him, ridicule Him, and finally crucify Him. The sequence from popularity to persecution unfolds on this Sunday of the Passion. Hosanna accolades would be stifled by jeering mockery. The imagery of palm branches would be obscured with the bloodied palms and wounded head of Jesus. Within a week, Christ is adorned in beauty and fame, scorning and shame. For us, He decidedly unravels death's hideous sting!

THE FIRST READING from Isaiah 50:4–9a

⁴The Lord God has given Me
the tongue of those who are taught,
that I may know how to sustain with a Word
him who is weary.

Morning by morning He awakens;
He awakens my ear
to hear as those who are taught.

⁵The Lord God has opened My ear,
and I was not rebellious;
I turned not backward.

⁶I gave My back to those who strike,
and My cheeks to those who pull out the beard;
I hid not My face
from disgrace and spitting.

⁷But the Lord God helps Me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;
therefore I have set My face like a flint,

and I know that I shall not be put to shame.

⁸He who vindicates Me is near.

Who will contend with Me?

Let us stand up together.

Who is My adversary?

Let him come near to Me.

⁹Behold, the Lord God helps Me;

who will declare Me guilty?

THE SECOND READING from Philipians 2:5–11

⁵Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

THE GOSPEL READING from John 12:12–19

¹²The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem. ¹³They took palm branches and went out to meet Him, shouting,

“Hosanna!” “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Blessed is the King of Israel!”

¹⁴Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written:

¹⁵“Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion;

see, your King is coming,

seated on a donkey’s colt.”

¹⁶At first His disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realise that these things had been written about Him and that these things had been done to Him.

¹⁷Now the crowd that was with Him when He called Lazarus from the tomb and raised Him from the dead continued to spread the word. ¹⁸Many people, because they had heard that He had performed this sign, went out to meet Him. ¹⁹So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after Him!”

ARTICLE: Facing Our Failures: Lessons from Peter's Denial

At the heart of the Gospel of Mark, in chapter 14:66-72, lies a narrative rich with vulnerability, failure, and redemption. Mark recounts the historical story of Peter, a close follower of Jesus, who, despite his passionate declarations of loyalty, denies knowing Jesus three times. Peter's moment of weakness is not just a tale from ancient times. One reason the Holy Spirit preserved this story is because it reflects the struggles we face today in standing firm in our beliefs amidst societal pressures. Christians around the globe are being pressured into abandoning their biblical convictions. Shall we deny Jesus too?

The Struggle of Faith in a Sceptical World

We live in times where openly expressing one's faith can be met with suspicion, ridicule, or even outright hostility. The fear of being ostracised or misunderstood can lead to moments where, like Peter, we may find ourselves denying our convictions. We can deny our Lord both explicitly, like Peter did, or through our silence. Sometimes, if you're like me, the times when I have swallowed down my convictions, succumbed to the pressure, and kept quiet, haunt me. The question that arises from Peter's story is not about the inevitability of our failures but about how we prepare ourselves to face them and stand firm in our faith. But it is also a passage that teaches us something remarkable about Jesus' love, even though He knows we may fail Him.

Preparation Through Reflection and Trust

Peter's denial teaches us the importance of self-awareness and trust in God. Before the moment of his denial, Peter was confident in his own strength. Peter painted the picture clearly. Everyone else would desert Jesus. But there would still be one standing on the battlefield next to his Lord. And, if it came down to it, Peter would die for Jesus. However, it was exactly this confidence that led to Peter's downfall. Take heed, you who stand, lest you fall.

It is exactly at this point we must put ourselves in Peter's shoes. We, like Peter, too often rely on ourselves. If we stop for a moment and reflect on our vulnerabilities, things may change. It is crucial that we rely on God as we prepare ourselves for the moments when our faith will be tested. We must not rely on our own strength. We must trust God. He is our shield and our strength.

The narrative also highlights the power of forgiveness and redemption. Despite Peter's denial, he is not cast aside. Instead, his story is one of being remembered

and restored. It's no accident why Jesus at the resurrection told the women to go get Peter. There's no wonder why Jesus asked Peter three times, "Do you love Me?" Peter's salvation and hope of glory were never meant to depend on his own strength. Jesus went to that cross knowing he would bear the guilt of Peter's sin. Peter called down a curse upon himself, but Jesus would take that curse. What a powerful testament to the grace that awaits us, even in our weakest moments.

Practical Applications for Today

Embrace Humility: The way up is down. He must increase, and we must decrease. It is crucial that we recognise that our ability to stand firm does not come from our own resolve but from God Himself. Not even the strength of our trust. As disciples, we embrace humility and acknowledge that, like Peter, our own understanding and strength are insufficient.

Cultivate a Relationship with the Holy Spirit: The transformation of Peter from a denier to a bold proclaimer of the Gospel is a journey of empowerment through the Holy Spirit. Peter went from being frightened of the Jewish people to preaching to thousands. How? What changed between Peter's thrice denial and a few months later, preaching Christ in the temple? Peter met the resurrected Christ, was restored to his position, and received the Holy Spirit. The weakest Christian is the one who relies solely on their own strength. We must nurture a deep, personal relationship with the Holy Spirit, allowing Him to guide, strengthen, and embolden us in our walk of faith.

Know the Gospel: You will face challenges in this life to deny Christ. Opportunities will come for you to proclaim Jesus or to shrink back. In moments of difficulty, the depth of your understanding and the conviction of the Gospel within you are your greatest defence. You must know the Gospel. You must know your Lord. You must know that the Gospel is for you. You must know Jesus as your Lord. Preach the Gospel to yourself. Immerse yourself in the Scriptures, not just as a routine, but as a foundation for life.

Live Out Your Faith with Love and Meekness: It is remarkable that Peter, the former denier, is now led by the Holy Spirit to write to the churches about how to be effective apologists. Peter teaches us in 1 Peter 3:13-17 that our journey of boldness in faith is not about confrontation but about standing firm with love, humility, and a clear conscience. We must be ready to defend the hope we have. However, our attitude should be one of meekness, reverence, and a good conscience. Let your life be a testament to the grace you've received by showing grace, love, and understanding to others, even when faced with opposition.

Seek Community and Encouragement: Just as Peter was not alone in his journey, neither are we. Surround yourself with a faith community that inspires, supports, and challenges you to grow in your walk with God.

May the Lord be your strength. May the Lion of Judah be your confidence. May the Holy Spirit fill your heart with His courage. May you suffer for the Lord of glory well. May His kingdom come and His will be done here on earth as it is in heaven.

CHILDREN'S ADDRESS:

Who can tell me what we call this very special Sunday? Right, Palm Sunday. What happened on Palm Sunday? And why do we call it Palm Sunday?

A long time ago, on this day we now call Palm Sunday, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. People put their clothes on the donkey for Him to ride on, and on the road, too. They sang praises to Jesus. And some of them waved palm branches to welcome Him. That's why we call it Palm Sunday.

Do you know who was in that crowd? Yes, lots of different people. But the Bible especially mentions children. Children were in the crowd. Some running and jumping. Some are being held by their parents. Some were waving palm branches, just like the grown-ups were. It was so exciting! I'm sure Jesus was happy the children were there, singing praises to Him. I know Jesus is happy when you praise Him, too.



However, a few days after Jesus rode on that donkey and people waved palm branches, He was nailed to the cross.

Dying on that cross hurt terribly! But even though Jesus was in such pain, you know who He was thinking about? He was thinking about everyone who needs forgiveness. He was thinking about the children back then. He was thinking about you. He did everything He needed to do so that you could be with Him forever. All your sins were nailed to the cross with Jesus. Now we can rejoice and sing “Hosannah” every day because we have been forgiven!

Thank You, Jesus, for riding into Jerusalem for me. Because of Your death and resurrection, I know that I have eternal life. Amen.

If you wish to view, download, or print copies of anything in the bulletin from online, either the Sermon, Prayer, Children's Address, Article, or the Bulletin please visit the AELC Website at

www.aelc.org.au/resources/



UPCOMING SERVICE TIMES

April 3 <i>Good Friday</i>	10:30am Aubigny Holy Communion 8:30am Oakey Holy Communion 9:00am Greenwood Lay Reading 9:00am Toowoomba Lay Reading MS 9:00am Lowood Lay Reading	Readings: Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9; John 19:17-30 Hymns: 448, 452, 447, (437, 531), 554
Liturgical Colour: Black		
April 5 <i>Easter Sunday</i>	10:00am Aubigny Lay Reading MS 8:30am Oakey Lay Reading MS 9:00am Greenwood Lay Reading 6:00am Toowoomba Holy Communion Readings: Ex. 14:10-15:1; 1 Cor. 15:1-11; John 20:1-18 9:00am Marburg Holy Communion	Readings: Acts 10:34-43; Colossians 3:1-4; Matthew 28:1-10 Hymns: 457, 467, 475, (560, 710), 484
Liturgical Colour: White		
April 12 <i>Second Sunday of Easter</i>	10:30am Aubigny Holy Communion 8:30am Oakey Holy Communion 9:00am Greenwood Lay Reading 9:00am Toowoomba Lay Reading 9:00am Lowood Lay Reading MS	Readings: Hymns:
Liturgical Colour: White		
April 19 <i>Third Sunday of Easter</i>	9:30am Aubigny Lay Reading 8:30am Oakey Lay Reading 9:00am Greenwood Lay Reading 9:00am Toowoomba Lay Reading 9:00am Lowood Lay Reading	Readings: Hymns:
Liturgical Colour: White		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

www.aelc.org.au/whats-on

Today, after service, the Parish AGM will be held.

Monday, 6 April. 10:00 am. Parish Sunday School Picnic at St Johns Aubigny. All are invited to attend. Could each family please provide a plate to share and also something for dessert? If you would like to bring along any games/puzzles (e.g. how many jellybeans in a jar etc) please do!

The Women's Guild is again running an Easter colouring competition for the children. Sunday School-aged children can take home a picture to colour in today. Please bring it to the Easter Monday Picnic at Aubigny!

Pastor is away 6-18 April.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Church Locations: For all church locations and their details throughout the AELC, please go to www.aelc.org.au/church-locations

Online Giving: For online/electronic giving/offerings and for church bank details to set up a recurring direct debit, please go to www.aelc.org.au/online-giving

Verse of the Day

He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. **Philippians 2:8b**

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 subscribe to *The Book of Concord* of 1580, *The Word Shall Stand* (1990) 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 continue to confess the teachings of the *Evangelical Lutheran Church* wherever she is found 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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WEEKLY READINGS

<i>Sunday, March 29</i>	Number 7-8 Revelation 17	<i>Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation (2017)</i> pp. 105-109, The Seventh Commandment, Questions 78-82
<i>Monday, March 30</i>	Number 9-11 Revelation 18	
<i>Tuesday, March 31</i>	Numbers 12-14 Revelation 19	
<i>Wednesday, April 1</i>	Numbers 15-16 Revelation 20	
<i>Thursday, April 2</i>	Numbers 17-19 Revelation 21	
<i>Friday, April 3</i>	Numbers 20-22 Revelation 22	
<i>Saturday, April 4</i>	Numbers 23-25 Matthew 1	