

DARLING DOWNS PARISH OF THE AELC
TRINITY OAKLEY, ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,
BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA

3 September 2017
Bulletin for the 13th Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 411 112 349 376 323 197

INTROIT: Vindicate me, O LORD! For I have been walking in my integrity, and I trust in the LORD. I shall not waver.

Test me, O LORD, and try me! **Examine my secret parts and my heart!**

For Your mercy is before my eyes, and I have been walking in Your truth.

I have not been sitting with deceitful people, and I shall not associate with hypocrites.

I hate the assembly of evildoers, and I shall not sit with wicked people.

I shall wash my hands in innocence, that I may walk around Your altar, O LORD, that I may proclaim a song of thanksgiving, and tell about all Your wonderful deeds.

O LORD, I love the house where You live, the place where Your glory dwells.

Do not sweep my soul away with sinners, or my life with bloodthirsty people!

They have an evil scheme in their hands, and their right hands are full of bribes.

However, I myself shall walk in my integrity. Redeem me and be gracious to me!

My foot has been standing on level ground. I shall bless the LORD in the assemblies.

Psalm 26

COLLECT: Almighty God, Your Son willingly endured the agony and shame of the cross for our redemption. Grant us courage to take up our cross daily and follow Him wherever He leads; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for 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.**

READINGS: Jeremiah 15:15-21 "I shall rescue you and redeem you."

Romans 12:9-21 "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good!"

Matthew 16:21-28 "Take up your cross and follow Me."

SERMON: Matthew 16:21-28 The Necessity of the Cross

²¹ From that time on, Jesus began to show His disciples that He had to go to Jerusalem, suffer greatly at the hands of the elders, chief priests, and scribes, be killed, and be raised on the third day.

²² However, Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, "May God in His mercy spare you this, Lord! This will certainly not happen to You."

²³ However, Jesus turned and told Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me, because you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of human beings."

²⁴ Then Jesus told His disciples, "If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me! ²⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what good will it do a person if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a person give in exchange for his soul? ²⁷ For the Son of Man is going to come in His Father's glory with His angels, and then He will repay each person according to what he has done.

²⁸ Truly, I tell you that there are some of those who are standing here who will certainly not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

Our Help comes from the LORD

(Jeremiah 15:15-21)

The LORD was angry at the wickedness of Judah. So the Lord told His prophet Jeremiah, "Send them away." Send them away to destruction. The monstrous impenitence of Judah and the unbending justice of God caught Jeremiah between them. He staggered under the burden. Struggle as he may, he could not extricate himself from the cold despair, which slowly numbed his faith.

The people of Judah refused to listen and instead saw Jeremiah as the enemy. As Ahab once pointed an accusing finger at Elijah, saying, "You are the one who troubles Israel," so Jeremiah's contemporaries lashed out at him. If it wasn't for him and his incessant preaching of judgment, the land would be at peace. The Lord told him at the very beginning of his ministry that all would oppose him. Now the reality of that prophecy was bearing down on Jeremiah with all its force. Yet the Lord consoled His prophet with the assurance that everything would turn out according to His good purpose.

In his effort to fight off the damp darkness creeping into his soul, Jeremiah turned to the Word, to his certain knowledge of the Lord's character. He confessed that the Lord knew the anguish of his heart and felt with him and for him. The Lord would not let him be taken away. The prophet had been faithful to his calling. How many insults had stung him! How often he had been called the fool for his message! How many times the people of Judah had thrown the question in his face, "Where is the fulfillment of the Lord's Word?"

According to the Lord's own command to him, Jeremiah had stood apart from the normal social activities. By doing so he had given testimony to the terror of the coming judgment. He had always found his strength in the Lord's Word.

God's Word was his support, the food of his life. What pleasure, what force of life came to him as he devoured it! How it lifted his soul and refreshed his spirit! How gladly he bore the name of the Lord! He looked to that Word now to ward off the doubt so swiftly coming upon him. It had not failed him in the past.

This time, however, Jeremiah let the comfort of the Word slip from him. He fell back on his own strength, and soon the pain overwhelmed him. The blackness of despair, drawing everything into itself, engulfed the prophet's faith, hope, and very spirit. He could not hold back his doubts any longer. They rushed upon him. They made the Lord's Word seem only a distant whisper. They called God's promise and person into question. Has God become an intermittent stream like water that is unreliable? In the heat of trouble does God give out on us? Jeremiah's aching bones and weary soul cried out; they shouted in the face of God, "Why is my pain unending and my wound grievous and incurable?" His inner pain blotted out hope, all the love he had known from the Lord, and every promise by which he had lived.

The Lord loved Jeremiah, so He shocked him to his senses. In the midst of such unbelief and despair, such smallness and narrowness of vision, God slapped the prophet in the face with the word "repent." Turn to Me, listen to My voice, serve Me, grab hold of My promise, and forget about yourself. The Lord repeated the promise He had made at the very beginning of Jeremiah's work. At that point the Lord had promised to make Jeremiah a bronze wall against all the people (1:18). Now God urged him to become again the worthy spokesman he had been.

Jeremiah had lost his sense. He had become like those to whom he was preaching; he had begun to turn to them; he had begun to relinquish the truth of God. The Lord called him back. The Lord told him, "Do not be afraid; trust what I have said, and what you do will not be in vain." We do not hear the prophet's response. We can see by his action, however, that he took to heart what the Lord had told him here and that he continued on with a renewed faithfulness to his calling.

Even great men of faith fall prey to doubt and despair. They are examples for us. If they fear, if they doubt, if they need encouragement, if they need admonition, if they need help, if they need the preaching of the law and the repeated assurance of the promises of God, how much more do we! We may all expect to drink some of the same bitter cup as did the prophet here. We all will need to be shocked out of our stupor by God's call to repentance. But with the Lord's help we will find our way back to Him, as did Jeremiah. From these experiences, both Jeremiah's and ours, we are made more ready to be shining lights to others who also drift into the fog of doubt and despair. We have been there and have returned. We may be able to help them return too.

Welcome to all with us today! May God bless our worship of Him by His serving of us!
 Pastor Peter Ziebell, Phone 0407583922.
 Email him at paziebell@gmail.com
 Weekly sermons and bulletins are available at www.aelc.org.au.
Please notify pastor of anyone who is unwell or in need of a visit.

COMING SERVICES

10 September 14 Pentecost	17 September 15 Pentecost	24 September 16 Pentecost
8.30am TMBA HC 8.30am OAK PR JZ 10.00am GRN PR JZ 10.30am AUB HC	8.30am TMBA PR JZ 8.30am OAK LR 9.00am GRN LR 10.30am AUB PR JZ	8.30am OAK PR JZ 8.30am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.00am GRN PR JZ
Sunday, 10 September		
READINGS: Ezekiel 33:7-9; Romans 13:1-10; Matthew 18:1-20		
HYMNS: 499 431 345 (314 848) 380 OAK & GRN: 266 258 264 195		
Sunday, 17 September		
READINGS: Genesis 50:15-21; Romans 14:1-12; Matthew 18:21-35		
HYMNS: 361 119 356 452 TMBA & AUB: 266 258 264 195		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wednesday, 6 September, 10.00am. Women's Guild at Oakey. Opening Devotion: Leanne Priebbenow. Key Word: Holy. Item of Interest: A Spring flower

Sunday, 10 September, 7.30pm. Choir Practice at Oakey.

Tuesday, 12 September, 7.30pm. Men's Fellowship at Oakey.

Friday, 15 September, 7.30pm. Combined parish Bible Study at Oakey.

Pastor will be away from 16 Sept – 6 October, attending the ULMA conference in the USA. In case of an emergency while pastor is away, please contact Pastor Ohlson on 53596802, or Vicar Zabel on 0458251132.