

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

31 December 2017
Bulletin for New Year's Eve

HYMNS: 22 552 181 413 292 559

INTROIT: O LORD, You have been our dwelling-place in all generations.
Before the mountains were born, or You gave birth to the earth and the world,
from eternity to eternity You are God.

You turn mankind back to dust, and say, "Return, children of Adam!"

For **a thousand years** in Your sight are **like yesterday** when it passes, like a
watch in the night.

You end their lives while they sleep. They are like grass that is fresh in the
morning.

In the morning it flourishes and is fresh. In the evening it withers and dries up.

For we have been consumed by Your anger, and we have been terrified by Your
fury.

You have set our iniquities before You, our secret sins in the light of Your
presence.

For all our days have passed away in Your wrath. We finish our years like a sigh.

The days of our lives have seventy years in them or, if we are strong, they are
eighty years. Their pride is only toil and trouble. For life quickly passes and we
fly away.

Who knows the power of Your anger? For Your wrath is as great as the fear that is
due to You.

Teach us to count our days correctly, that we may gain wise hearts!

Psalm 90:1-12

COLLECT: Eternal God, we commit to Your mercy and forgiveness the year now
ending and commend to Your blessing and love the times yet to come. In the
New Year, abide among us with Your Holy Spirit that we may always trust in the
saving name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the
Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. 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: Isaiah 30:8-17 Write it on a tablet

Romans 8:31b-39 If God is for us, who can be against us?

Luke 12:35-40 Watch and be ready

SERMON: Psalm 27 The LORD is my Light and my Salvation

¹ The LORD is my Light and my Salvation. Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the Fortress of my life. Of whom should I be afraid?

² When evildoers came against me to devour my flesh, my oppressors and my enemies stumbled and fell.

³ If an army were to pitch camp against me, my heart would not be afraid. If a war were to break out against me, in this I would be confident.

⁴ One thing I have asked of the LORD. That I shall seek, that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD, and to reflect in His temple.

⁵ For He will hide me in His shelter in the day of trouble. He will conceal me under the cover of His tent. He will set me high on a rock.

⁶ Now my head will be high above my enemies all around me. Therefore I shall offer sacrifices in His tent with shouts of joy. I shall sing and make music to praise the LORD.

⁷ Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud! Be gracious to me and answer me!

⁸ When You said, "Seek My face!" my heart said to You, "Your face, O LORD, I shall seek."

⁹ Do not hide Your face from me! Do not turn Your servant away in anger! You have been my Help. Do not cast me off or abandon me, O God of my salvation!

¹⁰ When my father and my mother have abandoned me, the LORD will take me in.

¹¹ Teach me Your way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies!

¹² Do not surrender me to the will of my oppressors! For false witnesses have risen against me, and they breathe out violence.

¹³ Surely, I am convinced that I shall see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

¹⁴ Wait eagerly for the LORD! Have courage! Let your heart prove to be strong! Wait eagerly for the LORD!

Jesus presented in the temple.

Luke 2:22-40

The angel Gabriel had revealed to Mary what she was to name her Child (Luke 1:31). The name "Jesus" comes from two Hebrew words: *the Lord* (Jehovah) plus *save*. Matthew 1:21 gives this interpretation of the name *Jesus*: "He will save His people from their sins." Truly an appropriate name for this Child!

We don't know just where Mary and Joseph might have stayed while they remained in Bethlehem after Jesus was born. Undoubtedly, they were able to find more suitable shelter than the stable after the rush of people had left Bethlehem following the census registration.

When Jesus was 40 days old, they made the short trip to Jerusalem for the purification of Mary and the presentation of the Child in the temple. The law of the purification of a mother is found in Leviticus chapter 12. A poor person was required to bring two doves or young pigeons as her sacrificial offerings. The law also required that a firstborn male was to be consecrated to the Lord (Exodus 13:2). If the child was not given into the service of the Lord, the parents needed to

redeem him by a payment of five shekels (Numbers 3:46-47). Mary and Joseph did not make this payment since Jesus was consecrated to the Lord in the fullest possible way. On the 40th day of His life, Jesus is presented to the Lord.

We are now introduced to two very pious and aged persons, Simeon and Anna. They remind us of those other two persons, Zechariah and Elizabeth, whom we met at the beginning of this story of the births of John and Jesus. And just as Zechariah sang a hymn of praise, so does Simeon.

Simeon had been promised by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. When Mary and Joseph come into the courts of the temple, the Spirit directs Simeon to do the same. Seeing the child Jesus, he takes the infant in his arms and praises God with the song commonly called the *Nunc Dimittis* (from the opening words of the hymn in Latin). We continue to sing this song as part of our communion liturgy.

Simeon is not really making a request of the Lord- he is making a statement of fact: "*You are letting Your servant depart in peace,*" (Luke 2:29). Simeon's service in the temple as a watchman waiting for the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises is at an end. The watch is over; the servant can retire in peace. With the eyes of faith, Simeon sees more than a Babe in arms; he sees a Saviour dying on the cross; he sees salvation for all people, both Israelite and Gentile.

Joseph and Mary marvelled at the words spoken by Simeon. But the old man is not finished. He shows insight that could come only by special revelation of the Spirit concerning the destiny of this Child. Israel would be divided over Jesus - He would cause some to fall and some to rise. For some, Jesus would be a rock of offense over which they would stumble; for others, He would be the living stone of salvation. Mary would herself witness His suffering on the cross; her own soul would be pierced with the sword.

Simeon passes from the scene to be replaced by Anna, a widow who was very old. She had faithfully served the Lord for many years with worship, fasting, and prayer. Now she adds her thanksgiving to that of Simeon's and speaks of the Child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

Joseph and Mary had much to discuss as they proceeded on their way back to Bethlehem following their visit to the temple. For the time being, they decided to stay in Bethlehem. Luke skips over the story of the coming of the wise men and the flight into Egypt (Matthew 2). He simply reports that after doing everything required by the law of the Lord, Mary and Joseph returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Here Jesus grew up, becoming stronger day by day, and was filled with wisdom and the grace of God.

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

1 January 2018 New Year's Day	7 January The Baptism of Jesus	14 January 2 Epiphany
9.30am AUB HC	8.30am TMBA HC 8.30am OAK PR JZ 10.00am GRN PR JZ 10.30am AUB HC	8.30am OAK HC 8.30am PR JZ 10.00am GRN HC 10.30am AUB PR
Monday, 1 January 2018		
READINGS: Numbers 6:22-27; Galatians 3:23-29; Luke 2:21		
HYMNS: 35 36 277 398 330 219		
Sunday, 7 January		
READINGS: Genesis 1:1-15; Romans 6:1-11; Mark 1:4-11		
HYMNS: 522 39 831 286 (282) 279 OAK & GRN: 47 279 394 508		

The members of the Priebbenow family would sincerely like to thank the members of the parish for their kind thoughts and sympathies on Mona's passing. We would also like to thank those who assisted with the catering and other duties on the day of her funeral.