

CONGREGATIONS OF THE AELC
TRINITY OAKEY, ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY, BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA
TRINITY MARBURG, ST JOHN'S MINDEN, OUR SAVIOUR LOWOOD

21 June 2020

Bulletin for the 3rd Sunday after Pentecost

ORDER OF SERVICE WITHOUT HOLY COMMUNION

THE INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

HYMN 400 FROM GOD SHALL NAUGHT DIVIDE ME

1	2	3
From God shall naught divide me, For He is true for aye; He on my path shall guide me, Lest I should go astray. His ever bounteous hand By night and day is heedful, And gives me what is needful, Where'er I go or stand.	Whate'er shall be His pleasure Will always serve me best; He gave His dearest treasure, In whom I'm richly blest. How wondrous is His love, That in His Son He gave us Whate'er could bless and save us: Praise Him who reigns above.	O praise Him, for He never Forgets our daily need; O blest the hour whenever To Him our thoughts can speed. Yea, all the time we spend Without Him is but wasted, Till we His joy have tasted, The joy that has no end.
4		
The Father who has made us Both wills and seeks our good; The Son has grace to aid us, And saves us by His blood;		The Spirit rules our ways, By faith in us abiding, To heaven our footsteps guiding: To God be thanks and praise

THE CONFESSION

Dear friends in Christ: Let us draw near to God our Father with a true heart to confess our sins, and ask Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.

Our help is in the name of the Lord. **He made heaven and earth.**

I said, I will confess my sins to the Lord. **Then He forgave the guilt of my sin.**

Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we confess to You that by nature we are sinful and unclean, and that we have sinned against You by thought, word and deed. Therefore we flee for refuge to your infinite mercy and plead for Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Most merciful God, You have given Your only Son to die for us: Have mercy on us, and for His sake grant us forgiveness of all our sins. By Your Holy Spirit increase our knowledge of You and Your will, and make us obedient to Your Word, so that by Your grace we may come to eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy on 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 has given the right to become the children of God, and has given them His Holy Spirit. He who believes and is baptised will be saved. Grant this, Lord, to us all. Amen.

THE INTROIT

The one who lives under the shelter of the Most High will stay for the night in the shadow of the Almighty.

I shall say to the LORD, "My Refuge and my Fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

For He Himself will rescue you from the fowler's snare and from the destructive plague.

He will cover you with His feathers, and you will take refuge under His wings.

His truth will be your Shield and Buckler.

You will not be afraid of the terror of the night or of the arrow that flies by day or of the plague that stalks in darkness or of the pestilence that lays waste at midday.

A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.

You will only look with your eyes and see the retribution on wicked people.

For You, O LORD, are my Refuge. You have made the Most High your Dwelling-place.
No harm will happen to you. No plague will come near your tent.

Psalm 91:1-10

THE GLORY TO THE FATHER

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

THE LORD HAVE MERCY

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.

THE GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST

Glory to God in the highest.

And on earth peace, among men with whom He is pleased. We praise You, we bless You, we worship You, we glorify You, we give thanks to You for Your great glory, O Lord God, heavenly king, God, the Father Almighty. O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father: You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. You take away the sin of the world; receive our prayer. You are seated at the right hand of God the Father; have mercy on us. For You alone are holy, You alone are Lord, You alone, O Christ, with the Holy Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

THE COLLECT

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

O God, because Your abiding presence always goes with us, keep us aware of Your daily mercies, that we may live secure and content in Your eternal love; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

THE FIRST READING

The First Reading for _____ is written in chapter _____ of _____, beginning at verse _____.

After the reading:

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE SECOND READING

The Second Reading is written in chapter _____ of _____, beginning at verse _____.

After the reading: This is the Word of the Lord.

Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah.

THE GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel is written in the _____ chapter of the Gospel according to _____, beginning at verse ____.

Glory be to You, O Lord.

After the Gospel: This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to You, O Christ.**

THE APOSTLES' CREED

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, dead and 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 199 CHRIST, THOU STRONG GUARDIAN, E'ER THY CHURCH DEFENDING

1
Christ, Thou strong Guardian, e'er Thy Church defending,
Grant us protection, speedy succour sending;
From those who hate us and assail us ever
Do Thou deliver.

2
Fight for Thy children, take from them all sadness;
Withstand the devil, stay his rage and madness;
All that assails us, Thine own members lowly,
O'erthrow it wholly.

3
For Church and school, Lord, grant us peace abiding,
Peace to the rulers for our country's guiding;
Peace to the conscience, peace that all hearts treasure,
Grant without measure.

4
Lord, for Thy goodness we on earth shall praise Thee,
Through endless ages joyous strains shall raise Thee:
Thus, faithful Guardian, all who stand before Thee
Ever adore Thee.

SERMON - STOP BEING AFRAID Matthew 10:24-33

HYMN 217 O CHRIST, OUR TRUE AND ONLY LIGHT

1
O Christ, our true and only light,
Enlighten those who sit in night,
Let those afar now hear Thy voice,
And in Thy fold with us rejoice.
2
Fill with the radiance of Thy grace
The souls now lost in error's maze,
And all whom in their secret minds
Some dark delusion haunts and blinds.

3
O gently call those gone astray,
That they may find the saving way;
Let every conscience sore oppressed
In Thee find peace and heavenly rest.
4
O Make the deaf to hear Thy Word,
And teach the dumb to speak, dear Lord,
Who dare not yet the faith avow,
Though secretly they hold it now.

5
Shine on the darkened and the cold,
Recall the wanderers to Thy fold,
Unite all those who walk apart,
Confirm the weak and doubting heart;
6
So they with us may evermore
Such grace with wondering thanks adore,
And endless praise to Thee be given
By all Thy church in earth and heaven.

THE PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER:

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE BLESSING

The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make His face shine on us and be gracious to us. The Lord look upon us with favour, and give us peace. **Amen.**

HYMN 785 IN ADAM WE HAVE ALL BEEN ONE

1
In Adam we have all been one;
All one rebellious man;
We all have fled that evening voice
That sought us as we ran.
2
We fled our God and, fleeing Him,
We lost our brother too;
Each singly sought and claimed His own;
Each man his brother slew.

3
But Your strong love, it sought us still
And sent Your only Son
That we might hear His Shepherd's voice
And, hearing Him, be one.
4
O Saviour, when we loved You not,
You loved and saved us all;
O great Good Shepherd of mankind,
O hear us when we call.

5
Send us Your Spirit, teach us truth;
O Saviour, set us free
From fancied wisdom, self-sought ways,
And give us unity.
6
Then shall our song united rise
To Your eternal throne,
Where with the Father evermore,
And Spirit, You are one.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor is proposing a return to normal services beginning **Sunday 12 July**, unless there is a further lifting of restrictions. Until then, he will be offering HC at the following churches using a shortened order of service. Feel free to come along at any time during the following hours:

Sunday, 28 June
Bethlehem Toowoomba. 8-11am
Sunday, 5 July
St John's Minden. 9-11am.

Sunday, 12 July
8.30am TMBA HC
10.30am AUB HC

8.30am OAK LR
9.30am GRN LR
9.00am LOWOOD LR

Please note that St Paul's Greenwood and Bethlehem Toowoomba are resuming LR services.

Wednesday, 1 July. 10.00am. Women's Guild is set to resume. We shall meet at the Oakey hall.
Opening Devotion: Kathie. Key Word: Learn. Item of Interest: Something beginning with "U".

WHERE IS GOD IN TRAGEDY?

A question many ask when tragedies occur is "Where is God in this?"

Many are living in a time of great fear because of the coronavirus and the recent murderous rampage in the United States. Surely things won't get so out of hand in our country? But of course illnesses are nothing new and neither is the evil of murder. The history of the human race is filled with plagues and tragedy, and violence and murder both from organised governmental regimes and individual perpetrators.

Our natural reaction is to question God when these things happen. That's what our sinful flesh always does. "How could You let this happen?" "Why?" Part of it is seeking answers and part of it is not understanding why there is evil in the world. We may even think we know better than God and that we don't deserve anything bad to happen to us.

The fact of the matter is that God created the world perfect, but man has ruined it with his sin. We are all sinful. We have all fallen short of the glory of God. We all deserve tragedies and disasters piled upon us. Really, our question should be, "Why am I so blessed and protected from tragedies and disasters? Why have I not had to face more tragedies in my life?"

The thing is that we cannot get very far with this particular line of questioning. We know that all plagues and tragedy are the result of sin, both our own sin and the sin of others. We also know that God works good even from tragedy, but we cannot know why God allows any particular tragedy because He doesn't tell us. We cannot answer what particular good He is working in any particular instance because He doesn't tell us. "*For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His adviser?*" (Romans 11:34).

So, we cannot answer in particular, but we can answer in general. In general, tragedies are calls for repentance.

As recorded in Luke chapter 13, some people told Jesus about Galileans who had been massacred by Pilate while they were offering their sacrifices. Jesus responded by saying, "*Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? I tell you, no. However, unless you repent, you too will all perish in a similar way. Or do you think that those eighteen who were killed when the tower at Siloam fell on them were guiltier than all the other people who were living in Jerusalem were? I tell you, no; but, unless you repent, you will all perish in the same way.*"

In other words, we cannot say that because tragedy falls upon someone they deserved it more than anyone else. You cannot say that based on what happened to someone they must be worse sinners. Jesus simply says, "No." That is not how we are to look at the tragedies around us. We are not to look around us and think about the sins of others. The fact that someone dies in a tragedy is no indication that they were punished by God for their sins. The righteous suffer with the unrighteous.

Tragedy around us are not a call to repentance for those who died. They are a call to repentance for us. Unless we repent, we will all likewise perish.

To repent means to be sorry for your sins and to trust that your sins are forgiven on account of Jesus' death for you. It is a turning away from sin to Jesus, our Saviour from sin.

Again, we cannot answer in particular, but we can answer in general. In general, tragedies are used by God to work to strengthen our faith and trust in Him. In tragedy we see how fleeting this life is and we thus long for heaven. We see how unreliable and untrustworthy everything on this earth is. We see the face of evil in what takes place.

In tragedy, God also reminds us that there is a remedy for death. There is a remedy for sin. There is a remedy for evil.

This is where we move away from what God doesn't tell us to what God does tell us. He tells us that He loves us so much that He has sent His only Son to die for us to save us eternally. He is our Saviour. Jesus, the Son of God, has willingly come to take on our flesh and suffer and die in our place. He has come to save us from this world of sin and suffering. He has come to save us from the hell we deserve because of our sin.

In Baptism we were united with Jesus' death and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-5). Thus, our Baptism is God's promise that we shall rise from the dead as surely as Jesus rose from the dead. The forgiveness of sins Jesus earned on the cross is given in Baptism, so as forgiven believers, we shall be raised to eternal life when we die from this life. That is God's promise to us.

Until Jesus returns, we shall all face death, whether through a tragedy or otherwise. We will be ready for death through repentance and the forgiveness of sins. We will be ready for death because Jesus died our death in our place and has earned for us His inheritance – the inheritance of eternal life.

Eternal life is promised to all believers where there will be no more hunger or thirst (Rev. 7:16) but a feast of rich food (Is. 25:6). There will be peace and weapons will no longer be needed as swords will be turned into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks (Is. 2:4). Death will be swallowed up as there will be no more sin, and God will wipe away tears from all faces (Is. 25:8).

In the midst of things we cannot know or understand, we cling to the promises of God. They are sure and certain. Psalm 46 tells us, "God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present help in troubles. Therefore, we shall not be afraid, although the earth quakes and the mountains topple into the middle of the seas, although its water roars and foams, and the mountains quake with its surging."

May God comfort you with His promises and strengthen you through the days ahead.