

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

12 July 2020

Bulletin for the 6th Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 507 267 431 839 291 346

INTROIT: You have taken care of the land and have caused it to overflow. You have enriched it abundantly. The stream of God is filled with water. You are providing their grain. For that is how You have prepared it.

You have given its furrows their fill of drink and levelled off the edges of its furrows. You soften it with gentle rain and bless its growth.

You have crowned the year of Your goodness, and Your wheel-tracks drip with fat.

The pastures in the desert overflow. The hills are robed with joy.

The meadows are clothed with flocks, and the valleys are covered with grain. They are shouting for joy. Indeed, they are singing.

Psalm 65:9-13

COLLECT: Blessed Lord, since You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; 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 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 55:10-13 The Lord's Word does not return to Him
empty

Romans 8:12-17 Joint heirs with Christ

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 The Word of the kingdom

SERMON: Romans 8:12-17 We are God's children

God's Powerful Word

God makes contact with sinners through His Word. The Word comes from God, who authors it and sends it across time and space to the sinner. God assures us in Isaiah 55:10-11 that His Word is effective. He says, "*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,* ¹¹ *so My Word will be, which goes out of My mouth. It will not return to Me without results but will accomplish what I desire and be successful in what I have sent it to do.*" It is His Word because it goes out of His mouth and returns to Him. As His Word, it is powerful. The writer to the Hebrews reminds us, "*The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart*" (4:12).

We also say that His Word is true because it comes from God. God has given His Word by inspiration, and His Word cannot lie because God cannot lie. As we read the words written by Isaiah, we can be confident that they are the very words of God. Throughout the prophecy, Isaiah noted that what he wrote had been revealed to him and that he had received his revelation from God (for example, 1:1; 2:1; 5:9; 6:1; 8:11). Jeremiah and the other prophets made the same claim. The apostle Paul wrote, "*This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit*" (1 Corinthians 2:13), and Peter summarised the centuries of God's proclamation by reminding us, "*Prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit*" (2 Peter 1:21).

Isaiah introduces us to a precious truth concerning the Word of God. Through His prophet, God tells us how His Word works. Clearly and simply, God presents a striking comparison. His Word comes from Him like the rain and snow from heaven. When rain and snow come down, they water the ground and make it bud and flourish. When God's Word comes to sinners, it

too works. Paul told Timothy what the Word could do: “All *Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting and for training in righteousness,* ¹⁷ *that the man of God may be proficient and thoroughly equipped for every good work*” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). God can also use His Word to bring judgment. Isaiah had the difficult task of proclaiming God’s Word and watching as it made the hearts of his listeners calloused and their ears dull. God told Him, “*Go and tell this people: ‘Keep on listening but do not understand, and keep on seeing but do not perceive!’*” ¹⁰ *Make the heart of this people insensitive, make their ears dull and seal their eyes shut, that they may not see with their eyes or hear with their ears and that their hearts may not understand, so that they should not turn back and find healing for themselves!”* (6:9-10). In this section, however, the great accomplishment of the Word is to convert and draw the nations to God.

God has promised to work through the external Word. God has simply chosen the Word as the means through which He has promised to work. Of course, he could work through other means, but the entire Scripture maintains that God works through the Word. These verses only emphasise the encouragement He gave earlier in verses 2 and 3, namely, “*Why do you spend money for what is not bread and your labour for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me! Eat what is good and enjoy rich food!*” ³ *Turn your ears toward Me and come to Me! Listen, that your souls may stay alive! I shall establish an eternal Covenant with you, the long-lasting mercies shown to David.”* There God invited sinners to listen – to listen carefully and turn their ears toward Him. The phrase “turn your ears toward Me” means to stretch out the ears, to strain them to catch the words. None of this should surprise us when we realise what God’s Word can do. Whenever anyone thinks that he or she can do without hearing the Word, such a person discards the way God works within us. We may behold the beauties of God’s created world and wonder at God’s glory and majesty, but those insights will not bring us to Christ. Only His Word can do that.

Welcome to all with us today!

Pastor Peter Ziebell, Phone 46333604 or 0407583922.

Email him at paziebell@gmail.com or to the church office at ddaelc@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

19 July 7 Pentecost	26 July 8 Pentecost	2 August 9 Pentecost
8.30am OAK HC 8.30am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.00am GRN HC 9.00am MARBURG LR	9.00am OAK LR 10.00am MINDEN HC AELC Praise and Thanksgiving service depending on social distancing restrictions.	8.30am TMBA HC 8.30am OAK LR 9.30am GRN LR 10.30am AUB HC 9.00am LOWOOD LR
Sunday, 19 July		
READINGS: Isaiah 44:6-8;	Romans 8:18-27;	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
HYMNS: 456 338 434 (852 282) 512		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tuesday, 14 July, 7.30pm. Men's Fellowship at Oakey.

BIBLE STUDIES

Thursday, 16 July, 10.00am at Our Saviours Lowood.

Friday, 17 July, 7.30pm at St Paul's Greenwood.

Friday, 24 July, 7.30pm at St John's Aubigny (combined with Oakey).

Sunday, 2 August, 8.00am at Bethlehem Toowoomba.

If restrictions are further lifted, we are hoping to hold a Praise and Thanksgiving service at Minden on the 26th of July. However, unless social distancing rules change, this may have to be postponed. An announcement will be made in next week's bulletin.