

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

19 July 2020

Bulletin for the 7th Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 456 338 434 852 282 512

INTROIT: You are my Portion, O LORD. I have promised to keep Your Words. I have asked for Your favour with all my heart. Be gracious to me according to Your Word!

I have been considering my ways and turned my feet back to Your Testimonies.

I have been hurrying and have not been delaying, to keep Your Commandments.

Although the ropes of wicked people have been wrapped around me, I have not forgotten Your Instruction.

At midnight I shall rise to give thanks to You because of Your righteous Decisions.

I am a companion of all who fear You and of those who keep Your Directions. The earth, O LORD, is full of Your mercy. Teach me Your Prescriptions!

Psalm 119:57-64

COLLECT: O God, so rule and govern our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that, ever mindful of Your final judgment, we may be stirred up to holiness of living here, and dwell with You in perfect joy hereafter; 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 44:6-8 The LORD is the first and the last.

Romans 8:18-27 The suffering of this present age, and freedom from death
in the glorious age to come.

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 The righteous will shine forth like the sun.

SERMON: Romans 8:18-27 The Glory that will be Revealed in Us

Our God is the One True God

The Lord based His promise on what He had done for His people. He made them and formed them. The Lord's activity toward His people has the tender care of a mother who has carried her child "*in the womb*" (Isaiah 44:2). With such care and tenderness invested in His people, God would also help His people. God's activity in shaping His people is a significant thought in Isaiah chapters 40 through 66. God's activity in the making and forming of His people will be placed in contrast to the way the idolaters formed and shaped their gods. But before God ridicules the foolishness of idolatry, He asserts His superiority. He has done more than make and shape His people, and He draws the attention of His people to all that He has done and would do.

In our First Reading for today, we hear these words of introduction: "*This is what the LORD, Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD of hosts, has said*" (Is. 44:6). God gives Himself a series of significant names that help us understand what He had done for His people. He is "*Israel's King*." He has administered the affairs of His people efficiently. No single human king who ever ruled over God's people was a perfect king. They all had faults, some of them serious faults. The Lord is the perfect, wise ruler of His people. He controls all the affairs of His people in a way that is best for them. He is also their "*Redeemer*." The word for redeem used here is a special word found repeatedly in the second part of Isaiah's prophecy. Altogether, it appears 24 times in chapters 40 through 66 and only once in the first 39 chapters. The word emphasises the activity of God. He and He alone must redeem His people after they have made themselves slaves by their own sin and rebellion. God would pay the price necessary to buy back His helpless people from the consequences of their own folly. Of course, the word points us ultimately to the payment God's own Son made in order to secure the release of all humanity from sin, death, and hell.

He is also "*the LORD of hosts*." LORD is the special name God revealed. He is the God of free and faithful grace, that is, the God of the covenant. He is the "I AM" who appeared to Moses. Additionally, He is all powerful in that He controls the hosts of heaven. The term, "*the LORD of hosts*," emphasises God's superiority, which God again underscores by the next words, "*I am the First and I am the*

Last.” Before the Israelites had become a nation, before Abraham, before Adam, God is God. He existed before the first words of Scripture: “*In the beginning...*” (Genesis 1:1). God did not emerge from the history of the created world. He is independent of creation because He called everything into existence by His powerful Word. These phrases encourage us to look ahead to the end of history too. When the last human is born, God will still be God. When the created world ceases to be, He will remain the first and last, Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. These terms stand in sharp contrast to the idols created by human hands.

There is no God like the God of the Scriptures. The Lord says it so clearly, “*there is no God except Me*” (44:6). No one should have any doubt of that truth, but the sinful heart still resists that truth. To quell all doubts, God issues a challenge to those who trust in other gods and who have made idols. He challenges the false gods and those who believe in them to match His ability, specifically His power to care for His people in the past and to predict what will happen to them in the future. The God of the Scriptures is a God of action. He does things for the benefit of His people. Even more impressive, God foretells His actions before they take place. Can any god created by human thought claim to do that? No, such gods remain silent and mute.

God acts because of His faithful love for His people. They receive all the benefits of His action. When God claims superiority over the false gods, it is not only because He is a jealous God unwilling to share His glory with another. His superiority assures His faithful people that He can take care of them. God encourages His people not to fear and tremble as they face the difficulties of the Babylonian captivity or any other catastrophe or problem. When the flood of troubles roars as a mighty stream toward His people, God assures His people that He is the Rock that remains. The waters may swirl fiercely around it, but the Rock provides safety in the midst of life’s surging troubles.

For the Jews, such comfort was necessary as they faced captivity. Surely, believers through the ages have not faced exactly the same difficulties as the Jews did in captivity. Nevertheless, God continues to be the Rock who provides safety, no matter what roaring streams of trouble rush toward us and future generations of God’s people. There is no other Rock. We need to hear the encouragement too: “*Do not be terrified and do not be afraid!*” (44:8). Our confidence and hope are built on our King, the Lord Almighty, the Redeemer, the First and the Last. He is our Rock. Apart from Him no safety or redemption exists because apart from Him there is no god.

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

26 July 8 Pentecost	2 August 9 Pentecost	9 August 10 Pentecost
9.00am OAK LR 10.00am MINDEN HC AELC Praise and Thanksgiving service.	8.00am Bible Study & 9.00am TMBA HC 8.30am OAK LR 9.30am GRN LR 10.30am AUB HC 9.00am LOWOOD LR	8.30am OAK HC 8.30am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.00am GRN HC 9.00am MINDEN LR
Sunday, 26 July		
READINGS: Deuteronomy 8:1-10; Philipians 4:6-20; Luke 17:11-19		
HYMNS: Minden: 437 887 441 362 840 285 468 Oakey: 437 887 441 468		
Sunday, 2 August		
READINGS: Isaiah 55:1-5; Romans 9:1-13; Matthew 14:13-21		
HYMNS: 305 386 334 (284 294) 391		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Sunday, 26 July. We shall go ahead with our AELC service at Minden. If you are coming along, please place your collection in envelopes marked back to your own congregation. All loose offering will remain in the Marburg parish. Also, due to ongoing covid19 restrictions, **NO COMMUNAL SERVING OF FOOD IS PERMITTED**, however, this does not mean each family cannot bring something along for themselves. There is plenty of room outside for us to mingle after service without breaking social distancing restrictions, and there are plenty of shady trees etc. to sit under and have a sandwich. No need to rush home!

BIBLE STUDIES

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

Sunday, 2 August, 8.00am at Bethlehem Toowoomba.