

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

13 September 2020

Bulletin for the 15th Sunday after Pentecost (Harvest Thanksgiving)

HYMNS: 567 563 814 138 840 643

INTROIT: You receive praise in silence in Zion, O God, and vows to You will be fulfilled.

O You who hear prayer, to You all human beings will come.

Iniquitous things have been prevailing over me. You Yourself will provide atonement for our rebellious actions.

Blessed is the person whom You choose and whom You bring near, that he may dwell in Your courts! We shall be satisfied with the good things of Your house, the holiness of Your temple.

You answer us in righteousness with awesome deeds, O our saving God, the Confidence of all the ends of the earth and of the most distant sea.

He is the One who sets the mountains in place by His strength, the One who puts on strength like a waistcloth.

He is the One who calms the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the turmoil of the peoples.

Those who live at the ends of the earth have been in awe of Your miraculous signs. You make the places where morning dawns and the places where evening fades shout for joy.

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

COLLECT: Almighty God, You crown the fields with Your blessing and permit us to gather in the fruits of the earth. As stewards of Your creation, may we receive Your gifts in humble thankfulness and share Your bounty with those in need; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

READINGS: Deuteronomy 26:1-11 Firstfruits presented to the LORD.

2 Corinthians 9:6-15 Sowing generously.

Luke 12:13-21 The Parable of the rich fool.

SERMON: Luke 12:13-21 A person's life does not consist in how plentiful his possessions are

God Encourages us to do Good Works by Promising to Bless our Work for Him

God owes us nothing for the works we do. Even if we carried out God's will perfectly, He would owe us nothing. We could only say that we had done what is our duty to do. Jesus said, "*When you have done everything you have been ordered to do, you also should say, 'We are worthless slaves. We have only done what our duty was to do'*" (Luke 17:10). No one has the right to feel that God is indebted to him for the work he has done. We cannot even come close to doing all God demands of us, much less think that God is indebted to us for what little we do in our sanctified lives.

Yet, though God owes us nothing for our works, in His grace He still promises to bless them. He does this to encourage us to serve Him with good works. Paul writes, "*Let us not become tired of doing good! For we shall harvest, each in his own appointed time, if we do not give up*" (Galatians 6:9). God promises to bless our work for Him in His own time and in His own way. The blessings He gives us, by grace, may be material or spiritual. They will come when God deems best and as He deems best.

For example, God promises to bless generous giving. Again, Paul writes, "*I say this: **The person who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the person who sows bountifully will also reap***"

bountifully” (2 Cor. 9:6). The Lord challenged the people of Malachi’s day by saying, *“Bring the full tithes into the treasury, that there may be food in My house! Please test Me in this way!”* the LORD of hosts has said, *“whether I shall not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down a blessing for you until there is more than enough”* (Mal. 3:10). We cannot demand that God make us rich as a reward for our offerings. Greed is not a God-pleasing motive for giving. God’s love in Christ is what empowers generous giving.

In connection with the matter of God’s blessing our works, it appears as if there will be degrees of glory in heaven based on a believer’s works in this life. Daniel writes, *“Many of those who are asleep in the land of dust will wake up, some to everlasting life and others to shame and everlasting abhorrence. Moreover, those who have insight will shine like the bright dome of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness like the stars for ever and ever”* (Daniel 12:2-3), and Paul’s words quoted earlier (2 Cor. 9:6) also seem to indicate this.

However, whatever way God chooses to bless us is a blessing based on grace, not on merit. Also, there will be no jealousy in heaven, only perfect love, and there will be no degrees of enjoyment of heaven. We shall enjoy it as much as the twelve apostles and the prophets do!

Finally, our service to God is not motivated by a desire for a higher degree of glory in heaven. Far from it! The motivation for our service is always God’s love in Christ, not a desire for something for ourselves. Whatever we do for God is a distinct privilege, for God gives us the ability to serve Him in His kingdom.

Thus God encourages us to do good works. Paul encourages us that our work in the Lord is not in vain when he writes, *“Therefore, my dearly loved fellow-Christians, stand firmly and immovably! Always do much work in the Lord, since you know that your hard work in the Lord is not in vain!”* (1 Cor. 15:58). We shall joyfully and zealously serve God until the day we bask in the glory of His love in heaven.

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

20 September 16 Pentecost	27 September 17 Pentecost	4 October 18 Pentecost
8.30am OAK LR 8.30am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am <u>LOWOOD</u> HC & Bible Study	8.30am OAK HC Harvest Thanksgiving 8.30am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.00am GRN HC Harvest Thanksgiving 9.00am LOWOOD LR	8.30am TMBA HC Harvest Thanksgiving & Confirmation Service 8.30am OAK LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am MARBURG LR
Sunday, 20 September		
READINGS: Isaiah 55:6-9; Philippians 1:12-14, 19-30; Matthew 20:1-16		
HYMNS: 461 324 332 (840 847) 459		
Sunday, 27 September		
READINGS: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32; Philippians 2:1-18; Matthew 21:23-32		
HYMNS: 36 197 405 346 OAK & GRN: 567 563 814 138 840 643		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bible Studies:

Thursday, 17 September, 10.00am at Lowood.

Sunday, 20 September, after service at Lowood.

Friday, 19 September, 7.30pm at Greenwood.

Friday, 26 September, 7.30pm at Aubigny.

***Please note that services can change, depending on any further restrictions being placed on places of worship by the government during covid 19. If any decisions are made which will affect our services, I shall let everyone know.