

CONGREGATIONS OF THE AELC
TRINITY MARBURG, ST JOHN'S MINDEN, OUR SAVIOUR LOWOOD

13 September 2020
Bulletin for the 15th Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 422 119 430 508

INTROIT: Bless the LORD, O my soul and, all my inmost being, bless
His holy name!

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all His benefits!

He forgives all your iniquities. He heals all your diseases.

He redeems your life from the pit. He crowns you with mercy and
compassion.

He satisfies what adorns you with good things, so that you renew your
youth like the eagle.

The LORD carries out acts of righteousness and of justice for all who
are oppressed.

He has made known His Ways to Moses, His deeds to the people of
Israel.

The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to become angry and
abounding in mercy.

He will not always accuse and will not keep on being angry for ever.

He has not treated us as our sins deserve and has not paid us back
according to our iniquities.

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is **His mercy
toward those who fear Him.**

As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our
transgressions from us.

Psalm 103:1-12

COLLECT: O God, our refuge and strength, the author of all godliness,
hear the devout prayers of Your Church, especially in times of
persecution, and grant that what we ask for in faith we may obtain;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the
Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

READINGS: Genesis 50:15-21 Joseph reassures his brothers.

Romans 14:1-12 Respecting the conscientious scruples of a weaker brother.

Matthew 18:21-35 The parable of the unforgiving servant.

SERMON: Romans 14:7-8 We belong to the Lord

⁷ For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. ⁸ For, if we live, we live to the Lord; and, if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

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, 18 September, 7.30pm at Greenwood.

Friday, 25 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.