

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

7 February 2021
The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

HYMNS: 499 16 150 443

INTROIT: Praise the LORD! For it is good to sing praises to our God. For it is pleasant; and a song of praise is beautiful.

The LORD is the Builder of Jerusalem; He is the One who gathers the outcasts of Israel together.

He is the Healer of the broken-hearted; He is the One who binds up their sores. He counts out the number of stars; He calls them all by name.

Great is our Lord and great is His might; there is no limit to His understanding.

The LORD comes to the aid of humble people; He brings wicked people down to the ground.

Sing a song of thanksgiving to the LORD; sing praise to our God with the lyre. He covers the heavens with clouds; He provides rain for the ground; He makes the grass grow on the mountains.

He gives food to the animals, and to the young ravens that call out.

He does not delight in the strength of the horse; He takes no pleasure in the legs of a man.

The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who wait for His mercy.

Psalm 147:1-11

COLLECT: O Lord, keep Your family, the Church, continually in the true faith, that, relying on the hope of Your heavenly grace, we may ever be defended by Your mighty power; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

READINGS: Isaiah 40:21-31 God is unequalled in power and knowledge.

1 Corinthians 9:16-23 Free to be all things to all people.

Mark 1:29-39 Jesus heals many people.

SERMON: John 18:36-37 CHRIST OUR KING

Jesus is our King

God's ideal of a king in the Old Testament was that he was to be a shepherd for his people (2 Samuel 5:2; 7:7). Jesus referred to Himself as the Good Shepherd, *"I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep"* (John 10:11). It was part of His kingly office that He take care of His people as a shepherd. The prophet Nathan foretold that David's descendant would be *the King* whom God would send into this world. Nathan told David, *"Your house and your kingdom will stand firm before you for ever. Your throne will be established for ever"* (2 Samuel 7:16). The angel Gabriel indicated that this prophecy was fulfilled in the child born to Mary. *"He will reign over the family of Jacob for ever, and there will be no end of His kingdom"* (Luke 1:33). Jesus Himself indicated He is the King when He said to Pilate, *"You are correct in saying that I am a king. I have been born for this reason and have come into the world for this reason, that I may testify to the truth"* (John 18:37).

Jesus' work as King was different than what the people of His day anticipated. They were looking for a king who could give them free food and health care. That is why they wanted to make Jesus a king after He had fed the five thousand (John 6:15). That is why many sought Him because they saw His miracles of healing (Matthew 8:16,17). They were looking for someone to free them from Rome and make them a powerful nation like they had been under David and Solomon (Luke 17:20). Even Jesus' own disciples did not fully understand the nature of His kingdom (Mark 10:37; Acts 1:6). Jesus' kingdom, however, is not an earthly kingdom. He said it is spiritual in nature, *"My kingdom does not belong to this world. If My kingdom belonged to this world, My attendants would fight, to prevent Me from being handed over to the Jews. However, now My kingdom is not from here"* (John 18:36). It consists of His rule in the hearts of those who believe in Him. *"He answered them, 'The kingdom of God does not come in such a way that people can observe it.²¹ Nor will people say, 'Look! Here it is,' or 'There it is.' For, indeed, the kingdom of God is in your midst"* (Luke 17:20-21).

The Bible speaks of the kingdom of God (Matthew 12:28) and of the kingdom of Christ (Matthew 16:28). The two are identical. The kingdom of Christ was given to Him by His Father. As our Mediator, it was given to His human nature. In His state of exaltation, Jesus fully and constantly exercises

the authority and power given to His human nature by His divine nature. The word kingdom denotes God's or Christ's ruling or governing activity. Christ's kingdom does not consist in a group of persons or things governed. The focus is on His ruling activity.

Jesus has conquered sin and Satan for us. He has broken the power the devil had over us, which was to accuse us of our sins. Christ has sent the Holy Spirit to bring us to faith. He reigns in our hearts so that we gladly serve Him as our Lord and King. His reign as our King today is really one kingdom, but Scripture mentions three distinct spheres of His reign. Jesus' kingdom is one of power, of grace, and of glory. The kingdom of power is His governance over the universe. The kingdom of grace is His reign in the hearts of those who believe in Him. The kingdom of glory is where Christ reigns in heaven and shepherds His believers there. Reformed theology restricts the kingdom of Christ to God's elect alone and leaves all else to the Father (since the Reformed deny the communication of the properties of the divine nature to the human nature). They also desire to see a visible kingdom of Christ on earth, though Christ said His kingdom was invisible and not of this world.

As long as we live in this world, we are beset by the problems sin causes sinners living in a sin-corrupted world. Though we are sinners, we have been washed clean by the blood of the Lamb. We are clothed in His righteousness. Jesus has promised us that He will say "*Come, you whom My Father has blessed! Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the time when the world was created!*" (Matthew 25:34). Then, as Paul says, "*we shall always be with the Lord*" (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

In joyful expectation, then, we say with the hymn writer:

O sweet and blessed country,
The home of God's elect!
O sweet and blessed country
That eager hearts expect!
In mercy, Jesus, bring us
To that dear land of rest,
Who art, with God the Father,
And Spirit, ever blest. (Hymn 494:4)

Welcome to all worshipping 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

14 February The Transfiguration	ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES	21 February 1 Lent
8.30am OAK LR 8.30am TMBA HC 9.00am GRN LR 10.30am AUB HC 9.00am MARBURG LR	Wednesday 17 th – 7.00pm LOWOOD HC Thursday 18 th – 7.30pm OAK Vespers	8.30am OAK LR 8.30am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am LOWOOD HC
Sunday, 14 February		
READINGS: Exodus 34:29-35; 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:6; Mark 9:2-9		
HYMNS: 164 37 358 (789 85) 532		
ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES		
READINGS: Joel 2:12-19; 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21		
HYMNS: Marburg: 431 310 493 54 291 69 Oakey: 431 310 493 48 v.3		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tuesday, 9 February, 7.30pm. Men's Fellowship at Oakey.

Thursday, 11 February, 10.00am. Bible Study at Lowood.

Congregational AGM's

GRN: Sunday, 7 February, immediately after service.

OAK: Sunday, 14 February, 1.00pm.

MARBURG: Sunday, 14 January, immediately after service.

LOWOOD: Sunday, 21 January, immediately after service.