

Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church
BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA, OUR SAVIOUR LOWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,
ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, TRINITY MARBURG, TRINITY OAKEY,

18 July 2021

8th Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 200 248 607 848 292 604

INTROIT: The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not lack anything.

He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads to water where I may rest.

He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for ever. Psalm 23

COLLECT: Heavenly Father, although we do not deserve Your goodness, still You provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may acknowledge Your gifts, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience; 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: Jeremiah 23:1-6 The LORD will gather His people.

Ephesians 2:11-22 We are all one in Christ.

Mark 6:30-44 Jesus has compassion on the crowd.

SERMON: Mark 6:30-44 A MODEL FOR THE CHURCH

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.**

Is “Fake News” Fake News? Understanding Media Misinformation

Fake news has become quite the buzzword, but not everyone agrees about what “fake news” means - or even whether the term is valid. Let’s take a closer look at what misinformation is, so we can better understand how to spot it.

One late August day in 1835, readers of the *New York Sun* opened their papers to find a truly incredible news update: a high-powered telescope had reportedly enabled an astronomer to glimpse *tailless beavers walking upright on the moon!*

The article, one of six in a series expounding on “great astronomical discoveries,” reported, “*The (extra-terrestrial beaver) resembles the beaver of the earth in every other respect than in its destitution of a tail, and its invariable habit of walking upon only two feet. It carries its young in its arms like a human being, and moves with an easy gliding motion... From the appearance of smoke in nearly all (its huts), there is no doubt of its being acquainted with the use of fire.*”

Other newspapers soon picked up the story.

A personal letter by the story’s apparent author, Richard Locke, revealed that he likely intended the piece as *satire*. Still, many people fell for it. Even after the series became known as a hoax, the Sun never fully retracted the articles.

The “Fake News” Phenomenon

As the beaver incident illustrates, “fake news” is nothing, well, new. Even Scripture documents cases of false information shared as news. For example, Matthew 28:12-15 records that after Jesus’ resurrection, the chief priests bribed the guards of Jesus’ tomb to report that His disciples stole the body - a report which became “widely circulated” among the people.

Millennia later, various shades of false reports still circulate as widely as ever - especially thanks to the internet. Rising concerns about media misinformation have sparked a firestorm of discussion among scholars and civilians alike, even leading Google to alter their search algorithms. But while everybody seems to be talking about “fake news,” few can apparently agree what it is - or what should be done about it. Let’s take a closer look at the “fake news” debate, so we can better think biblically and critically about claims in the media.

Debatable Definitions

“Fake news” may sound like “news which is fake.” The trouble is, there’s no single, expert definition to pin down exactly what it means. Does “news” only mean information from professional journalism platforms? Or does it also include reports broadcasted from other platforms, social media accounts, and citizen journalists, like bloggers? Does “fake” only mean intentional deception, or can it include honest mistakes? Do partial truths count as “fake news?” How about facts reported from only one perspective?

Types of (Potentially) Misleading Information

However we define it, false or misleading information does appear in the media and does demand our critical thinking in response. Here are a few types of potentially problematic messages which communications researcher Claire Wardle has identified:

- **Satire or parody:** exaggerated or completely made-up news stories intended to entertain rather than to inform. Like Locke's alien beaver story, these reports may sometimes be taken as true.
- **Misleading content:** messages which present select facts in a misleading manner. For instance, photos may be angled or cropped to make a crowd look larger or smaller.
- **Imposter content:** messages from impersonated sources.
- **Fabricated content:** made-up information presented as legitimate news and intended to deceive.
- **False connection:** headlines, captions, or visuals which don't accurately relate to the information they're supposed to support.
- **False context:** information which has been taken out of its original context in order to mislead.
- **Manipulated content:** materials including photos or videos which have been altered or otherwise manipulated to deceive.

The Foundation for Thinking Critically About the News

There is considerable disagreement when it comes to determining which content should be considered "fake news" and which should be excluded. This holds especially true as the term "fake news" has become highly political and is often used as a buzzword not only used to describe fabricated information but to undermine the credibility of news organisations or argue against commentary that disagrees with our own opinion. Classifying a piece of content as false requires a grounding of a universal truth, which can be a difficult endeavour that requires collective consensus, and herein lies the problem.

To talk about what is false, we need a foundation for understanding what is true, and according to so many 'experts,' it is *popular consensus* that helps to define universal truth. But if the subjective human perceptions which made up that popular consensus *happened to be wrong*, would those many wrong beliefs add up to one objective, universal truth? No!

We need God as the source of absolutes. A biblical worldview provides the foundation for truth to exist and be knowable. Therefore, it also provides us a foundation from which to think critically about claims in the news.

Even claims about extra-terrestrial beavers.

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

25 July 9 Pentecost	1 August 10 Pentecost	8 August 11 Pentecost
8.30am OAK LR 8.00am TMBA Bible Study & 9.00am HC 9.30am GRN LR 10.30am AUB HC 9.00am MARBURG LR	8.30am OAK LR 8.30am TMBA LR 9.30am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am LOWOOD HC	8.30am OAK HC 8,30am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.00am GRN HC 9.30am LOWOOD LR
Sunday, 25 July		
READINGS: Genesis 9:8-17; Ephesians 3:14-21;		Mark 6:45-56
HYMNS: 344 409 146 (85 358) 526		
Sunday, 1 August		
READINGS: Exodus 16:2-15; Ephesians 4:1-16;		John 6:22-35
HYMNS: 306 347 771 (835 847) 368		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please take home with you a copy of the latest CoC minutes.

BIBLE STUDIES:

Friday, 23 July, 7.30pm at Aubigny (combined with Oakey)

Sunday, 25 July, 8.00am at Toowoomba

Pastor is taking holidays from the 5th to the 21st of August. He will still be available if there is any emergency during this time.