

**Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA, OUR SAVIOUR LOWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,**  
**ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, TRINITY MARBURG, TRINITY OAKEY**  
25<sup>th</sup> August    Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

**HYMNS:** 464 259 266 152

**INTROIT:** Psalm 14

The fool has been saying in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt. They have been acting abominably. There is no one who does good.

The LORD has been looking down from heaven on the descendants of Adam to see if there is anyone who understands and who seeks God.

Everyone has turned aside. Together they have become corrupt. There is no one who does good. There is not even one.

Have all evildoers no knowledge? They devour my people as if they were devouring food. They have not been calling on the LORD.

There they have been trembling in terror. For God is with the generation of righteous people.

You people frustrate the plan of the poor person, but the LORD is his refuge.

If only the salvation of Israel would come from Zion! When the LORD turns back the captivity of His people, let Jacob rejoice! Let Israel be glad!

**COLLECT:**

Almighty and merciful God, defend Your Church from all false teaching and error, that Your faithful people may confess You to be the only true God and rejoice in Your good gifts of life and salvation; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

*Welcome to all worshipping with us!*

Pastor Ziebell can be contacted via phone/text at 0407 583922.

Please notify pastor of anyone who is unwell or in need of a visit.

Email him at [paziebell@gmail.com](mailto:paziebell@gmail.com) or to the church office at [ddaelc@gmail.com](mailto:ddaelc@gmail.com). Pastor is usually in his office Tuesday-Wednesday for anyone who would like to call in. Other days of the week are set aside for visits.

## READINGS:

Isaiah 29:11-19 “They honour Me with their lips, while their hearts are far from Me.”

Ephesians 5:22-33 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Mark 7:1-13 Jesus rebukes the scribes and Pharisees.

### Isaiah 29:11-19

<sup>11</sup> The vision about all this will become like the **words in a sealed scroll** for you. If people give the scroll to a man who can read and tell him, “Please read this!” he answers, “I cannot. For it is **sealed**.” <sup>12</sup> If the **scroll** is given to someone who cannot read, and he is told, “Please read this!” he answers, “I do not know how to read.”

<sup>13</sup> The Lord has said: “Because **this people has been coming near Me with their mouths and has been honouring Me with their lips, while their hearts have been keeping far away from Me, and their fear of Me is a commandment of men that has been taught them**, <sup>14</sup> Therefore, look! I shall again do wonderful things with this people, with wonder on wonder. **The wisdom of their wise men will become lost, and the intelligence of their intelligent men will be hidden.**”

<sup>15</sup> How horrible it will be for those who bury their plans deeply to conceal them from the LORD! Their deeds are done in the dark, and they ask, “Who sees us? Who knows us?” <sup>16</sup> Such is your perversity! Should the potter be regarded as the clay, that the thing that is made should say about the one who has made it, “He did not make me,” or that **a thing that is shaped** should **say** about **him who has shaped it**, “He has not been intelligent”? <sup>17</sup> Is it not just a little while until Lebanon changes into a fertile land, and the fertile land is regarded as a forest?

<sup>18</sup> On that day **the deaf people will hear** the Words of a scroll and, out of gloom and darkness, the eyes of **blind people will** begin to **see**. <sup>19</sup> **Humble people** will have joy after joy in the LORD, and the poorest of people will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.”

### Ephesians 5:22-33

<sup>22</sup> Wives, be subordinate to your own husbands as to the Lord! <sup>23</sup> For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is also the Head of the church, His body, of which He is the Saviour; <sup>24</sup> but, as the church is subordinate to Christ, so also wives should be subordinate to their husbands in everything! <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> that He might make the church holy, by making her clean with the Washing of water by the Word! <sup>27</sup> He did this that He might present her to Himself as a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any other such blemish, but that she might be

holy and without fault. <sup>28</sup> In this way husbands also ought to love their own wives, as their own bodies. A man who loves his own wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup> For no one has ever hated his own flesh. Rather, everyone feeds his body and treats it tenderly, as Christ also does the church. <sup>30</sup> For we are members of His body. <sup>31</sup> **“This is why a man will leave his father and mother and remain united with his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”** <sup>32</sup> This mystery is great. However, I speak of it with reference to Christ and the church. <sup>33</sup> However, each one of you husbands should love his own wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

### Mark 7:1-13

<sup>1</sup> The Pharisees and some scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus. <sup>2</sup> They saw that some of His disciples were eating their food with ‘defiled’ hands, that is, without washing them. <sup>3</sup> For the Pharisees, like all other Jews, do not eat without washing their hands up to the wrist, to follow the tradition of their elders. <sup>4</sup> When they come from the marketplace, they do not eat without first washing, and there are many other things that they have had handed on to them and observe, such as the washing of cups, pitchers, brass pots and couches. <sup>5</sup> The Pharisees and the scribes asked Him: “Why do Your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders but eat bread with defiled hands?”

<sup>6</sup> He replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites, as the Scriptures say: **‘This people honours Me with its lips, but its hearts are far from Me. They worship Me in vain, since what they teach as doctrines are the commandments of men.’** <sup>8</sup> You have abandoned the Commandment of God but hold on to the tradition of men.”

<sup>9</sup> He told them: “You have a fine way of setting aside the Commandment of God to establish your own tradition! <sup>10</sup> For Moses said: **‘Honour your father and your mother!’** and **‘Let the person who speaks evil of father or mother be put to death!’** <sup>11</sup> However, you say, ‘If anyone says to his father or mother, “Anything by which I might have helped you is Corban (that is, a gift to God),” <sup>12</sup> then you do not let him do anything for his father or his mother any longer. <sup>13</sup> You make the Word of God of no effect by the tradition that you have handed down. You also do many other things like that.”

### TRADITION: YES OR NO?

Sermon for the 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost 2024

Mark 7:1-13

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is our Gospel from before, Mark 7:1-13:

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth, Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

Traditions are everywhere. Families have their Christmas traditions of gathering for a festival lunch and a game of cricket in the afternoon. It's often a time for special desserts and so on. Year after year, the same routine happens. We also have traditions in sport. Lucky shirts are worn, beards are grown out, and fun rituals are performed (think of how some spectators dress for the cricket)! Some workplaces have traditions, too. We are told the stories of the business's founding with certain slogans and work ethics that are to be mimicked and practised every day. We even have traditions in the church. The church has a calendar, specific church attire is worn, certain feasts are celebrated, and traditional orders of service are practised. These traditions are nothing more than the passing on of customs and beliefs from one generation to another younger generation.

Traditions, though, can be *good*, or they can be *bad*. They can teach and pass on valuable and worthy aspects of a generational heritage, or they can perpetuate sinful habits from one generation to the next. On the other hand, there are some traditions that have absolutely no meaning whatsoever but are basically done because we've always done it that way - it's tradition!

Now, with all that said, in our Gospel reading from today it seems as if Jesus is unleashing negative judgment upon *all* traditions. We heard Him say to the Pharisees in a rather pointed way, **“You have abandoned the Commandment of God but hold on to the tradition of men.”** Again, **“You have a fine way of setting aside the Commandment of God to establish your own tradition!”** and again, **“You make the Word of God of no effect by the tradition that you have handed down. You also do many other things like that.”**

Now, we must especially take note of Jesus' strong words as a church, for, as you know, our congregation is part of a denomination with a long heritage and several ancient traditions. We follow certain forms of worship, follow a certain church calendar, and have certain practices that have been handed down from previous generations. Indeed, many of the elements of our Sunday Divine Services and things that we do as a church go back literally thousands of years.

With that stated, we must ask ourselves if Jesus is advocating the removal of all traditions. Do we, as AELC Lutherans, need to be purged of tradition and have some sort of modern-day reformation? Some Christians – not necessarily in our church - would perhaps read today's Gospel and conclude that this is the case. They shiver at customs and rituals and advocate that any and all traditions in the church should be thrown out and that the slate should be wiped clean. However, history has shown us that when certain traditions are eradicated from the church, new traditions have a way of popping up in

their place. In other words, when ancient traditions are removed from the church, these ancient traditions are immediately - whether it is intended or not - replaced with contemporary traditions. This is just the way that it is. We are people of tradition.

But is this what Jesus is so concerned with in our Gospel reading? Is Jesus an anti-traditionalist? Should all tradition be condemned, burned, and discarded? Well, of course, the answer is no. You see, what Jesus is against in our Gospel reading is 'bad' tradition. You would have picked that up when He spoke of tradition as replacing the **“Commandment of God”** or **“the Word of God.”** Yes, there is such a thing as bad tradition, and there is such a thing as good tradition. As we shall hear, good traditions should be preserved, passed down to younger generations, respected, and revered. However, bad traditions should be resisted, rejected, and scoffed at, as Jesus did in the Gospel reading from Mark.

You see, what Jesus is so concerned about is that the Pharisees during the first century had what could be described as “a hyper-piety.” This hyper-piety of the Pharisees led them to follow certain manmade traditions that were not even in the Old Testament Scriptures. Furthermore, the Pharisees elevated these manmade traditions to the status of being God’s Law. Somewhere along the way, these manmade traditions were elevated to the status of God’s Word, as if God prescribed them Himself when He actually did not. Jesus had observed, **“Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites, as the Scriptures say: ‘This people honours Me with its lips, but its hearts are far from Me. <sup>7</sup> They worship Me in vain, since what they teach as doctrines are the commandments of men.’”**

To put it another way, these traditions were formed on the basis of mankind’s own voice and spiritual experiments, not by God’s command, which led to these traditions taking the place of God’s Word. Mistakably, the Pharisees were enforcing these manmade traditions upon the people as if they were God’s binding Word, which resulted in people essentially following the traditions of man rather than the Word of God. They were doubly damned: bound in manmade traditions with no voice of God.

However, any tradition that you or I create - whether old or modern, whether rustic or contemporary, whether boring or hip - any tradition that is developed from our own self-centred opinions, our own selfish desires, and our own agendas; any tradition that we create that opposes Christ and His forgiveness; any tradition that elevates itself above Jesus and His Word is evil and must be rejected. Perhaps we can ask ourselves, *“What old-looking or modern-looking traditions have you and I established in our life and in our church that stand in opposition to God’s Word? Furthermore, in what ways have we invented for ourselves traditions according to our own reasoning that serve us, appease our sinful nature, excuse our sin, deprive love of our neighbours, and dismiss God’s Word?”*

You see, when our own voices shape our traditions, and we allow our manmade traditions to guide us while distancing God’s Word from us, we have fallen into that which

Jesus condemns in our Gospel reading today. We must repent of our foolishness and self-deception.

All this stated, we are now beginning to understand that tradition can be bad. However, it can also be good. It can oppose Christ or honour Christ. It can stand in the way of Scripture or elevate it. It can point us to ourselves, or it can point us to Christ. It can bind a conscience or reveal the peace of the Gospel to a conscience. We can wrongfully hang our body on a bad tradition, or a good tradition can bring us to the body of Christ hung on a tree.

Ultimately, the traditions of the Pharisees had led them and the people away from an honest view of themselves as sinners in need of grace. Furthermore, their traditions had created a layer between them and God's Word. As a result, they ignored the wickedness in their hearts while counting themselves righteous. They had created their own traditions, waved their fingers at those who didn't pass muster, patted themselves on the back, and considered themselves worthy while the Lord was off on the sidelines. They even went so far as to put tradition over the caring of their own flesh and blood. Jesus told them, **"You have a fine way of setting aside the Commandment of God to establish your own tradition!"** <sup>10</sup> For Moses said: 'Honour your father and your mother!' and 'Let the person who speaks evil of father or mother be put to death!' <sup>11</sup> However, you say, 'If anyone says to his father or mother, "Anything by which I might have helped you is Corban (that is, a gift to God)," <sup>12</sup> then you do not let him do anything for his father or his mother any longer. <sup>13</sup> You make the Word of God of no effect by the tradition that you have handed down. You also do many other things like that." Jesus described them as failing to obey the Fourth Commandment because they had considered it more important to give special offerings than to support elderly parents. Such piety is ultimately self-serving and a sham.

Believe it or not, elevating tradition above the Word of God was one of the things at the heart of the Reformation of the Church in the 1500s. Martin Luther and the Reformers actually were not anti-tradition, but rather, intentionally rejected many of the Roman Catholic Church's traditions that obstructed the Gospel from the people and wrongfully obscured the Word of God. They rejected traditions made by human beings for the purpose of appeasing God and for earning grace, for this eliminated the need for the bleeding Saviour. That's right, they excluded traditions that were contrary to the Gospel and that were contrary to the teachings of the Christian faith. However, we must remember that the Reformers *did not abolish every single tradition of the time*. Why not? The reason why was that many of the traditions and ceremonies 'did' serve the purpose of teaching the people what they needed to know about Christ; many of the traditions 'did' lead the people to the confession of their sins and the reception of the Saviour. These good faith traditions and ceremonies were preserved by the Reformers! It would have been foolish to toss these out, for they were noble, good, and true. They served the saints of the church by bringing them to Christ and His Word.

Dear friends, traditions are either formed from the imaginations of mankind or they are shaped and inspired by the Word of God. You and I must reject bad traditions, for they assault the faith of the children of God and lead the faithful away from Christ to rely upon human wisdom, human piety, and false doctrine. These bad traditions lead us to our own agendas, our own piety, our own doings, and our own work regarding salvation; they lead us to the pits of despair, hell, and damnation. However, good faith traditions can and should be respected insofar as they point you and me to Christ and Him crucified for our sins and for the sins of the world.

While we respect faith traditions not because they make us acceptable to God or because they are necessary for salvation, we respect them and follow them because they direct our attention to Christ Jesus and His gifts. For example, the pattern of our services, the candles, the changing of the colours on the altar, the changing banners, the clothing and vestments of the pastor, and all the decorations are not just a meaningless show but rather grant beauty, dignity, and reverence. This beauty, dignity, and reverence are not for the sake of being worshipful but rather for turning our eyes, ears, and minds to Christ and His gifts. These good faith traditions block distractions and pull us out of our sometimes mundane lives so that we can hear - so that you can hear now in this Divine Service the crystal clear Words of Christ, *“Come to me and I shall give you rest. I shall make you clean; you are clean for I bled and died for you. You are forgiven. You are redeemed. You are adopted as my child. Take and eat, this is My body. Take and drink, this is My blood, given for you for the forgiveness of all of your sins. You are mine. Do not fear. I shall be with you to the end of the age.”* Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

## PRAYER FOR THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Almighty God, heavenly Father, You have raised from death the Lord Jesus, our great Shepherd, because His death fulfilled Your eternal covenant to save us from sin. We praise You for Your marvellous love and goodness, and pray that You would give us everything we need to know and do Your will, and to live to Your honour and praise. Come into our lives with the power of Your Holy Spirit. Renew in us a true and living faith in Jesus Christ Your Son, so that we may be completely united with Him, trusting not in our own goodness, but in the righteousness based on His death for us.

Keep us from fearing, loving, and trusting anyone or anything more than You. Fill us with love for You, which expresses itself in humble, loving service to our neighbours. Help us to act justly, to love mercy, and to live humbly before You, our God. Move us to show respect to everybody, to be generous to the needy, to share the burdens of the weak, and to act in sincere love to all people. Help us to pattern our lives on Jesus Christ. Make our words sincere and edifying, our lives pure and godly, and our relationships with others peaceful and harmonious.

Make Your Church so aware of Your countless blessings, especially the gift of the Gospel, that it may continually respond with thanks and praise. Inspire Your people to proclaim Christ's saving love to all mankind. Give pastors a true understanding of Your Word. Give wise judgment to those in positions of leadership. Give us all a loving compassion to people in need.

Bless our country and its people, that mercy, truth, uprightness, and peace may be evident everywhere. Give us leaders whose concern is not to serve personal pride or party loyalties, but to be Your instruments of service to all.

Fill our homes with the joy of Your presence. Inspire parents with the Spirit of Christ, so that they may encourage their children by word and example to live godly lives and to find joy in serving You and their fellowmen.

Bless all good and useful employment. Give to all both satisfaction in what they do and a fair reward for their efforts. Teach people in all situations to remember that they are accountable to You for every word and action.

Look with pity on those who are facing trouble and trials, especially those Christians who are suffering for the sake of their faith. Strengthen all the needy by Your mighty power, that they may remember that You are their only saviour and help.

Hear our prayers for Jesus' sake, O Lord, that we may praise You for ever and ever. Amen.

### **Article: Get behind Me, Satan!**

Sometimes, we go to church, and all we really want to hear is some good news, some reassuring message that everything is going to be all right, that life is not really as bad as it may seem, and that the sun will rise tomorrow. Often, this is the comforting message we receive. The Good News of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is the Good News of salvation for lost and condemned sinners like us. So, we come in here as broken and empty-handed beggars with nothing to offer, no work to show off, and once again hear about salvation by grace alone. Yet sometimes, the message we hear (which, quite frankly, we need to hear) is not just about better days tomorrow or the promise of eternal joy, but it is the honest reflection of lives that will be marked by struggle and hardship. They are lives of discipleship that will know the weight of bearing a cross here and now.

Saint Peter once made an incredible confession of the faith, a beautiful revelation of the identity of the Son of Man. Remember, Jesus asked, "*Who do you say that I am?*" Peter replies, "*You are the Christ, the son of the living God*" (Matt. 16:15-16). Our Lord then explains how this confession was revealed to Peter by His Father in heaven, and upon this statement the Church will be built. The whole thing is quite powerful. So, Jesus follows up by giving a few details as to what it means to be the Christ, the Son of the living God. What does it look like? What does the Christ do? Matthew says, "*From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and*



*be killed, and on the third day be raised*" (16:21). To be the Christ is to go the way of the cross, to suffer many things, to be killed, and rise again on the third day. This is what the Son of God has come to do.

Notice what Peter does here. When Jesus said this, Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "*Far be it from You, Lord! This shall never happen to You...*" (v. 22). Good old Peter! He stops doing the very thing that makes a disciple a disciple. He stops following. He stops following and takes the lead, redirecting our Lord away from the direction He has just said He must go. Of course, Peter seems to have good intentions. He does not want his Lord to suffer and die. He cannot imagine this is the path of the Christ, the Son of the living God. How could it be? It does not make any sense. Why would God come to suffer? Why would God come to die and rise again? There must be another way this can go, an alternative path that is marked by glory, prestige, power, and dominion over all that is evil and wrong in this age. That is what Peter wants. That's what we all want. What good is there in suffering? What benefit is there to a cross?

But our Lord will not tolerate any of this. He will not be led around by anyone. He will not be turned from the path He has come to walk. So, Jesus turns toward this man, to whom just five verses earlier He said, "*Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.*" And now He says, "*Get behind Me, Satan! You are a hindrance to Me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man*" (v. 23). Peter finds himself in the role of the ancient tempter, seeking to hinder Jesus from the path He must walk. He demands his Lord to fit his ideal of what the Christ is supposed to be. Instead of following, he will lead. Instead of receiving, he will give. Instead of trusting, he will rebuke, and he is immediately checked by our Lord.

This exchange leads to an important teaching regarding suffering and the life of a disciple. As Peter is quickly placed back in the role of following, Jesus tells all His disciples that suffering will come. He says, "*If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it*" (v. 24-25). There it is. To follow Jesus is not to be marked by victory, glory, and prestige. It is not a recipe to be healthy, wealthy, and wise. No, to follow Jesus is to carry a cross. It is to lose your life, not save it. See, there is a consequence that comes from being a believer. It is a fairy tale to think you can follow Jesus without an impact on your life. Believing He is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and trusting in your life, not just in the ways you want it or may be convenient to you. This just may empty you out, break you down, and shatter your dreams. That said, our experience in the Church in this age has not helped us to understand and embrace the radical call of discipleship. Most of us have only known the Church as a place society embraces as useful and is often

regarded as no different than any other social club found in civilised society. It is a place of polite conversation and the promotion of good citizens. We get dressed up a bit more than usual; we find some convenient ways of feeling better about ourselves through service, and off-we-go to live our lives, mostly unscathed. But it has not always been like this. The faith we confess, that we sing and celebrate, was handed down to us through the blood of martyrs, through suffering and opposition. It would divide families, be the cause of betrayal, and the reason you ended up in prison. To follow Christ could mean torture and even death. I tend to think this reality is quickly changing, that the Church's privileged position is eroding, but overall, we have been spoiled in our day. Because of this, we have all been seduced by the lie that suffering is the greatest evil of our age. Like Peter, we have difficulty seeing suffering and cross-bearing as part of the plan. So, when you do suffer, when hardships and turmoil come into your life, it is first understood as always something outside of the faith. Of course, we do not know persecution the way the early Church did, but we do suffer. You struggle with mental anguish and depression. You have painful regrets and deep sadness in your life. Perhaps you are alone, too afraid to let anyone in to see the turmoil and mess that is your reality. As a result, you can easily imagine that perhaps if you prayed the right words or offered the right service, you could fix it, you could overcome it, you could save yourself.

Look, the world is full of prosperity preachers who have this exact message: The promise that faith will save you from your suffering. But this does not seem to be the message our Lord actually gives to us. No, He says we are to take up our crosses and follow. You are not to try and leave your cross behind or somehow overcome your cross so you can really do the work of following. No, following is the bearing of the cross. It is to live a disjointed life, a life where suffering is real, hardships are real, and doubt and anguish are real. Yet, it is a life of endurance, promise, and hope. It is the mark of a life lived knowing this age will pass and a more glorious day will come. It is a life where suffering is not outside the work of God, but it is often right there in the midst of the pain where He does His greatest work. That is what we see on Calvary, which is the gift of divine suffering and death for your salvation.

I know, Jesus is brutal in His correction to Peter. His command to, "*Get behind Me Satan,*" is not easy to forget. But perhaps there is a way we can see this in a positive way. Behind Jesus is where Peter belongs. It is where we all belong. After all, we are His disciples, His followers. Therefore, the call of "*get behind Me*" does not have to be a rebuke. It can be a command from our General who leads us into the battle. Get behind Me as Jesus goes first, to suffering, to death, to the resurrection, and to the right hand of the Father. Get behind Me, He says, for He is your Advocate, your Deliverer, your Hope, and Salvation. He holds you in the storm. He speaks into your terror. Jesus loves you in your doubt and pain. So, what else can we do but take up our cross and follow.

## Children's Message:

In today's Gospel, Jesus talked about traditions. What's a tradition? Traditions are like if you have ham every year for Christmas dinner. Traditions like that can be very good and even very fun. We look forward to that tradition. It makes that special day even more special. Some traditions even teach us or remind us of important things. Like opening gifts with your family on Christmas morning. That tradition reminds us of the gift our heavenly Father gave us when He sent Jesus to us.

Do you have any other traditions that you do with your family?

We have some traditions like that in church too. Each Sunday we have candles or candelabra that we light each Sunday. That reminds us that Jesus is the Light of the world. We have different colours in the church. Right now, we are in the season of the Sundays after Pentecost, and so, the colour is green. Green reminds us of the hope we have in Jesus, as well as the growth we have through Him.

We have these traditions because they can be very helpful in teaching us about Jesus. But Jesus warns us to be careful not to misuse these traditions. I like ham on Christmas Day, but if you don't and your family has burgers instead, that's not wrong. There's no law that says we have to eat ham for it to be a real Christmas lunch! If we forget to light the candles on the altar or switch them on, it's not a sin. And if we were to use the wrong colour of the season, it's no big deal! The Word of Christ is still His Word proclaimed no matter what colours we have in the church. We can't turn our traditions into laws.

Having our traditions doesn't make us good in God's eyes. What does? What's the one and only thing that makes us good and right in God's eyes? That's right! Jesus. Jesus makes us pleasing to God by dying on the cross for us. Our traditions don't do that. Only Jesus does.

That's really what our traditions in church are meant to show us. The traditions you see in church each week aren't laws, but they are good and useful as long as they remind us of Jesus and how He forgives us and makes us holy.

*Dear Jesus, thank You for dying and rising for me. As I look at such things as the candles and the colours we use in the church, let these remind me of the great love You have for me! Amen.*



## WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

<b>1 September 15 Pentecost</b>	<b>8 September 16 Pentecost</b>	<b>15 September 17 Pentecost</b>
8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA LR <b>9.00am</b> GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am MARBURG LR	8.30am OAK HC 9.00am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.15am GRN HC 9.00am LOWOOD LR	8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am MARBURG HC
<b>Sunday, 1 September</b>		
READINGS: Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9; Ephesians 6:10-20;		Mark 7:14-23
HYMNS: 520 329 326 458		
<b>Sunday, 8 September</b>		
READINGS: Isaiah 35:4-7a; James 2:1-10; 14-18;		Mark 7:31-37
HYMNS: 16 450 818 (335 848) 618		
<b>Sunday, 15 September</b>		
READINGS: Isaiah 50:4-10; James 3:1-12;		Mark 9:14-29
HYMNS: 336 241 447 (847 289) 383		

Tuesday, September 3, 7.30pm. Men's Fellowship at Aubigny. Opening devotion: Don.

Wednesday, September 4, 10.00am. Women's Guild at Trinity Marburg. Opening Devotion: Kylie. Choose a verse from Deuteronomy 1-3. Item of Interest: Something orange.

Saturday, September 14, 1.00pm. Fellowship afternoon at Bethlehem Toowoomba. All are welcome to attend. Please bring a shared afternoon tea.

Saturday, September 24, 7.00pm, YAY (Young Adults and Youth) is on at Aubigny. The hall will be open for games and socialising from 6:30pm. All young adults and youth are most welcome to attend. Please remember to bring your Bible and something for supper.

### SEPTEMBER BIBLE STUDIES

Lowood: Thursday, 12 September, 10.00am.

Marburg: Sunday, 15 September, after worship.

Greenwood: Wednesday, 18 September, 7.30pm in the hall.

Toowoomba, Sunday, 22 September, 8.00am.

Aubigny/Oakey: Friday, 26 September, 7.30pm at Aubigny.