

Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church
BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA, OUR SAVIOUR LOWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,
ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, TRINITY MARBURG, TRINITY OAKEY
15th September Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 336 241 447 383

INTROIT: Psalm 116:1-9.

I love the LORD, because He hears my voice, my supplication for favour.

Because He has turned His ear to me, I shall call on Him as long as I live.

The cords of death encompassed me; the distresses of the grave took hold of me; I was experiencing affliction and torment.

But I kept calling on the name of the LORD: "O LORD, I pray, save my life!"

Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; our God is compassionate. The LORD protects simple people. When I was weak, He kept on saving me.

Return to your resting places, O my soul; for the LORD has been good to you.

For You have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling.

I shall walk before the LORD in the lands of the living.

COLLECT:

Lord Jesus Christ, our support and defence in every need, continue to preserve Your Church in safety, govern her by Your goodness, and bless her with Your peace; for You live and reign with the Father 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 or to the church office at 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 50:4-10 The obedient Servant of the LORD.

James 3:1-12 Control your tongue.

Mark 9:14-29 Jesus heals a boy possessed by an impure spirit.

Isaiah 50:4-10

⁴ “The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of disciples, to know how to use a Word to sustain him who is tired out. He awakens Me morning after morning. He awakens My ear to listen, like those who are disciples. ⁵ The Lord GOD has opened My ear, and I Myself have not been rebellious. I have not turned back. ⁶ I have given My **back** to **those who struck Me** and My cheeks to those who plucked out My beard. I have not hidden My **face** from **insults** and **spittle**. ⁷ The Lord GOD will help Me. That is why I have not been disgraced. That is why I have set My face like flint and know that I shall not be ashamed. ⁸ He who **declares Me righteous** is near. Who will contest a lawsuit against Me? Let us stand up together! Who is My accuser? Let him confront Me! ⁹ Look! The Lord GOD will come to help Me. **Who** is he who **will condemn Me**? Look! **They will all wear out like a garment**. The moths will eat them.”

¹⁰ Who among you fears the LORD and obeys the voice of His Servant? Let the one who has been walking in darkness and has had no light trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God!

James 3:1-12

¹ Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow-Christians! For you know that we shall be judged more severely. ² For we all commit many sins. If anyone does not sin in what he says, he is a perfect man, who can also keep his whole body in check. ³ If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we turn their whole bodies. ⁴ Look also at the ships. Although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, a very small rudder turns them wherever the inclination of the pilot leads him. ⁵ So also, the tongue is a small member of the body and yet it makes great boasts. See what a small fire sets such a large forest ablaze! ⁶ The tongue is also a fire. It is a world of wickedness in our members. It defiles the whole body, it sets the whole course of life aflame and is set aflame by hell. ⁷ For every creature, from animals to birds to reptiles and to sea-creatures, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. ⁸ However, no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ With the tongue we bless the Lord and Father and with it we curse human beings, who have been **made in God’s likeness**. ¹⁰ Blessing and cursing come out of the same mouth. My fellow-Christians, these things ought not to be so. ¹¹ Surely a spring does not

pour out both fresh and bitter water from the same opening? ¹² My fellow-Christians, surely a fig tree cannot produce olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

Mark 9:14-29

¹⁴ When they came back to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and scribes arguing with them. ¹⁵ As soon as the whole crowd saw Jesus, they were amazed and ran to Him and greeted Him.

¹⁶ He asked them, “What are you discussing with them?”

¹⁷ Someone in the crowd answered, “Teacher, I brought to You my son, who has a spirit who has robbed him of speech. ¹⁸ Wherever it takes hold of him, it throws him down, and he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked Your disciples to cast the spirit out, but they could not.”

¹⁹ Jesus answered them, “O faithless generation! How long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to Me!”

²⁰ They brought the boy to Him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground, rolled around and foamed at the mouth.

²¹ Jesus asked his father, “How long has this been happening to him?”

He said, “Since he has been a child. ²² It has often thrown him into fire or into water to destroy him. Nevertheless, if You are at all able, have compassion on us and help us!”

²³ Jesus answered him, “With reference to ‘If You are able’ — all things are possible for him who believes.”

²⁴ Immediately the child’s father cried out, “I believe. Help my unbelief!”

²⁵ When Jesus saw that a crowd was running together towards Him, He rebuked the unclean spirit: “You speechless and deaf spirit, I command you, ‘Come out of him and do not go into him again!’”

²⁶ It cried out, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy became like a corpse, so that most of them were saying, “He has died.”

²⁷ However, Jesus took hold of his hand and lifted him up, and he stood up.

²⁸ After Jesus had gone into a house, His disciples asked Him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?”

²⁹ He told them, “This kind cannot be driven out by any means except by prayer.”

HE WILL NOT BREAK OFF A BRUISED REED OR EXTINGUISH A SMOLDERING WICK

Sermon for the 17th Sunday after Pentecost 2024

Mark 9:14-29

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 9:14-29: **When they came back to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and scribes arguing with them. ¹⁵ As soon as the whole crowd saw Jesus, they were amazed and ran to Him and greeted Him.**

¹⁶ He asked them, “What are you discussing with them?”

¹⁷ Someone in the crowd answered, “Teacher, I brought to You my son, who has a spirit who has robbed him of speech. ¹⁸ Wherever it takes hold of him, it throws him down, and he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked Your disciples to cast the spirit out, but they could not.”

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²⁹ He told them, “This kind cannot be driven out by any means except by prayer.”

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

Dear friends,

The LORD God once described the work of His Messiah, Jesus, through the mouth of the prophet Isaiah. He said, “*Here is My Servant, whom I support, My Chosen One, in whom I delight! I have put My Spirit on Him. He will bring righteousness to the nations. ² He will not cry out. He will not raise His voice or make His voice heard in the street. ³ He will not break off a bruised reed or extinguish a smouldering wick*” (Is. 42:1-3).

The LORD God described His chosen servant as humble, even humble enough not to break off a bruised reed or extinguish a smouldering wick. And so, Jesus was. Yet, the LORD God wasn’t speaking about the reeds in the swamplands or saying that Jesus never put out a candle. No, He was talking *about people*.

Jesus came not to beat down, tear down, or destroy but to build up, to care for, and die for all mankind – even, and especially, for those who are burdened by this life. This is what we see in our text today as Jesus casts out an unclean spirit from a boy, but not before conversing with the boy’s father. In the conversation, the father revealed that he believed in Jesus but still found in himself some unbelief. He cried out to Jesus for help, and Jesus heard him. ***Our Lord has compassion for all people and heals even those weak in faith.***

Last week, we heard how Jesus had opened the ears and mouth of a deaf man. Since then, Jesus has fed the four thousand and healed a blind man. This week, we find Jesus just after He had come down from the Mount of Transfiguration. At the Transfiguration, His appearance was changed to shine like the sun, and Moses and Elijah appeared to speak with Him about His upcoming death and resurrection. When Peter suggested they remain on the mountain in glory, God the Father said from heaven, “*This is My Son, whom I love. Listen to Him!*” (Mark 9:7).

Jesus, Peter, James and John “**came back to the other disciples**” where “**they saw a large crowd around them and scribes arguing with them.**” At this time, they were some distance from Jerusalem, so the scribes must’ve come all that way to keep an eye on the disciples (and Jesus) and, in the course, got into an argument. Jesus asked them, “**What are you discussing with them?**” “**Someone in the crowd answered, “Teacher, I brought to You my son, who has a spirit who has robbed him of speech. ¹⁸ Wherever it takes hold of him, it throws him down, and he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid.**

I asked Your disciples to cast the spirit out, but they could not.” Remember that this is after Jesus had earlier sent the disciples out two-by-two into the villages to preach the Gospel (Mark 6:7-13). Jesus had given the Twelve the authority to cast out demons, and they did. This time, however, was different.

“Jesus answered them, “O faithless generation! How long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to Me!”

He told them later that they couldn’t cast it out because of their lack of prayer. It’s possible that while Jesus was on the mountain, the remaining disciples became tempted and thought that the power to cast out demons resided within them and not in the Word of God. When they tried to cast out the demon by their own authority – without the Word of God and prayer – it didn’t work. Seeing the crowd was beginning to press in, and perhaps spark a panic, Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, **“You speechless and deaf spirit, I command you, ‘Come out of him and do not go into him again!’”** The evil spirit **“cried out, convulsed him violently and came out.”** The convulsing was so violent that people thought the son was dead. **“However, Jesus took hold of his hand and lifted him up, and he stood up.”**

There are so many things to learn from our text that it’s hard to pick just one. However, the aspect of the text that jumps out is the short conversation between Jesus and the father. Maybe, first, that the conversation happened at all. Jesus had just come down from the Transfiguration, where His clothes had become brighter than any bleach could ever get them, and God the Father Himself spoke from heaven. Were you or I to receive such treatment, we may be full of ourselves. Often, that happens after even much smaller accolades. But not with Jesus. He saw the crowd gathered and stopped to see what was going on. Then, when the man brought up what was happening, Jesus asked how long the boy had been suffering. This wasn’t because Jesus was a doctor and needed to make the right diagnosis – *He asked because He cared*.

The man had brought his son to Jesus’ disciples because he believed in who Jesus was. But he had become disheartened when the disciples could not cast the demon out. He asked Jesus, **“If You are at all able, have compassion on us and help us!”** Jesus answered, **“all things are possible for him who believes,”** to which the man responds, **“I believe. Help my unbelief!”** And Jesus did. *He will not break off a bruised reed or extinguish a smouldering wick*. Jesus didn’t think it beneath Himself to help a struggling father who had witnessed his own son be thrown by a demon into fire and water. Instead, Jesus had compassion and cast the demon out of the boy.

Sometimes, we find ourselves in line with the father in this text. Our Father has called us through the Gospel. We have received the Holy Spirit, and eternal life is ours simply through the completed work of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. We join with the Apostle Paul saying, *“I know whom I have believed and am convinced that He can guard what has been entrusted to me until that day”* (2 Tim. 1:12). We have been Christians for as long as we can remember. And yet, because we are but flesh and blood, the Old Adam continues to claw away within our hearts. In our hearts, there is a constant battle between faith and unbelief. Sometimes we’re not aware of this, sometimes we are. And, sometimes, we doubt. To doubt is not to sin, but if we *entertain our doubts and begin to despair or disbelieve,* then we sin. However, a doubting faith is still faith, and Jesus does not cast away a doubting faith.

Jesus is mercy, love, and grace – even to those with doubts because He has died for all mankind, to win forgiveness even for those who struggle. He did not say to the father in our text, “Be gone!” because his faith wasn’t strong enough. No, He embraced him and strengthened his faith. It’s not how much faith you have that saves; it’s what your faith is in. Therefore, Jesus is able to have mercy on those who doubt by forgiving them and strengthening their faith. *Jesus also shows this same compassion to us.*

First, He forgives us our sins. Out of His great compassion for all the world, Jesus suffered and died for us. Daily and richly, the Catechism says, He gives that forgiveness to us in our baptism. By His Holy Spirit, daily He puts to death our sinful nature and leads us in His righteousness. Through the Holy Scriptures, the Spirit brings us to repent of our sins and points us to Christ for forgiveness. In the Word, He daily teaches and reminds us of all Christ has said and completed for us. In the Lord’s Supper, Jesus binds up our wounded and broken hearts by feeding us His true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins and the strengthening of our faith.

In our text today, we witness Jesus’ great compassion again. Out of love, He cast the speechless and deaf spirit out of that poor boy. He did not turn away the man because his faith was not great enough, but rather had mercy on Him, forgiving him and strengthening his faith. *He will not break off a bruised reed or extinguish a smouldering wick.* Through His Word and Sacraments, He forgives us also our sins and strengthens our faith until such time that we no longer walk by faith but by sight when we enter into that eternal glory to be with Jesus for ever more. Amen.

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

PRAYER FOR THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we praise You for Your wisdom, power, and holiness. But, above all, we worship You for Your goodness and forgiving love to all who call on You. You have changed us from enemies into friends through the sufferings and death of Your Son, who became a human being for our sakes. We are Your children, and come to You confidently in His name with our prayers and requests.

Give us an awareness of Your majesty and power, and that holy fear of You that is the basis of all true wisdom. Continue to supply our daily needs, giving us life and breath, health and contentment, and protection from every kind of danger to body and soul.

Especially look with mercy on our moral and spiritual weakness. By Your Holy Spirit free us from the evil from which we cannot free ourselves, and give us new life through faith in Jesus Christ. May Jesus speak His word of forgiveness to us, and become the ruler of our consciences, the focus of our wills, the centre of our motives, and the Lord of our lives. Let Christ's love for us fill Your Church. Enable all Your people to know more of the vastness of that love, although it can never be fully known. In its power may they love one another in the family of faith, show loving sympathy to all in need, and offer forgiveness to all their enemies. Fill us with such love for each other that we may avoid placing any obstacle that would cause a brother to sin against his over-scrupulous conscience.

Show the nations of the earth the fullness of Your goodness and grace, that they may turn to You, the only true God, and find salvation in Your Son Jesus Christ. Lord, You have been gracious to our land. Continue to bless us, that more and more may turn from evil, come to faith, and be made rich by Your gifts.

We pray also for a special measure of Your blessing on those who sorrow or mourn, those who suffer pain or sickness, and those who face temptation or danger. Because we ourselves deserve Your chastening and discipline, help us to receive in patience and humility whatever You send in our lives, knowing that You are lovingly preparing us for eternal fellowship with You.

O Lord, You are able to do so much more than we can ever ask for or even think of. Hear these prayers, and provide all our other needs, in the name of our blessed Redeemer and Lord Jesus Christ, who, together with You and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Children's Message:

When I was a little boy, there were lots of things I couldn't do. Is there anything you can't do? When we're little, there are lots of things we can't do, no matter how hard we try. But even as you grow up, there will still be things you can't do. Sometimes, and with some things, we all need someone to help us.

Today in God's Word, we hear how a father couldn't help his son who was being made sick by an evil spirit. He brought his boy to Jesus' disciples, and they couldn't help him either. But while everyone was arguing about why they couldn't help the dad and his boy, Jesus came to them and showed everyone that He could do what nobody else could do: He healed the boy by making the evil spirit leave him.

Today in His Word, Jesus is showing you and me that He is the Son of God and that He can do what we and everyone else can't do. I sin, and I can't stop sinning or take away my sin. Can you? No, you can't. Someday I'm going to die, and I can't keep myself from dying. You can't either. I can't get myself to heaven. Can you get yourself to heaven? Nope, you can't.

But Jesus came down from heaven to do everything that we couldn't do. He came to save us from the devil. He came to save us from our sins. He came to save us from death. He can take us to heaven when we die, and He will.

Jesus is here with us in church today to show you and me all He's done for us by dying on the cross and rising from the dead. He wants us to know that we can trust Him for everything and bring all our problems to Him. He can help us with anything and everything we need.



Thank You Jesus for being my Helper. Always remind me that I can come to with any problem I have. Amen.

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

22 September 18 Pentecost	29 September 19 Pentecost	6 October 20 Pentecost
8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA HC 9.00am GRN LR 10.45am AUB HC 9.00am LOWOOD LR	8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am MARBURG LR (Pastor away this Sunday)	9.00am TMBA LR 10.00am MARBURG HC (Harvest) AELC Service and Children's Sunday School Picnic
Sunday, 22 September		
READINGS: Jeremiah 11:18-20; James 3:13-4:10; Mark 9:30-37		
HYMNS: 54 356 277 (282 283) 199		
Sunday, 29 September		
READINGS: Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29; James 5:1-20; Mark 9:38-50		
HYMNS: 119 341 179 346		
Sunday, 6 October		
READINGS: Genesis 2:18-25; Hebrews 2:1-18; Mark 10:2-16 (Marburg) Deuteronomy 26:1-11; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15; Luke 12:13-21		
HYMNS: 361 893 280 101 MARBURG: 563 814 566 85 285 437		

AELC Service and Children's Picnic

Everyone is invited to the AELC service at Marburg on 6 October, followed by the Children's Sunday School picnic. Could each family please provide something for a shared lunch? A BBQ will also be running, with the loose offering for the day going towards the cost. As always, if you wish for your offering to return to your own congregation, please mark it in an envelope. Please come along if you can!

SEPTEMBER BIBLE STUDIES

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

Aubigny/Oakey: Friday, 20 September, 7.30pm at Aubigny. (note change of date)

Toowoomba, Sunday, 22 September, 8.00am.