

Sunday, November 22, 2020
Christ the King Sunday

On this final Sunday of the church year our gospel is Jesus' great story of judgment. In the end, the faithful are those who served Christ by ministering to those who are poor, hungry, naked, sick, or estranged. In the first reading God is the shepherd who seeks the lost, weak, and injured and feeds them with justice. We gather this day to celebrate the reign of Christ and his victory over death, yet we await the consummation of all things yet to come. Acknowledging Christ as our merciful ruler, we go forth that his reign may be known in our loving words and deeds.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALTAR FLOWERS *To the glory of God in loving memory of Eric Burns.*

Nadine Burns

PRELUDE

"You Are My All in All"
Sharon Gray, piano

arr. Mark Hayes

APOSTLES' CREED

**☩ I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen!**

WELCOMING SONG

"Come, Thou Almighty King"

ELW 408

**Come, thou almighty King,
help us thy name to sing;
help us to praise;
Father all-glorious,
o'er all victorious,**

come and reign over us,
Ancient of Days.

Come, thou incarnate Word,
merciful, mighty Lord;
our prayer attend.
Come and thy people bless,
and give thy word success,
and let thy righteousness
on us descend.

Come, holy Comforter,
thy sacred witness bear
in this glad hour!
Thou who almighty art,
rule now in ev'ry heart,
never from us depart,
Spirit of pow'r.

To thee, great One in Three,
eternal praises be
hence evermore!
Thy sov'reign majesty
may we in glory see,
and to eternity
love and adore.

GREETING

- P** *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*
- G** **And also with you.**

SONG OF PRAISE

“This is the Feast”

pg. 140

**This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God.
This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**Power, riches, wisdom, and strength,
and honor, and blessing, and glory are his.
This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

Sing with all the people of God,

**And join in the hymn of all creation:
Blessing, honor, glory, and might
be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.
This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**For the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign.
Alleluia.
This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

℟ *O God of power and might,*

☩ **your Son shows us the way of service, and in him we inherit the riches of your grace.
Give us the wisdom to know what is right and the strength to serve the world you have
made, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the
Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen!**

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Come, Ye Blessed”

John Prindle Scott

Sharmyn Thompson, soprano

FIRST READING – Kathy Wessler, reading

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

Because Israel’s kings proved to be bad shepherds, Ezekiel declares that the LORD will assume the role of shepherd in Israel. The LORD will also set over them a shepherd-messiah, “my servant David,” who will feed and care for the people.

¹¹Thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. ¹²As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. ¹³I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. ¹⁴I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord GOD. ¹⁶I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

²⁰Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. ²¹Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, ²²I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

²³I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. ²⁴And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

Reflection

In the verses preceding our text, Ezekiel prophesies against the leaders of Israel, who have been preying on the “sheep,” the people of Israel, and scattering them, rather than leading and protecting them. So who will be the shepherd if the leaders can’t be trusted? (verse 11) What will be the Lord’s task now for these scattered sheep? (verse 12) What will happen to the people in exile in foreign lands? (verse 13) How will they live with God as their shepherd? (verse 14) How will the Lord, their shepherd, heal them? (verses 15-16) What will happen to the “fat and the strong” sheep, who have also bullied the weaker ones? (verses 16, 20-21) How will the Lord save the flock? (verse 22) Who will then be their shepherd? (verse 23) How will David’s royal house care for the sheep? Who will be ultimately in charge of the sheep? (verse 24) How are the sheep responsible for each other in this parable? We are used to thinking of ourselves as the sheep when we use this metaphor. Are we the weak or the strong (bullying) sheep? Who are we as sheep responsible for? How will we serve all those who are God’s sheep?

Psalm 95:1-7a – read together with Jim Pierce

- ¹Come, let us sing to the LORD;
let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.
- ²Let us come before God’s presence with thanksgiving
and raise a loud shout to the LORD with psalms.
- ³For you, LORD, are a great God,
and a great ruler above all gods.
- ⁴In your hand are the caverns of the earth;
the heights of the hills are also yours.
- ⁵The sea is yours, for you made it,
and your hands have molded the dry land.
- ⁶Come, let us worship and bow down,
let us kneel before the LORD our maker.
- ^{7a}For the LORD is our God,
and we are the people of God’s pasture and the sheep of God’s hand.

Reflection

What does the psalmist call on us to do? (verse 1) Who is the Lord? What does “the rock of our salvation” convey to you? What is our prayer to God? (verse 2) Who is our ruler? (verse 3) Again, in this psalm, we have a couple of verses that celebrate the Lord’s creation. (verses 3-6) What does it mean to us that God’s hand holds the earth, the sea, and us? God is our God, not only because God is the powerful Creator, but also because God loves us. (verse 7a) How does God show love for us and for all God’s people?

SECOND READING – Debra Hohly, reading

Ephesians 1:15-23

In this passage, God is praised for revealing ultimate divine power in raising Jesus from the dead. The resurrected, exalted Christ is Lord of both the church and the entire universe, now and in the age to come.

¹⁵I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. ²⁰God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. ²²And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Reflection

Paul recalls and celebrates the faith of the people in the church in Ephesus, and their love for all the saints (all the baptized). (verse 15) How does Paul express this? (verse 16) What specifically does he pray for for them? (verse 17) What will they know when they receive this spirit of wisdom and revelation? (verse 18) What is their inheritance? (verse 19) How do they (and we) receive this inheritance? (verse 20) Who is the ruler of all the people and has authority? (verse 21) Especially as we come through this election season, when we, the people, are choosing a president of our country, it is good to be reminded that our president has only limited power. Who has all the power, not only for the church, but also for the world? (verses 22-23) How do we celebrate Christ, whether we are Republicans or Democrats, liberals or conservatives?

GOSEPL ACCLAMATION

“With a Voice of Singing”
Sharmyn Thompson, soprano

Martin Shaw

*With a voice of singing,
declare ye this and let it be heard,
Alleluia.*

GOSPEL

Matthew 25:31-46

Jesus compares himself to a king who moves among his subjects to see how he is treated: what is done for the least of those who belong to his family is truly done for him.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ³¹“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you

gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ ⁴⁰And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family you did it to me.’ ⁴¹Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴²for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ ⁴⁶And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’”

Reflection

This text is a parable about “the coming of the Son of Man,” who we understand to be Jesus. How does the Son of Man come? (verse 31) Who all is judged by the Son of Man? (verse 32) How are they separated? (verse 33) How does the Son of Man judge the sheep at his right hand? (verses 34-36) How do those at the right hand respond? (verses 37-39) What does the king (the Son of Man) tell them? (verse 40) How does the Son of Man say to those at his left hand? (verses 41-43) How do they respond? (verse 44) After their response, what does he say to them? (verse 45) What happens to both groups? (verse 46) I suspect that one of the temptations of this parable is to respond to people in need not as fellow servants of God but as instruments of our own salvation. Who do you think of when you think about people you have helped? Why do you help them? I remember often the people whose needs I ignore. I find myself hoping that the judgmental and weak part of me that ignores people in need or judges them as not worthy of my/our help does indeed get cast away. And what I know about those who I often disagree with and think they are judgmental and ignorant, they are often much more caring than I am. What does it say about me, and about those “others”? I think I remember a saying of Luther, that we are all sinners, beggars before God. I beg Jesus to cast out the evil that I do and give me grace and power to do what God would have me do and think and say and believe. What do you think?

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

Kris Langdon

SERMON

Rev. Keith Hohly

SONG OF THE DAY

“Shout To The Lord”

ELW 821

**My Jesus my Saviour
Lord there is none like You
All of my days I want to praise
The wonders of Your mighty love
My comfort my shelter**

**Tower of refuge and strength
Let every breath all that I am
Never cease to worship You**

**Shout to the Lord
All the earth let us sing
Power and majesty
Praise to the King
Mountains bow down
And the seas will roar
At the sound of Your name
I sing for joy
At the work of Your hands
Forever I'll love You
Forever I'll stand
Nothing compares to the promise
I have in You**

PRAYER SONG

“Open Our Eyes”

**Open our eyes Lord
We want to see Jesus
To reach out and touch Him
And say that we love Him
Open our ears Lord
And help us to listen
Open our eyes Lord
We want to see Jesus**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION – led by Bruce and Debbie Taylor

We remember in our prayers

Carolyn & Jack Pearl, Myrene Bunge, David & Amelia Vanderver (friends of Nila Schneider), Rachael Kinney, Janet, Marge & Roy (friends of Sharmyn Thompson), Pamma Williams, Marlene Hebb, Scott Correa (Sharon Gray's son-in-law), Lynn Ann Flora (friend of Laurel Goforth), Kira Wall (great-niece of Irene Wall), Andy Wilson (friend of Sharon Gray), Reed Nelson, Dorothy Masteller, Dee Rasmussen, those affected by the wildfires in the western United States, those affected by the storms in the Gulf.

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God's power on the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Sovereign of all, train our ears to hear your cry in the needs of those around us. Bless all social ministries of the church through which we seek to serve others as we ourselves have been served. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You cause rain to fall on the just and unjust alike. Direct our use of creation to provide for the needs of all people in ways that are sustainable for the earth. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Bring peace to every place where conflict rages. Grant opportunities for ending divisions among us and usher in your reign of unity and reconciliation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Heal the sinful divisions we erect between us and release us from systems of oppression and prejudice. Restore our capacity to see your image in those whose dignity we have stripped away. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Pour out the gifts of your Spirit on children and youth throughout the church. Sustain those who work in children's ministry, youth ministry, and campus ministry as they nurture the gifts of young people. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the midst of a global crisis, we look to you for strength, hope and help in fighting the coronavirus pandemic. We pray for those stricken with this disease and those who are treating them, for those mourning the loss of life and those facing death, and for those who urgently work to find effective treatments for cure. We lift up to you those in our faith community needing your care: Carolyn & Jack, Myrene, David & Amelia, Rachael, Janet, Marge & Roy, Pamma, Marlene, Scott, Lynn Ann, Kira, Andy, Reed, Dorothy, Dee, those affected by the wildfires in the western United States, those affected by the storms in the Gulf, and those we name aloud or silently in our hearts. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Thank you for saints now departed who fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and tended to the sick. Inspire us by their example, that we may see your presence in those in need around us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, until that day when you gather all creation around your throne where you will reign forever and ever.

Amen!

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P *Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved.*

G Amen!

P *Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.*

Silence is kept for reflection.

P *Holy One,*
C **we confess that we are not awake for you.**
We are not faithful in using your gifts.
We forget the least of our siblings.
We do not see your beautiful image in one another.
We are infected by sin
that divides your beloved community.
Open our hearts to your coming,
open our eyes to see you in our neighbor,
open our hands to serve your creation. Amen!

P *Beloved, we are God's children,*
and Jesus, our Beloved, opens the door to us.
Through ✠ Jesus you are forgiven,
by Jesus you are welcome,
in Jesus you are called to rejoice!
Let us live in the promises prepared for us
from the foundation of the world.

C **Amen!**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P *The peace of Christ be with you always.*

C **And also with you!**

DIALOGUE

P *The Lord be with you.*

C **And also with you.**

P *Lift up your hearts.*

C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

C **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

P *It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,*
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P *In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread
and gave thanks, broke it,
and gave it to his disciples,
saying: Take and eat;
this is my body, given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.*

*Again, after supper,
he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink,
saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people
for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this in remembrance of me.*

LORD'S PRAYER

☩ **Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen!**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P *There is a place for you at the banquet. Come and feast at Jesus' table. All are welcome.*

COMMUNION

BLESSING

P *May the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.*

C Amen!

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P *Lord Jesus,*

C **in this simple meal you have set a banquet. Sustain us on the journey, strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children, and give us glad and generous hearts as we meet you on the way. Amen!**

BENEDICTION

P *May the God of all creation,
in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved,
who strengthens us for service,
give you reason to rejoice and be glad!
The blessing of God,
Sovereign, \dagger Savior, and Spirit,
be with you today and always.*

C Amen!

SENDING SONG

“Rejoice, for Christ Is King!”

ELW 430

**Rejoice, for Christ is king!
Your Lord and king adore;
rejoice, give thanks, and sing,
and triumph evermore:**

Refrain

**Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice!**

**Our Savior Jesus reigns,
the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our stains,
he took his seat above: *Refrain***

**His kingdom cannot fail;
he rules o'er earth and heav'n;
the keys of death and hell
are to our Jesus giv'n: *Refrain***

**He sits at God's right hand
till all his foes submit
and bow to his command
and fall beneath his feet: *Refrain***

DISMISSAL – Jeff Langdon

P *Go in peace. Serve the Lord.*

G **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

“Crown Him With Many Crowns”

Sharon Gray, organ

Emma Lou Diemer

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Rev. Keith Hohly, Interim Pastor

Instruments: Drums – Bruce Taylor | Piano and Organ – Sharon Gray | Guitar – Jim Pierce

Song leaders and vocal talents: Sharmyn Thompson, Rev. Keith Hohly, Deb Hohly,
Dave Newman, Jeff Langdon, Phil Lewis, Nancy Lewis, Jim Pierce, Juel Pierce, Jim Bunge,
Carol Bunge, Roger Lenander, and Misty Coyle

Reflections on Today's Readings written by Rev. Juel Pierce

Music and Liturgy:

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