

*Truly I tell you,
whatever you did
for one of these
brothers & sisters of mine,
you did for me.*

Matthew 25:40

Christ the King Sunday
Worship with Holy Communion
November 26, 2023

Good morning & welcome to Grace as we celebrate the Reign of Christ.

*Our mission is to invite and welcome all
to the fellowship of Christ in service to our community.*

Falling after Thanksgiving Day in the United States as it does this year, Christ the King Sunday can get lost in the “holiday season” and the transition into Advent. However, as the conclusion of the church’s year, Christ the King Sunday is the capstone of our liturgical calendar, from the Christmas and Easter cycles, which share the story of Jesus’ birth, life, death, and resurrection, through the Sundays after Pentecost, which shape us more fully into discipleship. Our Sundays and festivals during the entire church year have aimed us toward recognizing and celebrating Christ as the sole sovereign of our existence, culminating in this day, when we boldly proclaim the Reign of Christ!

We are glad you are with us for worship today, and to give thanks for the grace, mercy and hope offered to us in the life, death and resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. We offer a special welcome to any guests who may be with us this morning, and to all those who are joining us via Live-Stream.

Children are welcome in worship at Grace! The voices of children only enhance worship, and they are welcome in this space! And, if needed, there is a nursery available for any family to use.

Your bulletin contains the worship service in its entirety, **and your parts are printed in bold type.**

In thanksgiving to God for the saving grace shown to all of us in the death and resurrection of Christ, we celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion each week. All are welcome at the Table. We do come forward to the front of the sanctuary for communion. The Pastor stands in the center of the aisle with the bread. Gluten free bread is available – just ask when you come forward. Finally, communion assistants are located on both sides of the sanctuary, with both **wine (red)** and **juice (white)** based on your preference. Please place your empty cup in the bowl on your way back to your seat after you commune.

For those participating from home, please have a small glass of wine or juice and a small piece of bread available for all who are planning to commune. When we come to the Meal portion of the service, please eat your bread and drink your cup as you are moved to do so.

If you have questions about our worship service, please don’t hesitate to ask someone around you. For more information about Baptism or Communion, about what Lutherans believe, or even about Grace Lutheran Church, please do not hesitate to reach out to our pastor.

Again, welcome to worship! We’re glad you’re here!

GATHERING ~ The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

“Crown Him With Many Crowns”

ELW 855

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

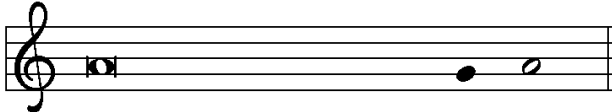
GATHERING HYMN

“Jesus Shall Reign”

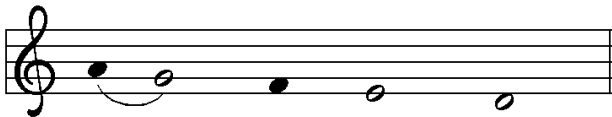
ELW 434

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

KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



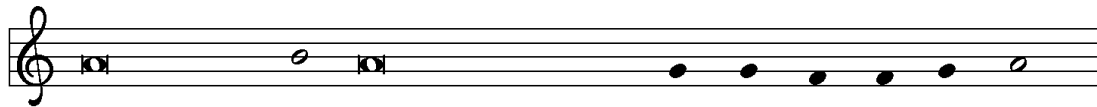
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



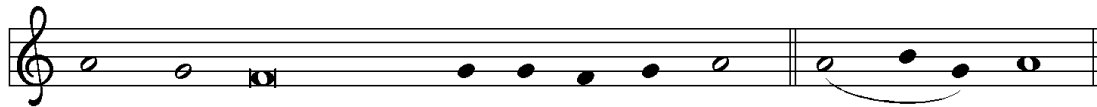
Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Assisting minister



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.

All



1 Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are his.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless-ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

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

MUSICAL OFFERING *“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”* **Mark Hayes**

WORD ~ God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST 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. And we read:

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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 95:1 – 7a (*read in unison*)

¹**Come, let us sing to the LORD; let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.**

²**Let us come before God's presence with thanksgiving
and raise a loud shout to the LORD with psalms.**

³**For you, LORD, are a great God, and a great ruler above all gods.**

⁴**In your hand are the caverns of the earth; the heights of the hills are also yours.**

⁵**The sea is yours, for you made it, and your hands have molded the dry land.**

⁶**Come, 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.**

SECOND 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. And we read:

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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 25:31 – 46

The holy gospel, according to Saint Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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. And we read:

[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.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

Dear friends, we give thanks for the gift of baptism as we come before God to make public affirmation of baptism into Christ.

Let us pray.

Merciful God, we thank you that you have made us your own by water and the Word in baptism. You have called us to yourself, enlightened us with the gifts of your Spirit, and nourished us in the community of faith. Uphold us and all your servants in the gifts and promises of baptism, and unite the hearts of all whom you have brought to new birth. We ask this in the name of Christ. **Amen**

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God, the powers of this world that rebel against God, and the ways of sin that draw you from God? **I renounce them.**

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

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.

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

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.

You have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism: to live among God’s faithful people, to hear the word of God and share in the Lord’s supper, to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.

People of God, do you promise to support and pray for one another in your life in Christ?

We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit, you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life. Stir up in your people the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence both now and forever. **Amen**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION & THE PEACE

Let us turn our hearts to God, our breath and life, as we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need (*a brief silence*).

Holy God, from Christ we receive our call to feed, clothe, and welcome. Direct your church to respond to this call with faithfulness and generous love. We pray for the work of ELCA World Hunger and partnerships with global feeding ministries. In Christ, the rock of our salvation, we are brought into union with all of creation. With mountains, seas, dry lands, and animals of the field, we seek your guidance and protection. Help all of us to better stewards of the resources you have provided. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

In Christ we know merciful judgment. Guide rulers of every nation in ways of humble leadership and wise decision-making. Allow aid to come to all who are underserved and care to any who are neglected. In Christ we feel the depth of your love and care toward us. Comfort those who are afraid, nourish all who hunger, connect any who are isolated, and be present to all who experience rejection or abuse. Today, we lift up to you those who suffer in any way, those on our prayer list, those whose needs only you know, and all those we name before you now in our hearts. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

In Christ we are made the people of his pasture. Inspire the outreach and social ministries of this congregation, and the various ways we, as individuals, provide ministry and care to our neighbors. We pray for all people who serve and attend to the needs of others, and today especially, we lift up the work of Lutheran Disaster Response. Holy God, in Christ we are welcomed home. We praise you for the faithful witness of those who have served you and extended your welcome and love to us, and pray that we will be united with them, and with the whole church, as one body of Christ. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We offer our spoken prayers and those held in our hearts trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

At this time, you are invited to greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

MEAL ~ God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

CHANCEL CHOIR

“All Hail the Power of Jesus Name”

ELW 634

OFFERING

If you would like to offer a gift, the collection plate is located at the back of the sanctuary for your convenience. Thank you for your continued support of our mission and ministry.

OFFERING RESPONSE

“We Are An Offering”

ELW 692

OFFERING PRAYER

God of all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance, and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your very self and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant. Amen

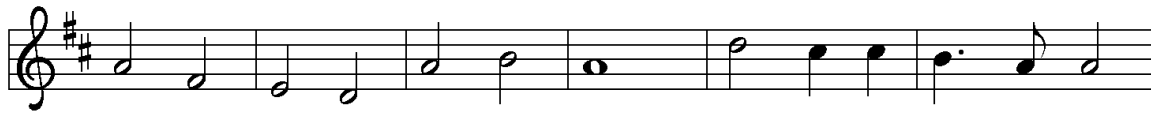
THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (Those moved to do so may rise.)

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The presiding minister continues with the proper preface:

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,



heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.



Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes



in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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 for the 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 for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

There is a place for you at the banquet. Come and feast at Jesus' table.

LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMNS

"The King of Love, My Shepherd Is"

ELW 502

"Thine the Amen"

ELW 826

BLESSING & PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

The body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you, and keep you in his grace.

Amen

Lord Jesus, 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**

SENDING ~ God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

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, ✝ Savior, and Spirit, be with you today and always. **Amen**

SENDING HYMN

“Christ Is Alive! Let Christians Sing”

ELW 389

DISMISSAL

Beloved of God, go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.

We will! Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“The Head That Once Was Crowned”

ELW 432

Copyright © 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SBWA002819. New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission.