

# Christ the King Sunday

November 26, 2023

10:15 am

## Prelude

## Welcome

On this final Sunday of the church year our gospel is Jesus' "Parable of the Sheep and the Goats". It is a story of judgement and in the end, the faithful are those who served him by ministering to those who are poor, hungry, naked, sick, or estranged. We gather this day to celebrate the reign of Christ and his victory over death, yet we await all things yet to come. Acknowledging Jesus of Nazareth, the promised Messiah as our merciful ruler, we go forth that his reign may be known in our loving words and deeds.

## Announcements

## Confession and Forgiveness

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Holy One, **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.**

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. **Amen.**

## Greeting Hymn: ELW #434 "Jesus Shall Reign" (vss 1-3)

- 1. Jesus shall reign where'er the sun does its successive journeys run, his kingdom stretch from shore to shore, till moons shall wax and wane no more.**
- 2. To him shall endless prayer be made, and praises throng to crown his head. His name like sweet perfume shall rise with every morning sacrifice.**
- 3. People and realms of every tongue dwell on his love with sweetest song, and infant voices shall proclaim their early blessings on his name.**

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## 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**

## *Readings and Psalm*

### **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.*

11 Thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. 12 As 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. 13 I 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. 14 I 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. 15 I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord GOD. 16 I 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.

20 Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. 21 Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, 22 I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep. 23 I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. 24 And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

### **Psalm Reading: Psalm 95:1-7a**

*We are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's hand. (Ps. 95:7)*

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.*

15 I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. 17 I 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, 18 so 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, 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. 20 God 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, 21 far 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. 22 And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

## **Gospel Acclamation**

*Alleluia.* Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.\* Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David. *Alleluia.*

The Holy Gospel according to the book of Matthew, beginning with the 25th chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

## **Gospel: 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. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, 33 and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. 34 Then 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; 35 for 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, 36 I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. 37 Then 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? 38 And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? 39 And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' 40 And 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.' 41 Then 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; 42 for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I 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.' 44 Then 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?' 45 Then 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.' 46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

The Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## Sermon

### Hymn of the Day: ELW #423 *"Shall We Gather at the River"*

1. Shall we gather at the river, where bright angel feet have trod;  
with its crystal tide forever flowing by the throne of God?

*Refrain:* Yes, we'll gather at the river, The beautiful, the beautiful river;  
gather with the saints at the river that flows by the throne of God.

2. On the margin of the river, washing up its silver spray,  
we will walk and worship ever, all the happy golden day. *[Refrain]*
3. Ere we reach the shining river, lay we ev'ry burden down;  
grace our spirits will deliver, and provide a robe and crown. *[Refrain]*
4. Soon we'll reach the shining river, soon our pilgrimage will cease;  
soon our happy hearts will quiver with the melody of peace. *[Refrain]*

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### Apostle's 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.

### Sharing of Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

### Offering

Offering Hymn: ELW #686 *"We Give Thee But Thine Own"* 1<sup>st</sup> verse

1. We give thee but thine own, whate'er the gift may be;  
all that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.

### 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.

## **Prayers of Intercession**      Hear us, O God, **Your Mercy is great.**

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.

Holy God, from your Son, Jesus of Nazareth, the promised Messiah, we receive our call to feed, clothe, and welcome. Remind us as your church to respond to this call with faithfulness and generous love. We pray for the our ELCA and its ministries that reach out to all in need. We pray: Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy God, through your Son, we know merciful judgment. Guide rulers of every nation in ways of humble leadership and wise decision-making. Allow aid to come to all in need, especially in the communities ravaged in war and to all who call upon you this day. We pray: Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy God, through your Son, we feel the depth of your love and care toward us. Nourish all who hunger, connect any who are isolated, and surround all who experience rejection or abuse. We pray for those who call upon you today for your healing Spirit **(especially Rachel, Lang Sheon, Arlan, Monica, Barry, Paulette, Caroline, The Reedstrom Family and the Sing Family)** We pray: Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Holy God, through your Son, we are welcomed into your eternal kingdom. We praise you for the faithful witness of those who have served you and extended your welcome and love to us. Unite us with them as one body of Christ. We pray: Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy God on this festival of Christ the King, we praise your Son, and we offer our spoken prayers and those held in our hearts trusting in your mercy; we pray through our Savior, the King of kings and Lord of lords. **Amen.**

## **The Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you. **And also 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 thanks and praise.**

## **Thanksgiving at the Table**

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.

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

### **Lord's Prayer.**

**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.

### **Communion Distribution**

#### **Distribution Hymn: ELW #480 "O Bread of Life from Heaven"**

- 1. O bread of life from heaven, O food to pilgrims given,  
O manna from above: feed with the blessed sweetness  
of your divine completeness the souls that want and need your love.**
- 2. O fount of grace redeeming, O river ever streaming  
from Jesus' wounded side: come now, your love bestowing  
on thirsting souls, and flowing till all are fully satisfied.**
- 3. We love you, Jesus, tender, in all your hidden splendor  
within these means of grace. Oh, let the veil be riven,  
and our clear eye in heaven behold your glory face to face.**

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### **Post-communion Blessing..**

May the sacrament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who died upon the cross and rose for you on Easter morning, strengthen your faith in him, now and always.

### **Prayer after Communion**

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.**

### **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: ELW #434 "Jesus Shall Reign" (vss 4-5)**

- 4. Blessings abound where'er he reigns: the prisoners leap to lose their chains, the weary find eternal rest, and all who suffer want are blest.**

**5. Let every creature rise and bring peculiar honors to our King,  
angels descend with songs again and earth repeat the loud amen.**

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## **Dismissal**

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

## **Postlude**

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