

Worship in the Home: November 22, 2020

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W orship in the Home

Christ the King
Last Sunday after Pentecost
Lectionary 34, Year A
November 22, 2020

In this time of world-wide crisis, congregations throughout this church are not able to gather for worship as the body of Christ. While you cannot be together in person, we can hear the word of God and hold each other in prayer. We offer this brief resource as an aid for prayer in the home. As with our prayers in the gathered assembly for worship, you are encouraged to prepare or adapt them locally for your context.

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.

Find a peaceful place to pray, perhaps a table. You may wish to light a candle near where you pray. One person may lead in this acclamation and then pray the Prayer of the Day.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

Amen.

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

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.

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.

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 ruler among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 95:1-7a

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

²Let us come before God's presence ¹ with thanksgiving
and raise a loud shout to the ¹ LORD with psalms.

³For you, LORD, ¹ are a great God,
and a great ruler a- ¹bove all gods.

⁴In your hand are the caverns ¹ of the earth;
the heights of the hills are ¹ also yours.

⁵The sea is yours, ¹ for you made it,
and your hands have molded ¹ the dry land.

⁶Come, let us worship ¹ and bow down,
let us kneel before the ¹ LORD our maker.

^{7a}For the LORD ¹ is our God,
and we are the people of God's pasture and the sheep ¹ 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.

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 God, ¹⁸so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which God has called you, what are the riches of God's glorious inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of God's power for us who believe, according to the working of God's great power. ²⁰God put this power to work in Christ when God raised him from the dead and seated him at the right hand of Power 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 God has put all things under the feet of Christ and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³which is the body of Christ, the fullness of the one who fills all in all.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46

The holy gospel according to 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.

[Jesus said:] ³¹When 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 dominion 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 the devil's 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.

Reflection

Having read these readings, think on this:

The parable judges us: we have not always given food and drink to the hungry and thirsty, welcome to the stranger, nor help to the naked, sick, and imprisoned. But God is also full of mercy. Indeed, this Sunday comes to show us who this God really is: the one whom Jesus calls Father, who passionately cares for the world and gathers the scattered and injured of the people, including us, judging all rulers who misuse the weak; the one shepherd Jesus Christ who, in his cross, identifies with all the wretched poor and remains as close to us as the closest needy person; and the Spirit who gives us wisdom to know this one God and who mercifully makes of us a community — the church — to bear witness in the world. This Sunday of the Last Judgment is also a kind of Trinity Sunday, a revelation of the one God who fills all in all. Such good news comes to us in the word, like food for a hungry flock, turning us again away from fear in a difficult time to care for our needy neighbor, helping us to be more "sheep" than "goats."

If you have a hymnal, you may now sing or read "O Christ, What Can It Mean for Us" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 431), "Jesus Shall Reign" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 434). Links to hymns in the public domain are provided below.

[Jesus Shall Reign](#)

Then pray these intercessions:

On this the last Sunday of the church year, let us pray to see God's reign in the church, in the world, and with all in need, responding to each petition with the words "In mercy, receive our prayers."

A brief silence.

Great God, we praise you for sustaining the church through another year of grace. Continue to shepherd your people with your tender care. Sustain the social ministries of the body of Christ, and increase ecumenical sharing of opportunities for ministry.

A brief silence.

You are the great and holy God:

In mercy, receive our prayers.

Sustain the world that you have made, the heights of the hills, the seas and the dry land. Guard the animals during the winter months, and direct our use of creation to provide for the needs of all. Be a source of strength and refuge for all weathering severe storms.

A brief silence.

You are the great and renewing God:

In mercy, receive our prayers.

Bring peace to every place where conflict rages, that your reign may be honored throughout the world. Be with the people of Armenia, Ethiopia, and Hong Kong. Bless the work of the United Nations and of agencies that promote the wellbeing of all peoples.

A brief silence.

You are the great and peacemaking God:

In mercy, receive our prayers.

Bring a peaceful conclusion to the American national elections. Bless all the newly elected officials with a love of concord and a desire for justice. Turn us away from historic prejudices, and show us your image in each of our neighbors.

A brief silence.

You are the great and reconciling God:

In mercy, receive our prayers.

Visit American homes on Thanksgiving Day. When we are separated from loved ones, embrace us with your care. Keep gatherings safe. Even in our reduced celebrations, give us voices to offer thanks to you for your perpetual blessings.

A brief silence.

You are the great and generous God:

In mercy, receive our prayers.

We beg you to end the earth's pandemic. Bring healing to the millions who are suffering from the coronavirus – any who are sick, dying, despairing, isolated, unemployed, and all exhausted medical workers. Guide researchers in developing a vaccine.

A brief silence.

You are the great and healing God:

In mercy, receive our prayers.

Show your loving power to all who are in need.

Equip us to feed the hungry,

to provide clean water for the thirsty,

to welcome the stranger,

to clothe the naked,

to care for the sick,

to visit the prisoners.

We pray especially for. . . .

A brief silence.

You are the great and gracious God:

In mercy, receive our prayers.

We appeal to you, Sovereign God, we who are like both the sheep and the goats, and we ask that in compassion you will hear the prayers of our own hearts.

A longer period of silence.

You are the great and loving God:

In mercy, receive our prayers.

We praise you for all the saints who have died in the faith, especially this week for the hymnwriter Isaac Watts, who gave us words to praise the reign of Christ. At the end of all things, bring us together with all the saints into your kingdom of joy.

A brief silence.

You are the great and eternal God:

In mercy, receive our prayers.

Receive our prayers, O triune God: Father of glory, Lord Jesus Christ, and Spirit of wisdom, now and forever.

Amen.

If you have a hymnal, you may now sing or read "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 634 / This Far By Faith 237), "Soon and Very Soon" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 439 / This Far By Faith 38). Links to hymns in the public domain are provided below.

[All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name](#)

Then conclude with these prayers:

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

O Holy One of wisdom, throughout human history and today among us here, you call us to walk the paths of justice and peace. We praise you, O God of truth, for your precious words. Grant that sheltered under their richness as under the tree of life, we live in gratitude and faithfulness, through Jesus Christ, your Word and our Wisdom, now and forever. **Amen.**

Offering

Please remember to mail in your offerings so that Grace can continue to serve you.

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.**

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

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.

Then speak the Blessing:

Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless us now and forever.

Amen.

Devotional Music Links: For your individual or group devotion, you may choose to listen to the following choral recordings made available through Augsburg Fortress: "[Hymn to Christ the Light;](#)" "[God Alone Be Praised: Per Crucem;](#)" "[Holy God, Holy and Glorious.](#)"

Readings for the Week:

Monday commemoration of Clement, Bishop of Rome, died around 100; Miguel Agustin Pro, martyr, died 1927) Psalm 7. **Tuesday** (commemoration of Justus Falckner, died 1723; Jehu Jones, died 1852; William Passavant, died 1894; pastors in North America) Esther 8:3-17. **Wednesday** (commemoration of Isaac Watts, hymnwriter, died 1748) John 5:19-40. **Thursday** (Day of Thanksgiving [USA]) Psalm 80:1-7. **Friday** 1 Thessalonians 4:1-

18. **Saturday** Micah 2:1-13. **First Sunday of Advent** Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37.

Daily Prayer Resources are available, including simple forms of Morning, Evening, and Night Prayer; Responsive Prayer; and prayers for mealtimes and other occasions.

Due to copyright restrictions, we are only able to provide downloadable hymns that are in the public domain. Other suggestions provided above may be found in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. To purchase a copy of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* for the home, visit the [Augsburg Fortress website](#) or call 1-800-328-4648. Selected hymns from the forthcoming *All Creation Sings* will be available in *Worship in the Home* as copyright restrictions allow.

Reflection text: Gordon Lathrop. Intercessory Prayer: Gail Ramshaw

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Thank you to those who clean the Church following worship.

Annual Meeting will be held November 22nd following Worship. If you are a Team Leader please get your yearly report into the Parish Adm. as soon as possible

Please keep in your prayers this week: Kevin Johnson, Barbara Metzger, Rob Johnson and Steve Lindberg (Streeter Family Friend's & Kin), Noah Klenken (Fred Fixsen's Nephew), Cal Curtis & Patty Thompson (Carole Holten's Son-in-Law & Sister), Bill Warner, David Warner, Emily (Ben & Casey's Daughter), Terry Newgard, Judy Wings, Steve Murdock, Elaine Marsyla.