

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2024

Pacific Presbyterian Church and First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

CHRIST the KING SUNDAY

GATHERING

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Grace to you and peace from the one who is
and who was and who is to come,
**All: Let us prepare our hearts and minds to worship Jesus Christ,
our Lord and King, our Messiah, our Savior...**
One: ...who delivered us and freed us from our sins,
who rules with compassion and grace.
All: To him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN** “Rejoice, the Lord Is King!” GtG 363

**1. Rejoice, the Lord is King!
Your Lord and King adore!
Rejoice, give thanks, and sing,
and triumph evermore.
Lift up your heart;
lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!**

**2. Our Savior, Jesus, reigns,
the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our stains,
he took his seat above.
Lift up your heart;
lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!**

**3. His kingdom cannot fail;
he rules o'er earth and heaven;
the keys of death and hell
are to our Jesus given.**

(continued...)

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

**4. Rejoice in glorious hope!
For Christ, the Judge, shall come
and gather all the saints
to their eternal home.
Lift up your heart;
lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!**

Words: Charles Wesley, 1746, alt.
Music: DARWALL'S 148TH, John Darwall, 1770
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UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Holy One, however much we call you Lord,
we yield to you only fragments of our lives.
We expect to serve you with what remains
after we have indulged our desires.
We seek power and security
while you call us to service and hospitality,
We hate our neighbors,
whom you call us to love.
We identify more with the nations on our passports
than with your kingdom.
Forgive us, merciful Savior.
Forgive our greed, our lack of trust.
Forgive our failure to claim you.
Restore us in your love,
and reclaim us as your people.
Forgive us as your children,
and teach us what it means to follow and to serve,
even at the cost of our lives;
for the sake of your life for us. Amen.**

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Let us rejoice in the goodness and grace of the Lord!
All: **Through the death of Christ we are forgiven.
By the resurrection of Christ we are given new life.**
One: So rejoice and be glad, and celebrate the good news of God's grace!
All: **For in Jesus Christ we are forgiven, we are loved,
we are given new life. Alleluia! Thanks be to God!**

THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

All: **And also with you.**

(From your seat, a brief sign of peace may be shared: a wave of the hand, a nod of the head, etc.)

THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Mark 14:1-16:8 (abridged version based on *NRSVue*)

MARK 14:

¹ *It was two days before the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him, ² for they said, "Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people."*

³ *While he was at Bethany, a woman came with a jar of very costly ointment, and she broke open the jar and anointed him with the ointment. There were some who grumbled over this, thinking the money could have been used better. ⁶ But Jesus said, "She has performed a good service for me. ⁸ She has anointed my body beforehand for its burial."*

¹⁰ *Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. ¹¹ When they heard it, they were greatly pleased and promised to give him money. So he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.*

¹² *On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples said to him, "Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?" ¹³ So he sent two of his disciples with instructions to meet a man carrying a jar of water who would lead them to a house with ¹⁵ a large upstairs room. "Make preparations for us there." And they did.*

¹⁷ *When it was evening, he came with the twelve. ¹⁸ And when they were eating, Jesus said, "One of you will betray me." ¹⁹ They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, "Surely, not I?"*

²² *Later while they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." ²³ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and ²⁴ said, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many."*

²⁶ *Then they went out to the Mount of Olives. ²⁷ And Jesus said, "You will all fall away. ²⁸ But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." ²⁹ Peter said, "I will never fall away." ³⁰ But Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, this day you will deny me three times." ³¹ But he said vehemently, "Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you." And all of them said the same.*

³² *They went to Gethsemane, and he said, "Sit here while I pray." ³³ He took with him Peter and James and John and began to be distressed and agitated. ³⁴ And he said, "Remain here, and keep awake." ³⁵ And going a little farther, he prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. ³⁶ "Yet not what I want but what you want."*

³⁷ He came and found them sleeping. “Could you not keep awake one hour? ³⁸ Keep awake.” ³⁹ And again he went away and prayed. ⁴⁰ And once more he found them sleeping. ⁴¹ He came a third time and said, “Are you still sleeping? Enough! The hour has come.”

⁴³ Immediately, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived, and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs. ⁴⁵ Judas went up to him at once and said, “Rabbi!” and kissed him. ⁴⁶ Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. ⁵⁰ All the rest of them deserted him and fled.

⁵³ They took Jesus to the high priest and the Council. ⁵⁴ Peter followed at a distance, and was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire. ⁵⁵ The chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus, but they found none, ⁵⁶ even though many gave false testimony against him. ⁶⁰ Then the high priest asked Jesus, “Have you no answer?” ⁶¹ But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah?” ⁶² Jesus said, “I am, and

‘you will see the Son of Humankind
seated at the right hand of the Power’
and ‘coming with the clouds of heaven.’”

⁶³ Then the high priest said, “Why do we still need witnesses? ⁶⁴ You have heard his blasphemy!” All of them condemned him as deserving death.

⁶⁶ While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the female servants ⁶⁷ saw him warming himself, and said, “You also were with Jesus.” ⁶⁸ But he denied it, and went out into the forecourt. ⁶⁹ And the female servant began again to say, “This man is one of them.” ⁷⁰ But again he denied it. After a little while the bystanders said to Peter, “Certainly you are one of them.” ⁷¹ But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, “I do not know this man you are talking about.” ⁷² At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said. And he broke down and wept.

15: ¹ As soon as it was morning, they bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. ² Pilate asked, “Are you the King of the Jews?” He answered, “You say so.” ³ The chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴ Pilate asked him, “Have you no answer?” ⁵ But Jesus made no further reply.

⁶ Now at the festival Pilate used to release a prisoner for them. ⁹ Then Pilate asked, “Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?” ¹¹ But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead – Barabbas, who had committed murder during the insurrection. ¹² Pilate said, “What do you wish me to do with the King of the Jews?” ¹³ They shouted, “Crucify him!” ¹⁵ So Pilate released Barabbas, and after flogging Jesus, handed him over to be crucified.

¹⁶ All the soldiers gathered in the courtyard. ¹⁷ They clothed Jesus in a purple cloak, put a crown of thorns on him, ¹⁸ and began saluting him, “Hail, King of the Jews!” ²⁰ After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

²² They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull).

²⁵ It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. ²⁶ The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." ²⁷ And with him they crucified two rebels, one on his right and one on his left. ²⁹ Those who passed by derided him. ³¹ The chief priests and the scribes mocked him saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself." ³² Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

³³ At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three. ³⁴ At three o'clock Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" ³⁷ Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. ³⁹ Now when the centurion who stood facing him saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

⁴⁰ There were also women looking on from a distance, ⁴¹ who followed him in Galilee and ministered to him, and who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

⁴² When evening had come, since it was the day before the Sabbath, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the council, himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁵ When Pilate learned that Jesus was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ Then Joseph wrapped the body in a linen cloth and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. ⁴⁷ And some of the women saw where the body was laid.

16: ¹ When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ² And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³ They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" ⁴ When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. ⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. ⁶ But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you." ⁸ So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SERMON "Expectations of a King. Needs of a People." by Pastor Bill Vincent

This looks like no king I know.
Blood runs down his face, from thorns dug into his brow.
Barely clothed, nails are driven through his flesh to hold him onto a piece of wood until
he dies.

This looks like no king I know.

It seems that, as Mark tells it, all the stories of this last week – the Passion – go to show that Jesus is nothing like the king anyone expected, or wanted.

He was anointed by a woman – sorry, but at that time, that would have been an insult. If Jesus was to be anointed as king, it would have been by a man, by a priest. Instead, he was anointed by a woman.

And then he refers to it as an anointing for burial – not life, but for death.
Who follows a dead king?

He had to celebrate the central festival of the faith – the Passover – in secret. All the sneaking around, the secret signals, the planning.

In hiding; not out in the open, together with the whole community.

He is betrayed by one of his closest associates, his inner circle. He is denied by another, abandoned by all the rest – every single one of them.

Some entourage.

At Gethsemane, he told his closest three to stay awake. This is the king, mind you, telling you – commanding you – to stay on guard, alert: like we heard about last week (chapter 13).

And did they? No! They disobeyed his orders.

He is arrested as a common criminal, by a mob.

He doesn't say a thing at his trial – for the most part – as he is falsely accused by others. And when he does speak, no one believes him.

No one believes the king?

His own people turn against him and choose a murderer over him.

The military mocks him.

The military mocks the king?

He is killed by the most cruel, dehumanizing, shameful method of execution.

Even those crucified with him taunt him.

And the religious leaders make that critical point:

“Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe.”

Maybe that really is the point: He refuses to be who everyone expects him to be. He will not be who everyone imagines he should be.

He will be what no one expects...and maybe, what no one wants.

And it is an outsider – a centurion – who correctly identifies who he is: “*God’s Son.*”

He is not the king the people imagined:

He does not ride into town in a show of might.

He does not speak in a loud, commanding voice.

He does not associate with the ‘right’ people.

He does not fight for his throne. In fact, he gives it up. And it could even be said that he is willing to be crucified on it.

Even in the final scene – at the tomb – he is not what – or where – people expected. For the tomb is empty. And he has disappointed the people’s expectations when they fail to find him dead.

This looks like no king I know.

Precisely.

More than once, Pilate refers to him as the King of the Jews.

Pilate spoke more truth than he would ever know.

But no one recognized it.

No one recognized him.

No one recognized that in his death, he gave us life.

No one recognized that in his giving, he received us unto himself.

No one recognized that in his (supposed) weakness, he displayed the very power of God.

No one recognized that in the foolishness of his Passion, we might discern the ultimate wisdom of God...and the penultimate King of all.

He is nothing like the king we imagined.

But maybe he’s precisely the king we need.

One who walked the narrow way with a wide embrace of the world.

One who shows us the way to true freedom is through service to others.

One who demonstrates the way to life is to die to self.

These are the words he has spoken of a way, and of a life, for all.

I have heard those words before: about following, serving, loving, giving of self.

But now I hear them differently.

Now – with what I hear in his Passion, with what I see in that empty tomb – I hear these words differently.

I hear him differently.

For he lived his word.

And he died his word.

And he lives his word again.

This is his way.
This is his life.
This is his story that he invites you to become a part of,
-in all its grace and glory,
-in all its strain and struggle;
-in all its might and mercy,
-in all its power and peace;
-in all its caring and compassion, humility and hope, love and life.

“But after I am raised, I will go before you to Galilee,” he said.
To all the Galilees we might know or imagine or experience...and even some we can't
imagine, or don't expect.

There
-to follow in his way,
-to obey his word,
-to embrace the life he embodied: a life of power through weakness, wisdom through
foolishness, freedom through service, life through dying.

This is the King he came to be.
This is the King he is.
This is the King who bids us follow and obey for goodness, for grace, for life.
And if we truly know him as King – if we really acknowledge him as our Lord, our
Savior, our Messiah – then that's exactly what we'll do:
-Proclaim him Savior with our words.
-Affirm him Lord with our choices.
-Crown him King with our very lives.

***HYMN** “You, Lord, Are Both Lamb and Shepherd” GtG 274

**1. You, Lord, are both Lamb and Shepherd.
You, Lord, are both prince and slave.
You, peace-maker and sword-bringer
of the way you took and gave.
You, the everlasting instant;
you, whom we both scorn and crave.**

**2. Clothed in light upon the mountain,
stripped of might upon the cross,
shining in eternal glory,
beggared by a soldier's toss,
you, the everlasting instant;
you who are both gift and cost.**

(continued...)

**3. You, who walk each day beside us,
sit in power at God's side.
You, who preach a way that's narrow,
have a love that reaches wide.
You, the everlasting instant;
you, who are our pilgrim guide.**

**4. Worthy is our earthly Jesus!
Worthy is our cosmic Christ!
Worthy your defeat and victory;
worthy still your peace and strife.
You, the everlasting instant;
you, who are our death and life.**

Words: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1984
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Music: PICARDY, French melody, 17th cent.
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***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (from "*A Declaration of Faith*")

**Jesus is our living Lord.
Jesus was dead and buried,
but God raised him from the dead.
The risen Lord appeared to his followers.
They recognized him as their Master
who had been crucified.
Before Jesus left them,
he commissioned them to proclaim to all people
the good news of his victory over death,
and promised to be with them always.
We are certain that Jesus lives.
He lives as God with us,
touching all of human life with the presence of God.
He lives as one of us with God.
Because he shares our humanity
and has bound us to himself in love,
we have an advocate in the innermost life of God.
We declare that Jesus is Lord.
His resurrection is a decisive victory
over the powers that deform and destroy human life.**

(continued...)

**His lordship is hidden.
The world appears to be dominated by people and systems
that do not acknowledge his rule.
But his lordship is real.
It demands our loyalty and sets us free
from the fear of all lesser lords who threaten us.
We maintain that ultimate sovereignty
now belongs to Jesus Christ
in every sphere of life.
Jesus is Lord!
He has been Lord from the beginning.
He will be Lord at the end.
Even now he is Lord.**

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PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

One: King of kings, Lord of lords...
All: ...hear us in your might and mercy.

THE LORD’S PRAYER (Traditional)

**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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.**

OFFERING

Invitation

Reflection

**Unison Prayer of Dedication*

Out of the abundance of your love we offer gifts to you, O Lord. Take these gifts of our labor, our wealth, our time, and our lives and use them to express your everlasting kingdom of love in this world. Amen.

SENDING

***CLOSING HYMN “Crown Him with Many Crowns” GtG 268**

1. **Crown him with many crowns,
the Lamb upon his throne;
hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns
all music but its own!
Awake, my soul, and sing
of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless King
through all eternity.**
2. **Crown him the Lord of love;
behold his hands and side,
rich wounds, yet visible above,
in beauty glorified:
no angel in the sky
can fully bear that sight,
but downward bends his burning eye
at mysteries so bright.**
3. **Crown him the Lord of peace,
whose power a scepter sways
from pole to pole, that wars may cease,
absorbed in prayer and praise.
His reign shall know no end;
and round his pierced feet
fair flowers of paradise extend
their fragrance ever sweet.**
4. **Crown him the Lord of years,
the potentate of time;
creator of the rolling spheres,
ineffably sublime.
All hail, Redeemer, hail!
For thou hast died for me;
thy praise shall never, never fail
throughout eternity.**

(next page...)

Words: Matthew Bridges, 1851
Music: DIADEMATA, George Job Elvey, 1868
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***CHARGE AND BLESSING**

One: ...And let the gathered people of God say...
All: ...Amen.

POSTLUDE

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