

Eastminster Presbyterian Church

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

Christ the King Sunday

November 22, 2020

GATHERING AROUND GOD'S WORD

CALL TO WORSHIP

from Psalm 100

Let us come into God's presence with singing, let all the earth make a joyful noise and worship the Lord with gladness. We enter this place with thanksgiving because we know that the Lord to whom we belong is our Shepherd and our King. We rejoice over the steadfast love and faithfulness of God enduring forever - to all generations. Come, let us worship God with praise and joy, and with thanksgiving in our hearts.

OPENING PRAYER: God of strange reversals and healing mysteries, we thank you for giving us a Divine King who has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Enable us, when we are confronted by the vulnerability and suffering of others, to make those choices that will keep us in tune with your generous love, and thereby create small colonies of heaven where you are truly worshipped and glorified. For your name's sake. Amen!

VOLUNTARY

The Power and Glory
Melody Davis

Birchwood

OPENING HYMN 265 *Jesus Shall Reign*

CALL TO CONFESSION: As we have been called to worship, so too are we called to confess our sins. When we lose our way, God searches for us until we are found. When we sin, God forgives us and offers us a healed relationship. We can hold these promises close to our hearts as we confess.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: Forgive us, O God, if our eyes have been so fixed on priorities of our own making that we have failed to look for Jesus in the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and the imprisoned. Forgive us all the times we fail to touch people's lives with acts of loving and caring, justice and mercy. Remind us that we are empowered and enabled by your Spirit to witness to the values of your kingdom in and through all we do and say, especially to the least of our brothers and sisters. Hear our prayer. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS: Hear this promise of God's grace. God searches for the lost and finds us; God invites the hungry to the table, and feeds us; God sends Jesus, and frees us from death's prison. God forgives all who sin and heals us with mercy. Thanks be to God. Amen.

RESPONSE 582 *Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me*

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Gracious God, as we listen for your Word today, by the power of your Holy Spirit, be in our hearing and our doing so that we may rejoice in the ministries to which you call us, as individuals, as a community of faith, and as the body of Christ. Amen

OLD TESTAMENT READING (*Pew Bible*, page 803)Ezekiel 34:11-16

The prophet Ezekiel declares that God is the Good Shepherd, and that God is the one who judges between sheep. But all are sheep. All are cared for by God. God's way of justice is restoration, not punishment—though if you are used to having a lot, having it taken from you can seem like punishment. But it is restoration—giving what is due to those who have gone without.

¹¹For thus 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.

ANTHEM

Our Lord Reigns Stanley Pethel

Sanctuary Choir

NEW TESTAMENT READING (*Pew Bible*, page 29)Matthew 25: 31-46

This is the last farewell discourse of Jesus, spoken to those closest to him. The story of his death follows after. Scholars say that this was most likely written about 50 years after Jesus' resurrection. Many expected Jesus to return in their lifetime. What we hear are Jesus' words telling them how to bring about the kingdom of God on earth, how to live right now before he comes back.

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 grass withers. The flowers fade. But this, the Word of our Lord lasts forever.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN (*LUYH*) 46 *Majesty*

SERMON

Table-Talking

Sherry Holloman

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH from *Our World Belongs to God* (Calvin Institute of Worship)

As followers of Jesus Christ, living in this world—which some seek to control, but which others view with despair—we declare with joy and trust: Our world belongs to God! From the beginning, through all the crises of our times, until his kingdom fully comes, God keeps covenant forever. Our world belongs to him! God is King! Let the earth be glad! Christ is Victor; his rule has begun. Hallelujah! The Spirit is at work, renewing creation. Praise the Lord! We rejoice in the goodness of God, renounce the works of darkness, and dedicate ourselves to holy living. As covenant partners, called to faithful obedience, and set free for joyful praise, we offer our hearts and lives to do God's work in his world. With tempered impatience, eager to see injustice ended, we expect the Day of the Lord. And we are confident that the light which shines in the present darkness will fill the earth when Christ appears. Come, Lord Jesus! Our world belongs to you. Amen.

OFFERTORY SENTENCE: Bless the Lord, O my soul, bless all that is within me. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and may I never forget all of God's blessings. In thanksgiving for those blessings, we receive God's tithes and our offerings.

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

The Lord is My Shepherd
Women's Ensemble

Arr. Lloyd Pfautsch

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING: Everything in heaven and earth comes from you, Lord. We give you only what is yours. May you be praised forever and ever. Amen.

RESPONSE 602 *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*

THE SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

THE INVITATION: Come, all you who are loved by God, come to the table of the Lord. Come and eat food with no cost. Come and drink with no money to pay. Come to the One who has promised to rescue us, to restore us, and to give us new life. Come, eat, drink, and let your hearts be glad!

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 our thanks and praise.

Out of the clouds and thick darkness of chaos, you spoke the creative Word, God of wonder, and creation burst forth in joy. You shaped us in your image, calling us to be your people, living in your steadfast love. But your hopes for us were pushed aside by the seductions of sin and death. Because we were your priceless treasure, you continued to search for us, sending prophets in all the ages. When we continued to worship all the false powers, you sent Jesus to gather us up and lead us back to you. So, skeptics and scoffers, with the faithful and the followers, we join our voices together singing our praise to you:

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. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Holy are you, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Child, our Savior. Seeing us stripped naked by sin, he lived and died so that we might be clothed in joy and hope and salvation. Setting aside his power, he would turn oppression inside-out, and injustice upside down to create the kingdom where the least are the most valued. Searching for us, he left no stone unturned, even going through death and in order to find us and bring us back to you. As we remember his service to all, as we celebrate the promised resurrection, we sing of that mystery we call faith:

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

In this sanctuary of your heart, with sisters and brothers in the faith, we pray that you pour out your Spirit upon us and the gifts of the Table. It is here all our scattered lives are woven together in that tapestry called the kingdom, where we are strengthened by the bread of life and the cup of salvation.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH AND THE LORD'S PRAYER: Even as we prepare to share this meal together, we remember the needs and the hopes, the joys and the sorrows of our family and friends: EASTMINSTER

We have brought our prayers before you for our loved ones and for situation in the world in which pain and anger dominate, and we place our trust in your response and your healing love. As the Savior's birth once startled an ancient world, so startle us with the reality of your presence in our midst. In the name of our Lord, we offer our 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 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.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION, BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND POURING OF CUP

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of generosity, we thank you for this meal, and for welcoming us to your table. We remember that we are your children, and that you have called us to share your love with everyone we meet, to walk in your strength and to follow in your ways every moment of our lives. Thank you for your promise that we will have all we need, so that we may partner with you to release your goodness and faithfulness into the world. This is our prayer; may it be so. Amen.

GOING INTO THE WORLD WITH GOD'S WORD

DISMISSAL AND BLESSING: Go now and embrace the hope to which God has called us. Recognize Christ in friend and stranger, and as Christ has been gracious to us, so be gracious to those in need.

And may God give us a place of rest on rich pasture;
may Christ Jesus be the shepherd king who binds our wounds;
and may the Holy Spirit give us wisdom
..... and reveal to us the fullness of the one who fills all in all. Amen

CLOSING HYMN 363 *Rejoice, the Lord is King*