

DIVINE SERVICE - HOLY COMMUNION

LAST SUNDAY OF THE CHURCH YEAR

November 22nd, 2020

AS WE GATHER

Today is the Last Sunday of the Church Year. This Sunday is traditionally filled with themes of Christ's roles as King and Judge. But consider these words from Psalm 95: "We are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand." We are God's chosen sheep. He is our Shepherd. We follow Him as He goes to seek the lost, bring back the stray, and bind up the injured.

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING HYMN "The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns" # 348 v. 1-3

- 1 The King shall come when morning dawns
 And light triumphant breaks,
 When beauty gilds the eastern hills
 And life to joy awakes.

- 2 Not as of old a little child,
 To bear and fight and die,
 But crowned with glory like the sun
 That lights the morning sky.

- 3 Oh, brighter than the rising morn
 When Christ, victorious, rose
 And left the lonesome place of death
 Despite the rage of foes.

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INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCES *Psalm 95:1-3a, 6-7*

Pastor: Oh come, let us sing to the LORD;

People: **let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!**

Pastor: Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving!

People: **For the LORD is a great God.**

Pastor: Oh come, let us worship and bow down.

People: For He is our God,

Pastor: and we are the people of His pasture,

People: and the sheep of His hand.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Indeed, our heavenly Father has called us to be His people. He has led us to green pastures and still waters. Yet, there have been times when we have treated our fellow sheep with disdain, when we have wandered away from our Shepherd. But our Good Shepherd does not abandon us, and we confess our sins before Him and one another.

Silence for reflection

Pastor: Heavenly Father,

People: we confess that we have wandered away from You. We confess that we have acted shamefully toward our brothers and sisters in Christ. We have sinned in our thoughts, words, and actions. We have failed by our inactivity. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, O Lord, that we might follow You to the green pastures and still waters of everlasting life.

Pastor: Our heavenly Father has heard Your confession and sent His only Son, Jesus, to be our Good Shepherd. Jesus searches for each one of His sheep. He brings back those who have strayed. He binds up the injured. He even lays down His life for the sheep. By Christ's death and resurrection, God forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen. We are sought by our Shepherd. We are forgiven in Christ.

☩ WORD ☩

INTROIT *Psalm 39:4–5, 7–8, 12a; antiphon: 2 Peter 3:13*

Pastor: In keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth,

People: the home of righteousness.

Pastor: O LORD, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days;

People: let me know how fleeting I am!

Pastor: Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths,

People: and my lifetime is as nothing before you.

Pastor: And now, O Lord, for what do I wait?

People: My hope is in you.

Pastor: Deliver me from all my transgressions.

People: Do not make me the scorn of the fool!

Pastor: Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear to my cry; hold not your peace at my tears!

People: For I am a sojourner with you, a guest, like all my fathers.

**All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Pastor: In keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth,

People: the home of righteousness.

KYRIE

**People: Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.**

HYMN "We Praise You, O God"

#785 v. 1, 2

1 We praise You, O God, our Redeemer, Creator;
In grateful devotion our tribute we bring.
We lay it before You, we kneel and adore You;
We bless Your holy name, glad praises we sing.

2 We worship You, God of our fathers, we bless You;
Through trial and tempest our guide You have been.
When perils o'ertake us, You will not forsake us,
And with Your help, O Lord, our struggles we win.

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SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with You.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray. Eternal God, merciful Father, You have appointed Your Son as judge of the living and the dead. Enable us to wait for the day of His return with our eyes fixed on the kingdom prepared for Your own from the foundation of the world; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Ezekiel 34:11–16, 20–24* (God will search for His sheep.)

Lector: “For thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. And 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 ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord GOD. 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, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice.” . . . “Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: Behold, I, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you push with side and shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns, till you have scattered them abroad, I will rescue my flock; they shall no longer be a prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep. And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am the LORD; I have spoken.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

GRADUAL *Revelation 7:14b; Psalm 84:5*

All: **These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Blessed are those whose strength is in You, in whose heart are the highways to Zion.**

EPISTLE *1 Corinthians 15:20–28* (The last enemy to be destroyed is death.)

Lector: But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

For “God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “all things are put in subjection,” it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

ALLELUIA and VERSE *Revelation 22:13*

All: Alleluia. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Alleluia.

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 25:31–46* (The separation of the sheep and the goats)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-fifth chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY “Crown Him with Many Crowns”

#525 v. 1, 3, 5

- 1 Crown Him with many crowns,
The Lamb upon His throne;
Hark how the heav'nly 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.
- 3 Crown Him the Lord of love.
Behold His hands and side,
Rich wounds, yet visible above,
In beauty glorified.
No angels in the sky
Can fully bear that sight,
But downward bend their wond'ring eyes
At mysteries so bright.
- 5 Crown Him the Lord of heav'n,
Enthroned in worlds above,
Crown Him the king to whom is giv'n
The wondrous name of Love.
Crown Him with many crowns
As thrones before Him fall;
Crown Him, ye kings, with many crowns,
For He is king of all.\

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SERMON “On Which Side Will You Stand?” (Matthew 25:31-46)

CREED *Nicene Creed*

**People: I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.**

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,

**the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ☩ of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Dear heavenly Father, You promise to seek the lost. We pray for all those who have wandered away from Your Church. We pray that You would strengthen us to reach out to them, to receive them with open arms and open hearts when they return home. Hear our prayer, O Lord.

People: **Give ear to our cry.**

Pastor: Lord, You promise to strengthen the weak. Send Your strength and courage to all those who need it, to the aging, the lonely, the tired, and the vulnerable. Protect and defend them from the wolves of this world. Hear our prayer, O Lord.

People: **Give ear to our cry.**

Pastor: Lord, You promise to feed Your sheep with good pasture. Raise up faithful servants and shepherds to share the nourishment of Your Word and Sacraments with all Your sheep. Hear our prayer, O Lord.

People: Give ear to our cry.

Pastor: Lord, You promise to rescue Your flock from all enemies. Guard and keep us from the enemies of sin, death, and Satan. Lead us away from temptation and always closer to the arms of our Good Shepherd. Hear our prayer, O Lord.

People: Give ear to our cry.

(additional local petitions spoken here . . .)

Pastor: Lord, You promise to bind up the injured. Bring Your healing to all those who suffer now through injury, illness, and oppression, especially . . . Heal them according to Your good and gracious will. Hear our prayer, O Lord.

People: Give ear to our cry.

Pastor: Lord, by Your Word You have told us that the last enemy to be destroyed is death. As we await the return of Jesus and the resurrection of the dead, we still grieve and mourn when the enemy of death strikes our friends and family. Be near all those who are mourning the death of loved ones. Comfort them with the hope of the resurrection to eternal life. Hear our prayer, O Lord.

People: Give ear to our cry.

Pastor: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord.

People: Amen.

HYMN "We Praise You, O God"

#785 v. 3

3 With voices united our praises we offer
And gladly our songs of thanksgiving we raise.
With You, Lord, beside us, Your strong arm will guide us.
To You, our great Redeemer, forever be praise!

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✠ SACRAMENT ✠

PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

2 Timothy 4:22

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

[Colossians 3:1]

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

[Psalm 136]

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD *Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes. *1 Corinthians 11:26*

People: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. *Revelation 22:20*

Pastor: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

LORD’S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

People: **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.**

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.
People: **Amen.**

AGNUS DEI

People: **Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
 Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
 Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us
 peace.**

DISTRIBUTION and HYMNS

“O Jesus, King Most Wonderful” #554
“The Lamb” #547

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray. We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
People: **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.
 The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
 The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace. *Numbers 6:24–26*

People: Amen.

HYMN

“At the Name of Jesus”

#512 v. 1, 2, 7

- 1 At the name of Jesus
Ev'ry knee shall bow,
Ev'ry tongue confess Him
King of glory now.
'Tis the Father's pleasure
We should call Him Lord,
Who from the beginning
Was the mighty Word.

- 2 At His voice creation
Sprang at once to sight,
All the angel faces,
All the hosts of light,
Thrones and bright dominions,
Stars upon their way,
All the heav'nly orders
In their great array.

- 7 Glory then to Jesus,
Who, the Prince of light,
To a world in darkness
Brought the gift of sight;
Praise to God the Father;
In the Spirit's love
Praise we all together
Him who reigns above.

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