

Sunday, November 21, 2021

Christ the King / Lectionary 34, Year B

Introduction

Even after Israel had experienced the vagaries of kings, the people still longed for a true king to set things right. He would have the king's title of Anointed One (Messiah); he would be the "one like a human being" (Son of Man) given dominion in Daniel's vision. Jesus is given these titles, even though he is nothing like an earthly king. His authority comes from the truth to which he bears witness, and those who recognize the truth voluntarily listen to him. We look forward to the day he is given dominion, knowing his victory will be the nonviolent victory of love.

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

In the name of the Father,
and of the ✙ Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Have mercy on us, O God.

**We confess that we have sinned against you
and against our neighbor.**

**We have built walls instead of tables
and have turned away the stranger.**

**We have sought glory for ourselves
and have treasured that which does not satisfy.**

**Help us to love as you love,
to welcome those you send,
and to treasure mercy and justice.**

**Turn us from our ways to your ways,
and free us to serve those in need. Amen.**

God, who makes all things new,
forgives your sins for ✙ Jesus' sake
and remembers them no more.

Lift up your heads and your hearts.

Yours is the kingdom of God.

Amen.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty and ever-living God, you anointed your beloved Son to be priest and sovereign forever. Grant that all the people of the earth, now divided by the power of sin, may be united by

the glorious and gentle rule of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. Blessed is the one who comes in the name^l of the Lord.* Blessed is the coming kingdom of our an-^lcestor David. *Alleluia.* (Mark 11:9)

Readings and Psalm

Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

The one coming with the clouds rules over all

Psalm 93

Ever since the world began, your throne has been established. (Ps. 93:2)

Revelation 1:4b-8

Glory to the one who made us a kingdom

John 18:33-37

The kingdom of Christ

Semicontinuous First Reading and Psalm

2 Samuel 23:1-7

The just ruler is like the light of morning

Psalm 132:1-12 [13-18]

Let your faithful people sing with joy. (Ps. 132:9)

First Reading: Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

To the community for whom this passage was written, it seemed as though the oppression they were experiencing would never end. Daniel's message is: It shall end. The Ancient One, who is judge, will call all nations to account and will give dominion to "one like a human being," the Messiah.

⁹As I watched,
thrones were set in place,
and an Ancient One took his throne,
his clothing was white as snow,
and the hair of his head like pure wool;
his throne was fiery flames,
and its wheels were burning fire.

¹⁰A stream of fire issued
and flowed out from his presence.
A thousand thousands served him,
and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him.
The court sat in judgment,

and the books were opened.
¹³As I watched in the night visions,
I saw one like a human being
coming with the clouds of heaven.
And he came to the Ancient One
and was presented before him.
¹⁴To him was given dominion
and glory and kingship,
that all peoples, nations, and languages
should serve him.
His dominion is an everlasting dominion
that shall not pass away,
and his kingship is one
that shall never be destroyed.

Psalm: Psalm 93

Ever since the world began, your throne has been established. (Ps. 93:2)

¹The LORD is king, robed in majesty; the LORD is robed in majesty and ¹armed with strength.
The LORD has made the world so sure that it can- ¹not be moved.
²**Ever since the world began, your throne has ¹been established;
you are from ¹everlasting. R**
³The waters have lifted up, O LORD, the waters have lifted ¹up their voice;
the waters have lifted up their ¹pounding waves.
⁴**Mightier than the sound of many waters, mightier than the breakers ¹of the sea,
mightier is the LORD who ¹dwells on high.**
⁵Your testimonies are ¹very sure,
and holiness befits your house, O LORD, forever and for- ¹evermore. **R**

Second Reading: Revelation 1:4b-8

The book of Revelation begins by celebrating the Almighty God, who spans all of time. Similarly, Jesus is celebrated as the firstborn from the dead who rules over the world's rulers. He is the one whose return we eagerly await.

^{4b}Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

⁷Look! He is coming with the clouds;
every eye will see him,
even those who pierced him;
and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail.
So it is to be. Amen.

⁸“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

Gospel: John 18:33-37

In John’s gospel, the story of Jesus and Pilate presents two different ways of exercising power: through force or with love.

³³Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” ³⁴Jesus answered, “Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?”

³⁵Pilate replied, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?” ³⁶Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.” ³⁷Pilate asked him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.”

Semicontinuous First Reading: 2 Samuel 23:1-7

This song attributed to David speaks of a promise: God will establish David’s house (dynasty) forever. Indeed, David’s dynasty endured more than four hundred years until the exile in 587 BCE. When there was no longer a Davidic king on the throne, this promise was understood to refer to the Messiah.

¹Now these are the last words of David:

The oracle of David, son of Jesse,
the oracle of the man whom God exalted,
the anointed of the God of Jacob,
the favorite of the Strong One of Israel:

²The spirit of the LORD speaks through me,
his word is upon my tongue.

³The God of Israel has spoken,
the Rock of Israel has said to me:

One who rules over people justly,
ruling in the fear of God,

⁴is like the light of morning,
like the sun rising on a cloudless morning,
gleaming from the rain on the grassy land.

⁵Is not my house like this with God?

For he has made with me an everlasting covenant,
ordered in all things and secure.

Will he not cause to prosper
all my help and my desire?

⁶But the godless are all like thorns that are thrown away;
for they cannot be picked up with the hand;

⁷to touch them one uses an iron bar
or the shaft of a spear.
And they are entirely consumed in fire on the spot.

Semicontinuous Psalm: Psalm 132:1-12 [13-18]

Let your faithful people sing with joy. (Ps. 132:9)

¹LORD, re- | member David,
and all the hardships | he endured;
²**how he swore an oath | to the LORD**
and vowed a vow to the Mighty | One of Jacob:

³**I will not come under the roof | of my house,**
nor climb up in- | to my bed;

⁴**I will not allow my | eyes to sleep,**
nor let my | eyelids slumber;

⁵until I find a place | for the LORD,
a dwelling for the Mighty | One of Jacob.”

⁶**“The ark! We heard it | was in Ephrathah;**
we found it in the | fields of Ja’ar.

⁷Let us go to God’s | dwelling-place;
let us fall upon our knees be- | fore God’s footstool.”

⁸**Arise, O LORD, into your | resting-place,**
you and the ark | of your strength.

⁹Let your priests be | clothed with righteousness;
let your faithful people | sing with joy.

¹⁰**For your servant | David’s sake,**
do not turn away the face of | your anointed. R

¹¹The LORD has sworn an oath to David, and in truth, | will not break it:
“A son, the fruit of your body, will I set up- | on your throne.

¹²**If your children keep my covenant and my testimonies that | I shall teach them,**
their children will sit upon your throne for- | evermore.” R

[¹³For the LORD has | chosen Zion,
desiring Jerusalem for a | habitation:

¹⁴**“This shall be my resting- | place forever;**
here will I dwell, for I de- | light in Zion.

¹⁵I will surely bless the cit- | y’s provisions,
and satisfy the | poor with bread.

¹⁶**I will clothe the priests | with salvation,**
and the faithful in Zion will re- | joice and sing.

¹⁷There will I make the horn of | David flourish;
I have prepared a lamp for | my anointed.

¹⁸**As for his enemies, I will clothe | them with shame;**
but as for him, his | crown will shine.” R

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Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Eternal God, you hold firm amid the changes of this world. Hear us now as we pray for the church, the world, and everyone in need.

A brief silence.

God, you sent your Son Jesus to testify to the truth. We pray for preachers, missionaries, evangelists, and teachers who carry your forgiveness and love to the world. Fill their words and actions with compassion and kindness so that your truth will shine. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God, you sent your Son Jesus to liberate all of creation. We pray for all living things longing for the freedom to flourish, from ancient trees and wild grasses to endangered animals and rare insects. Give human beings compassionate hearts to care for them. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God, you sent your Son Jesus to lead us into the way of peace. Direct the members of international alliances in choosing a nonviolent path toward the future. Give them the humility and wisdom to make just decisions to benefit all. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God, you sent your Son Jesus to make us into your own people, set free to serve you. We pray for people who serve the well-being of others, especially ministries in our community (*local social ministries or agencies may be named*). Renew them in their work. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God, you sent your Son Jesus to rule in all times and places. We pray for the friends of our congregation who are unable to join our worship in person and for all who are sick and suffering (*especially*). Join their prayers with ours and unite them with us in the body of Christ. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God, you sent your Son Jesus to be our beginning and our ending. We give thanks for those whose lives have given us a glimpse of Jesus' reign of justice and peace. Empower us to join their witness. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God our hope and strength, we entrust to you all for whom we pray. Remain with us always, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

Offering Prayer

Holy God,
the earth is yours and everything in it,
yet you have chosen to dwell among your creatures.
Come among us now in these gifts of bread and wine,
and strengthen us to be your body for the world
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Invitation to Communion

A feast of love is offered here
for you and for all the saints.

Prayer after Communion

Blessed Jesus,
at this table, you have been for us both host and meal.
Now send us forth to extend our tables
and to share your gifts
until that day when all feast together
at your heavenly banquet.
Amen.

Blessing

God, the beginning and the end,
who has written your name in the book of life,
✠ bless and keep you in grace and peace
from this time forth and forevermore.
Amen.

Dismissal

Led on by the saints before us,
go in peace to serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Upcoming Commemorations

Clement, Bishop of Rome, died around 100

Tuesday, November 23, 2021

Clement was the third bishop of Rome. He is best remembered for a letter he wrote to the congregation in Corinth, still struggling with the same problems that led to Paul's letters to them. As did Paul, he focused on the need for love among Christians.

Miguel Agustín Pro, martyr, died 1927

Tuesday, November 23, 2021

Pro grew up in a time when the Mexican revolutionaries accused the church of siding with the wealthy. He became a Jesuit priest, and worked on behalf of the poor and homeless. Falsely accused of throwing a bomb at a government official, he was executed, but not before crying out "Long live Christ the King!"

Justus Falckner, died 1723; Jehu Jones, died 1852; William Passavant, died 1894; pastors in North America

Wednesday, November 24, 2021

Not only was Falckner the first Lutheran ordained in North America, but he published a catechism which was the first Lutheran book published on the continent. Jones was the Lutheran church's first African American pastor and carried out missionary work in Philadelphia which led to the formation there of the first African American Lutheran congregation (St. Paul's). William Passavant helped to establish hospitals and orphanages in a number of cities and was the first to introduce deaconesses to the work of hospitals in the United States.

Isaac Watts, hymnwriter, died 1748

Thursday, November 25, 2021

Thought by many to be the greatest hymnwriter in the English language, Watts as a youth was critical of the quality of the metrical psalter of the time. He wrote about 600 hymns—many based on the psalms, but others that are not.

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