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Saint James Lutheran Church



A Parish of the North Carolina Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



"Growing in Christ Through Worship, Learning, Fellowship, and Service"

CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY NOVEMBER 22, 2020



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.

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Faithful God,

have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of ✚ Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world.

Amen.

GREETING

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

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

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.

A reading from Ezekiel, the thirty-fourth chapter.

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. 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 prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM: *Psalms 95:1-7a*

We are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's hand. (*Ps. 95:7*)

A reading from Psalm ninety-five.

- ¹Come, let us sing to the LORD;
let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.
- ²Let us come before God's presence with thanksgiving
and raise a loud shout to the LORD with psalms.
- ³For you, LORD, are a great God,
and a great ruler above all gods.
- ⁴In your hand are the caverns of the earth;
the heights of the hills are also yours.
- ⁵The sea is yours, for you made it,
and your hands have molded the dry land.
- ⁶Come, let us worship and bow down,
let us kneel before the LORD our maker.
- ^{7a}For the LORD is our God,
and we are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's hand.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

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.

A reading from Ephesians, the first chapter.

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

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 25:31-46*

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.

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the twenty-fifth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to the disciples: 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 Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN

Now Thank We All Our God

Glenda Poole, Organist / Betsy Ballard / Patsy Black, vocalists

1 Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices,
2 Oh, may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
3 All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given,

who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices;
with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,
the Son, and Spirit blest, who reign in highest heaven,

who, from our mothers' arms, has blest us on our way
and keep us all in grace, and guide us when perplexed,
the one eternal God, whom earth and heav'n adore;

with countless gifts of love, and still is ours to-day.
and free us from all harm in this world and the next.
for thus it was, is now, and shall be ever more.

NICENE CREED

God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we profess our faith.

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God's power on the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Sovereign of all, train our ears to hear your cry in the needs of those around us. Bless all social ministries of the church through which we seek to serve others as we ourselves have been served. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You cause rain to fall on the just and unjust alike. Direct our use of creation to provide for the needs of all people in ways that are sustainable for the earth. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Bring peace to every place where conflict rages. Grant opportunities for ending divisions among us and usher in your reign of unity and reconciliation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Heal the sinful divisions we erect between us and release us from systems of oppression and prejudice. Restore our capacity to see your image in those whose dignity we have stripped away. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Pour out the gifts of your Spirit on children and youth throughout the church. Sustain those who work in children's ministry, youth ministry, and campus ministry as they nurture the gifts of young people. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Thank you for saints now departed who fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and tended to the sick. Inspire us by their example, that we may see your presence in those in need around us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, until that day when you gather all creation around your throne where you will reign forever and ever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,

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.

BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Crown Him With Many Crowns

DIADEMATA

The Liturgy Has Ended; The Service Begins!

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please e-mail all information to the church office at keith@sjnc.net

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PRAYER LIST

All health care professionals and first responders including:

- Deb Bradshaw**
- Lauri Fowler**
- DeeDee Gilbert**
- Annette Propst**
- Meagan Lambert**
- Alison Monk**
- Jason and Stephanie Matthews**
- Dr Bradley Propst**, son of
Kenny and Annette Propst
- Sam Hurley**, son of *Elizabeth Hurley*
- Julie Greathouse**, friend of
Lois Marlow
- Betsy Waselovich**, sister of
Golda Jay
- Lauren**, daughter of *Angie Buchanan*
- Dr. Stephanie Garrison**, daughter-in-law of Margaret Garrison
- Dr. Kevin Burns**, son-in-law of Margaret Garrison.

If you have someone you would like to add to the prayer list, please contact Keith. 704-786-0166 and leave a message or email at keith@sjnc.net

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK

- 26-Nov.** Lauri Fowler
- 28-Nov.** Lee Caffrey
- 28-Nov.** Kyleigh Hughes

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

Lector/Intercessor:

Ann Gillon

Vocalist:

Betsy Ballard / Patsy Black

OUR STEWARDSHIP

Contributions and Receipts for November 15, 2020

\$7,224.37.00

(\$8,414.00 needed for weekly)

CUDDLE UP COAT DRIVE

The Cabarrus Partnership for Children kicked off its 14th annual Cuddle Up Coat Drive on October 1st. This winter, more than ever, we need your help to ensure all of our community's children are warm. In an effort to keep our families, children, and staff safe, we will not be accepting coats, socks, underwear, mittens or hats this year. Instead we are asking for checks (written to St. James Lutheran Church, note Coat Drive in the memo line), so that the Partnership staff can purchase the coats and winter items that local children need.

SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGING

St. James will be ringing the bell for Salvation Army on Friday, December 4 and December 11. The location is Sam's Club at the Northlite Shopping Center at Exit #60. You can signup online at: <https://forms.gle/hjE1Ep4TTNHRUhp8A> or call the church office. 704-786-0166

Join Saint James Lutheran Church Facebook and Instagram groups—send Jeremy Jay any pictures and/or articles you would like to have posted at jeremy@pbnjay.com

St. James YouTube Channel
Search for St. James Lutheran Church Concord NC and subscribe.

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The Rev. Dr. Timothy M. Smith.....Bishop

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OFFICE HOURS

M-Th 8:30-4:00, F 8:30-1:00
Closed for lunch 12:30 - 1:00