**Worship Plan for Sunday, November 26, 2023** **\* W-ELCA Thankoffering Service**

**Introduction to the day**

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.

**GOSPEL MESSAGE: The Coming Kingdom**

Jesus’ vision of glory is really a humble one. His kingly activity is not concerned with parading around royally, or associating with the powerful or wealthy, or affiliating himself with military might and authority. The pronouncements made from his throne are not ones issued for the sake of protecting his own power. Instead, he is concerned with one question in particular: How do the vulnerable fare?

As we celebrate Christ the King at the end of another church year, we are challenged to see an expression of political power that is far different from that which makes our governments tick. Jesus welcomes his followers into an alternative way of life, one that puts love of neighbor at the center of our daily actions.

To get a sense of how the vulnerable have fared on our watch, we could look at our national and local budgets, government policies, advocacy efforts, social interactions, even our charitable contributions. At the heart of Jesus’ teaching is an invitation to see one’s neighbor with renewed vision. There is an expectation when honoring Jesus’ sovereignty that our attention turn outward, away from ourselves. Similarly, the celebration of the Lord’s supper redirects our attention toward Christ and our neighbor.

When we receive the meal, we are not coming forward for a private snack. Instead, we come as people who are shaped by this gift of God. In this gift Christ himself reminds us of the common need we have, and as we partake in the meal, we are invited to see it as a central expression of Christ’s reign. In so doing, our idea of neighbor expands and we rehearse an economy that God desires, one in which vulnerable people matter. We share this meal with God’s family throughout history and around the world. And this is how the kingdom comes.

**Gathering:** The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

**Greeting**

Welcome to worship today, we are glad to have you with our Faith Lutheran Church community. I'm Pr. John Barton and I will be leading our service today. This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!

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.**

**ASSISTING MINISTER: ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Monday, the 27th: Council meeting at 1:00 in person and on Zoom

Tuesday, the 28th: Remembering & Honoring meets at 2:00 in person

Thursday, the 30th: the Movie "Martin Luther: A Return to Grace" will be shown in the Fellowship Hall beginning at 10:00 am; Bible Study will begin at 2:00 in person and on Zoom

Friday, the 1st: Al-Anon meets at 10:30 in the Fellowship Hall

On Saturday, the 2nd the Altar Guild will be decorating the sanctuary for Christmas. All helpers are encouraged to come on out...donuts and coffee will be served!

For the month of November, we are collecting canned chili, grocery bags, and empty egg cartons for the Community Cupboard. Please place donations in the wire basket in the foyer.

Our Faith Lutheran Church family will be donating gift cards to seniors in need in our community. Your donations will be going to The Menifee Valley Community Cupboard. Please stop by The Christmas Giving Tree in the Narthex for full instructions!

An earring was found in the sanctuary. It is a round amethyst stone in a gold setting. If this is yours, please see Lynn.

For more information and a complete monthly calendar, contact the church office. You can also go to the narthex and sign up to have the Forecaster and weekly announcements sent to you via email or via phone call. Thank you!

**Silence:** Let us take a moment of silence to quiet our hearts and minds and prepare for worship.

**And now please turn to hymn 815**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Gathering Song:*I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light* (ELW 815, vs. 1 & 3)**

**Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

**Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

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

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.**

**Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

**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.**

**Children's Chat**

**Word**

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

**First Reading:** Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

11Thus 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.**

**PsalmODY:** Psalm 95:1-7a

1Come, let us sing to the Lord; let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.

2**Let 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.

4**In 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.

6**Come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our maker.**

7aFor the Lord is our God, and we are the people of God’s pasture and the sheep of God’s hand.

**Amen.**

**Second Reading:** Ephesians 1:15-23

15I 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.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation (ELW p. 151)**

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.**

**Gospel:** Matthew 25:31-46

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**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**

**And now please turn to hymn 780**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Hymn of the Day:*Shepherd Me, O God* (ELW 780)**

**ASSISTING MINISTER: Apostle's Creed**

We continue as we confess our faith using the words of the Apostle's Creed.

**Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**Pastor and Assisting Minister: Prayers of Intercession**

Let us turn our hearts to God, our breath and life, as we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

Holy God, from Christ we receive our call to feed, clothe, and welcome. Direct your church to respond to this call with faithfulness and generous love. We pray for the work of ELCA World Hunger and partnerships with global feeding ministries. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

In Christ, the rock of our salvation, we are brought into union with all of creation. With mountains, seas, dry lands, and animals of the field, we seek your guidance and protection. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

In Christ we know merciful judgment. Guide rulers of every nation in ways of humble leadership and wise decision-making. Allow aid to come to all who are underserved and care to any who are neglected. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

In Christ we feel the depth of your love and care toward us. Nourish all who hunger, connect any who are isolated, and surround all who experience rejection or abuse. We pray for those who suffer, especially Jamie, JoLynne Buehring; Arnette Calkins; Ellie Clark; Vicki Crow; Arlene Dressler; Carole Erickson; Danny Johnson; Don Little; Alonna Lopez; Patsy Loughboro; Donna McCain; Jean Miles; Sandra Miller; Thordis Moe; Carol Morris; Michael Myers; Sheila Neal; Marilyn Rieti; Ashleigh Schmits; Dee Seel; Amy Sinclair; the Stone family; Joyce Stromberg; Kay Thomas and family; David Vendetti, Diana Ward; Michael Weller; the homebound; the emergency responders; and those grieving and anticipating surgery/tests. At this time, we also pray for those we name aloud or silently in our hearts. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

In Christ we are made the people of his pasture. Inspire the outreach and social ministries of this congregation. We pray for all people who serve and attend to the needs of others. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Holy God, in Christ we are welcomed home. We praise you for the faithful witness of those who have served you and extended your welcome and love to us. Unite us with them as one body of Christ. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We offer our spoken prayers and those held in our hearts trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Peace**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**Offering**

At this time, we remember that the giving of our offering is an authentic part of worship. Whether you give of your time, talents, or treasures, a combination of them, or are discerning how you can give to God's beloved community, thank you so much for all the ways you give and help to make the ministries of this church possible!

**Assisting Minister: Offering Prayer**

Let us pray.

Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

***Please feel free to either listen to our musical offering or sing along***

**Musical Offering: *You Say* (Lauren Daigle)**

**Great Thanksgiving**

**Dialogue (ELW p. 152)**

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.**

**Preface (ELW p. 153)**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God. You reveal your glory as the glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: equal in majesty, undivided in splendor, one Lord, one God, ever to be adored in your eternal glory. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, Holy, Holy (ELW p. 153)**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of pow’r and might: Heav’n 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.**

**Thanksgiving at the Table**

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

 Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

**Amen.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

**INSTRUCTION FOR COMMUNION**

As you are comfortable, you are invited to come forward to receive communion. All of God’s children are welcome to Christ’s table.

Gather at the altar rail to receive the communion elements or if you wish to receive a blessing, please cross your arms over your chest. You may commune yourself once you’ve received the communion elements. Please commune the bread first, turn over the vessel and then carefully open the grape juice. A gluten- free option is available upon request. Please deposit empty cups in the provided baskets on your way back to your seat.

If you would like communion brought to you at your seat, indicate by raising your hand for the Assisting Minister to see and they will bring communion to you.

**Invitation to Communion**

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

**During Distribution:*Here Is Bread* (ELW 483)**

**During Distribution:*Eat This Bread: Jesus Christ, Bread of Life* (ELW 472)**

**Communion**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

**Prayer after Communion**

Let us pray.

God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

**Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

**And now please turn to hymn 389**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Sending Song:*Christ Is Alive! Let Christians Sing* (ELW 389)**

**ASSISTING MINISTER: Dismissal**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Invitation**

The Church Council Members and I would like to invite guests and visitors to come and meet us in the narthex as you exit so that we can meet and welcome you.

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