

November 22, 2020 - Christ The King Sunday

Prelude:

Welcome: A warm welcome to all who are worshipping with us today.

We sing our **Gathering Song:** ELW 854 *“Blessing and Honour”*

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: O God of power and might, your Son shows us the path of life, and in him we inherit the riches of your grace. Give us the wisdom to know what is right and the strength to do it, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour 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

A reading from Ezekiel.

Thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As 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.

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 watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. I 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.

I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says 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, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

Therefore, says the Lord God to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

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, the Lord, have spoken.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 72: *“Every Nation on Earth Will Adore You”*

Second Reading: Ephesians 1: 15 - 23

A reading from Ephesians.

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that 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, so 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, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.

God 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, far 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. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David. **Alleluia.**

Gospel: Matthew 25: 31 - 46

The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus said to the disciples: “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. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left.

“Then the kings 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; for 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, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’

Then 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? And when was it that we saw you a stranger

and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And 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.'

"Then 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; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I 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.'

Then 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?' Then 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.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Homily: In our reading from Ezekiel this morning, we hear that our Lord is a Shepherd King. While it may sound odd to our ears, it was not odd for the Hebrews to speak of their great kings as good shepherds who care for their flock. That image was often used in the Hebrew scriptures to speak of the ideal king. Since good shepherd kings seemed to be in short supply on earth, our Heavenly Father chose to send his son, who will reign among us, gathering his scattered flock and holding them in grace and mercy.

Our Lord is unlike any other King the world has known. He does not want you to come to his throne with tributes; he wants you to come and tell him how you, in his name, have cared for the poor,

the hungry, the lonely and the ones pushed aside by the world or even by the other sheep, because even his flock has a few bullies.

This Shepherd King is glad to have you in his company, for you have truly embraced his holy work and you have become the sheep of his pasture, the flock in his care. He knows you; you recognize his voice and you follow him.

What Jesus wants us to know is that everything we do to care for others is done for him – for he is with all who are the children of God – and anything we do for any of God’s children brings joy to God’s heart. Matthew’s Gospel reminds us all we do as Christians really matters...it is how Christ is seen in the world, and how Christ our Lord is seen in us.

Our Lord did not say this so we would feel guilty about what we did not manage to do or to be worried about whether we have done enough. This is Matthew’s Gospel building on the idea that where your treasure is, there your heart shall be. Our greatest treasure is to be the loving, caring, forgiving, compassionate people that God called us to be in Baptism.

Nothing brings me more happiness than when I see people going about their holy work as Christians with joy and not out of a sense of obligation and duty. Too often in the Church we find ourselves motivated by guilt to do Christ’s work. Sometimes the Church has even used guilt to motivate people, but the result is usually not spiritual bliss and peace, but resentment and even some hostility. You know what they say: “Give the gift of guilt, the gift that keeps on giving.” Perhaps, instead of giving people guilt and shame for what they are not doing, we can give them opportunities they can embrace as the children of God and the friends of Christ our Lord.

Keep in mind, also, that for some people, just getting out of bed in the morning takes all the resolve they have, so they may not have much left to offer or give. A parishioner once shared with me their perception that we never really know what is going on in people's lives so we should always be very slow to judge or dismiss someone.

We rarely have all the information we need to make judgements about other people's motivations anyway, which is something I was reminded of last week, thanks to another parishioner, who wisely questioned one of my perceptions and the sources of my information and caused me re-evaluate my opinion. Like everyone else, I need to be reminded, from time to time, that we all live by the grace of God. Actually, I probably need to be reminded of that on a regular basis.

Notice that the Shepherd King made no comment about how successful his sheep were in doing the work of the Kingdom, only that it was what they were doing as those who share Christ's life. All who see our Lord in the face of all they meet and see everyone, despite who they meet, as a child of God, are well on the way to doing the holy work of the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth.

That's not easy! We live in a culture that writes people off quite easily... and provides many opportunities and reasons to avoid people who need our care and understanding. Some of our culture's ways of thinking take us far from the Kingdom of God. When we swim against the current of the way things are and care for others just as we care and love our Lord, then we will find ourselves members of another Kingdom – the Kingdom of Heaven. Then we will find our prayers come true: Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as in Heaven.

Amen

Hymn: ELW 434 *“Jesus Shall Reign”*

Prayers of the Faithful: Gracious God, your Son, our Lord reigns among us and your Kingdom comes as we do his holy work in this world with joy in our hearts. Bless all we do in the name of Christ. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the work of Canadian Lutheran World Relief, and especially those who devote their lives to the care of refugees and people living in poverty, times of hunger and fear. Bless all projects that support its holy work. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for your blessing upon the new Church year which begins next Sunday. May the Gospel of Saint Mark speak to our hearts in all its uniqueness and may we find strength and hope as it is proclaimed in our midst. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for Florence Felske, Richard Hubert, Angela Lubitz, Dorian Verch, and all who seek your healing touch and the gift of your peace. Hold them in your mercy, and journey with them in their illness, bringing them healing and peace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are anxious in these troubled times. Help us be gentle and understanding to all who are struggling. Make us slow to judge others, and quick to choose the ways of compassion and grace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are ill with Covid-19 and for all who care for them, and all who are working on vaccines. Bless this Holy Work. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All these things, and whatever else you see that we need, grant us, gracious God. **Amen.**

Gathering all our prayers into one, we pray the prayer that you have 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.**

Blessing: May our Gracious God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us in the Risen Life of Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Sending Song: ELW 855 *“Crown Him With Many Crowns”*

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude:

News and Announcements:

Please Pray for Those Who are Ill, in Hospital, or Requested Special Prayers: Florence Felske, Richard Hubert, Angela Lubitz, Dorian Verch.

A DONATION has been made by the Schutt Family to the Video Equipment Upgrade Fund in loving memory of Wendy's parents, Robert Slater, who passed away on February 12, 2018, and Norma Slater, who passed away on November 10, 2020. *“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.” James 1:12*

GLUTEN FREE COMMUNION BREAD

If you wish to receive a gluten-free host (bread) as we commune today, please let pastor Stephen know prior to this morning's celebration or ask one of our guides to share that information with him.

JAM JAR FUNDRAISER

It is that time of year that your Social Ministry Committee is launching the Jam Jar Fundraiser. This year we have chosen **Gifts from the Heart** Program from CLWR (Canadian Lutheran World Relief). This is an exceptional program that assists families which in turn leads to self-sufficiency. It also helps their local economy.

Depending on the monies raised will determine how we will help. For example, last year \$75.00 would purchase a pair of goats for a family. These goats would provide milk to help feed their families. The goats would also breed in time to promote long term growth. A pair of oxen and plough was \$500.00. With a pair of oxen more soil can be tilled more quickly allowing time for other activities such as attending school. Some gifts are matched 3x (the oxen and plough) or 4x (Emergency food) thanks to Canadian Foodgrains and the Canadian Government. Our money has the potential to go far.

You may pick up a jar at the registration table to fill with change or other. Cheques are always welcome. If you wish to have a tax receipt, we will need your name and address or envelope number if there is cash only in the jar. This campaign will run until the first week of Advent - November 29, 2020. Thank you for your generous support.

Your Social Ministry Committee

RAFFLE IN SUPPORT OF CAMP LUTHERLYN

Camp Lutherlyn is hosting a raffle with 13 various prizes to be given away. Tickets are \$10.00 each or 3 for \$20.00, and can be purchased from the church office, on line or from various members of the board. For more information, please check out their website (www.lutherlyncamp.ca) or their Facebook page. Draw date is December 12, 2020.

KIWANIS CLUB CHRISTMAS TOY & FOOD DRIVE

The Kiwanis Club of Pembroke is again holding a Christmas Toys and Food Drive in support of the purchase of Toys for less fortunate families in our community. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, this year it will be a virtual fundraising effort.

In an attempt to limit the risk of contacting Covid-19, there will be no volunteers stationed at local stores. For the same reason, no actual toys or food will be collected. Funds raised will be used to purchase toys, which volunteers will place in safe bags for pick up by families who have registered for help.

Surplus funds received will be distributed to St. Joseph's Food Bank (50%), St Vincent de Paul Soup Kitchen (25%) and The

Grind (25%). Several other service groups and organizations are working together with Kiwanis to help with this project.

Donations can be made in three ways:

1. mailed to Pembroke Kiwanis , 961 Pembroke St, Pembroke ON K8A 8R4. Make cheques payable to Kiwanis Toy and Food Drive, or
2. eTransfer to ToyDrive@PembrokeKiwanis.org(use password Toys), or
3. Dropped off at Studio Dreamshare, 18 Pembroke St. W.

Receipts will be issued for donations of \$20 or more.

Thank you for your support in this important Christmas project.

Today's Scheduled Worship Leaders

Counters: Diane Hammel, Pam Duplessis, Wilmer Verch

Greeter: Cheryl Sack

Guides: The Groskleg Family

Projector Operator: Rick Gerundin

Sexton: Don Boldt

Worship Assistant: Debbie Wegner

This Week at Zion – November 23 - 29

Tuesday	9:30 a.m.	Tai Chi (Intermediates)
	7 p.m.	Worship & Music Cte. Mtg.
	7 p.m.	Narcotics Anonymous
Wed	7 p.m.	Property Committee Mtg.
		BULLETIN DEADLINE

Sun

10 a.m.

11:30 a.m.

Holy Communion

Confirmation class

Jam Jars Returned