November 22, 2026 + 10:30 A.M.
Christ the King Sunday/Commitment Sunday

We Join in Worship

Liturgist: Hunter Balczo

If you need extra space for a wheelchair or walker, or if you have young children with you, please feel free to make use of our Prayground, the extra space across the aisle from the sound booth.

PRELUDE Give Thanks — Henry Smith

WELCOME

CHORAL INTROIT

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

*** CALL TO WORSHIP** (Adapted from *Psalm* 95)

Leader: O come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

ALL: **Let us come into the LORD's presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to the LORD with songs of praise!**

Leader: For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In God's hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains belong to God also.

ALL: **Let us come into the LORD's presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to the LORD with songs of praise!**

Leader: The sea is our God's, for God made it, and the dry land, which God's hands have formed.

ALL: **Let us come into the LORD's presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to the LORD with songs of praise!**

Leader: O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! For the LORD is our God, and we are the people of the LORD's pasture, and the sheep of the LORD's hand.

ALL: **Let us come into the LORD's presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to the LORD with songs of praise! Let us worship God!**

***OPENING HYMN:** "Come, Christians, Join to Sing" (150)

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Leader: The author of *Ephesians* prays that we may receive a spirit of wisdom and revelation as we get to know God. Together let us confess how we are lacking in wisdom with our ingratitude.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Sovereign God, we lift our prayer of confession knowing that we serve a just and merciful King. We confess that all too often we are ungrateful for the reign of your Son. We express our ingratitude by giving our loyalty to the powers and principalities of this world. This loyalty manifests in how we spend our time, money, and energy. This loyalty manifests in how we determine citizenship and belonging. This loyalty manifests in whom we look to for our salvation. Forgive us for denying your royalty with our disloyalty. Forgive us for our ingratitude. In the name of Jesus Christ the King we pray. Amen.

KYRIE: Glory to God, No. 579 (unison)

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Friends, hear the good news! Christ is seated at God's right hand in the heavenly places, far above all ruler and authority and power and dominion.

ALL: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Hallelujah! Thanks be to God!

GLORIA PATRI (577)

Glory be to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, ever shall be, world without end. Amen.
As it was in the beginning, is now, ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

STATEMENT OF FAITH (adapted from *The Confession of 1967*)

Biblical visions and images of the rule of Christ, such as a heavenly city, a father's house, a new heaven and earth, a marriage feast, and an unending day culminate in the image of the kingdom. The kingdom represents the triumph of God over all that resists God's will and disrupts God's creation. Already God's reign is present as a ferment in the world, stirring hope in people and preparing the world to receive its ultimate judgment and redemption.

We Hear God's Word

EMBODIED WORD FOR DISCIPLES OF ALL AGES

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Almighty God, you bear all the treasures of Wisdom and knowledge. Open our eyes that we may see the wonders of your Word; and give us grace that we may clearly understand and freely choose the way of your Wisdom; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

HEBREW BIBLE LESSON: *Daniel* 7:1, 9-10, 13-14

EPISTLE LESSON: *Colossians* 1:15-20

GOSPEL LESSON: *Matthew* 27:11-14, 27-37

SERMON: Thank you, King Jesus

MUSICAL MEDITATION: *Give Thanks* Henry Smith

We Respond in Faith

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

OFFERING INVITATION:

Leader: This week is a reminder that we are to always thank our God. Giving is part of gratitude. Let us bring forth our pledges cards, tithes, and offerings with grateful hearts this day. We will be processing forward and presenting them with joy! If you are not able to come forward, wave your hand so that an usher can come to you. If you are worshiping from home, please mail in your checks or use our online giving option on the website. Pledge cards can be mailed to the church office. Let us practice stewardship as we sing and bring forward what we have to offer to the Lord.

COMMITMENT PROCESSION WITH PLEDGE CARDS AND OFFERINGS

SONG "I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me" (Glory to God, 700)

I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, Lord, anytime!

***DOXOLOGY**
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures high and low;
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, in Jesus fully known;
Creator, Word, and Spirit one;
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION:** (Unison)
Sovereign God, your son Jesus Christ is King. Together you have created a Kingdom of love. We dedicate these offerings and commitments to you with thanksgiving. Guide us with Wisdom as we seek to be the Good News! Through Christ the King we pray. Amen.

We Go into the World

***CLOSING HYMN:** "Crown Him with Many Crowns" (151)

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Now Thank We All Our God with Come, Ye Thankful People, Come
Johann Crüger/George J. Elvey/arr. Cindy Berry

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PEEK AT THE WEEK:

SUNDAY 11/22:	COMMITMENT SUNDAY
	Adult Study – 9:00 AM
	Worship In Person & Online – 10:30 AM
	Luncheon & Bake Sale
	HANGING OF THE GREENS
MONDAY 11/23:	GA – 6:30 PM
	Al-Anon – 7:00 PM
TUESDAY 11/24:	Prayer Shawl – 1:00 PM
	Private Flute Lessons 2-8 PM (FH)
	Interfaith Worship Service @ Westminster – 7:00 PM
	AA – 7:30 PM
WEDNESDAY 11/25:	Private Flute Lessons 2-8 PM (FH)
	GA – 7:00 PM
THURSDAY 11/26:	THANKSGIVING
SATURDAY 11/28:	Sackurday – 12:00 PM
	AA – 6:30 PM
SUNDAY 11/29:	FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **STEWARDSHIP LUNCHEON, BAKE SALE, AND HANGING OF THE GREENS TODAY!** There will be a luncheon after worship to celebrate our collective generosity on Commitment Sunday! **There also will be a bake sale** featuring pies, breads and other sweets. Please consider sticking around to **hang the greens for Advent as well!**
- **SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGING** The Ministry of Mission is reaching out to the congregation to see if there is interest in bell ringing for the Salvation Army this year. Mission is looking to commit to one (1) day and will need 9-10 individuals to fill the 1 hour shifts for the day. If you are interested in bell ringing, please contact Cheryl Steen as soon as possible and let her know. Mission must make a decision before Thanksgiving and will only commit to the Salvation Army if we are certain there are enough volunteers to cover the one (1) day. Thank you for your continued support of the Ministry of Mission and blessings to all.
- **INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING WORSHIP SERVICE** This annual event will be held at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Munster on November 24 at 7:00 PM. This is a meaningful opportunity to join our neighbors in giving thanks to God!
- **SAVE THE DATE SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6TH!** Make plans after worship to join in the festivities! There will a light lunch served, followed by Advent/Christmas craft stations, a card station, cookie decorating, and then we'll go Christmas caroling to a few of our church members. Stay for the whole time, or pick and choose which activities you'd like to participate in. More details will be coming closer to December 6. If you have any questions, contact Heather Casiano.
- **"BYOB"** (Bring Your Own Bible) will not be meeting on November 25th. We will resume on December 2nd!
- **"THE BIBLE IN TODAY'S WORLD"** study class meets on Sunday mornings from 9-10 am at the church. We are excited to be using the study guide *United through Christ, Bound to Each Other: Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians*. If you have any questions, contact Heather Casiano. All are welcome! You can join even if you have never done so before!
- **FELLOWSHIP HOSTING** We are asking folks to sign up to host fellowship time. Hosting entails bringing a simple snack to share, setting it out, and cleaning up afterwards. On Sundays with no sign-ups, we will still have coffee and tea to enjoy.
- **CHOIR PRACTICE IS THURSDAYS AT 7PM** We need singers of all sorts and welcome singers of all skill levels! We have a great time, and singing is a great way to give glory to God!

- **FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!** If you don't already follow us on Facebook and Instagram, please start doing so @firstpchighland on both Facebook and Instagram.
- **INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF FPCH?** You are always welcome here, whether a member or not! If you are interested in joining as a member, though, we would love to have you! Please talk to Pastor Tyler if you would like to learn more.

Opportunities to serve as the HEART, HANDS, and FEET of Jesus Christ:

- **BLESSING BOX** Please continue to place items in the Blessing Box and take items if you are a person in need! Items most commonly donated: Canned goods with pull tabs, socks, toilet paper, non-perishable foods, small snacks, toiletries, baby wipes and diapers. Please check expiration dates!
- **HELP STOCK OUR PANTRY!** Please bring non-perishable foods to help the church's food pantry.
- **GOT SNEAKERS?** The sneakers that we all collect will help raise money to support our church's general fund AND will help our environment by keeping sneakers out of landfills. Bring the sneakers (athletic shoes only) to the church and put them in one of the blue bins by Door D or in the narthex.

Prayer List

Anthony
Brady Vanes
George Griner
Guy Hendricks
David Markley
David Kingen
Diana and Ray Mendoza
Janet Orem
Cindy Waltz and Sister
Yvonne Suroviak
Georgette and Garry Sknerski
Jakob Holden
Denise Matthys
Florance Cody
Kathy & Chuck Pumnea
Kevin and Annie Windstrup
Rick Parker
Gary Everhart
Darlene O'Brien
Doug & Sue Matthews
Janet Terpstra
Glen Nahler
Tom
David Hamblin
Jana Tolley
Larry & Bonnie Perryman
Delta Rose
Winnie Owen
Breeanne
Mom Bechtler
Marian Clayton
Ella P
Rita Stronczek
Keren, Zuriel, and Gedeon
Edna Cruz
Charlie
Jerry & Rena Martinez
Luana Sulkowski
Sonny Buono
Tammy
Mike Kelly
Sue Heth
Oscar Ochoa
Jean and Clara
Dave Shelborne
Kali Rosalia
Wendy
Jessica S
Shirley McKnight
Kay Johnson
Brooke
Arlene
Shelley
John
Pastor Laurel
Rosie
Rick Parker
Guy Hendricks

Daniel 7:1, 9-10, 13-14

7 In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head as he lay in bed. Then he wrote down the dream:

9 As 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.
10 A 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.

13 As 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.
14 To 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.

Colossians 1:15-20

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, 16 for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. 19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, 20 and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

Matthew 27:11-14, 27-37

11 Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus
said, "You say so." 12 But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. 13 Then Pilate
said to him, "Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?" 14 But he gave him no answer,
not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole
cohort around him. 28 They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, 29 and after twisting some thorns into a
crown they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying,
"Hail, King of the Jews!" 30 They spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. 31 After mocking
him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

32 As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his
cross. 33 And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), 34 they offered him
wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. 35 And when they had crucified him,
they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; 36 then they sat down there and kept watch over him.
37 Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

Our King, the Least of These

Ezekiel 34:11-16; *Psalm* 95; *Ephesians* 1:15-23; *Matthew* 25:31-46

Today we are celebrating Christ the King Sunday. This is the Sunday every year on which we recognize Christ's sovereignty over all creation. This is also the Sunday on which we acknowledge our need to respond to the call to ever strive for the completion of Christ's kingdom here on earth. It is a day to lift up our voices to the King:

I love you, Lord
And I lift my voice
To worship you
Oh my soul rejoice
Take joy, my king
In what you hear
May it be a sweet sweet sound
In your ear!

It is especially fitting that we celebrate this day today, as we prepare for Advent next week, the season in which we wait with expectant hope for Christ our king.

Six years ago we became part of the Presbyterian Church (USA) denomination's *Matthew* 25 initiative. For six years we have been striving to live into the call to dismantle structural racism, eradicate systemic poverty, and build congregational vitality. If you are still wondering what exactly it means to be a *Matthew* 25 church and a *Matthew* 25 person, I have good news for you. For, Christ our King spells it out clearly for us! In today's gospel reading we hear a prophecy of the Son of Man coming with the angels to sit upon the kingly throne of glory. It is an image of breathtaking power. Seated upon the throne of glory is the King of all the universes, the very Son of God and Son of Man. Surrounding him are all the angels of heaven, waiting upon him and standing prepared to do his bidding. And before him are gathered all the nations of the world, all the people of the earth. Really, you don't get any more immense or powerful than that!

In this scene of such immense majesty, what does the King of all the universes do? Does he shake his scepter and demand obedience? No! Does he rattle his sabre and call for a conquering war? No! Does he beat his chest and brag and boast about his mighty deeds? No! Does he raise his goblet and command adoration from his subjects? No! So what does he do? He hearkens back to the image of the good shepherd—the image of a king most famously embodied by David, beloved of God—the image so beautifully rendered in today's passage from the prophet Ezekiel: "'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." Yes, this is the King of the universes who sits on the throne of glory, waited upon by all the angels, speaking to the gathered billions: A good shepherd reaching out to his beloved sheep, calling them into the inheritance of a Father who loves them—the inheritance of the very Kingdom over which he was King, a Kingdom prepared for them from the very foundation of the world.

Picture it! The assembled billions from all the nations of the world gaze up at this mighty King seated upon this great throne of glory, waited upon by the very angels of God. And as he speaks, their collective jaws drop in consternation. In the immensity of it all and of all that he represented, how could his words make sense? "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." HUH? How could this be? How could it be possible that this mightiest of sovereigns ushering in the end of the ages was hungry, was thirsty, was a stranger, was naked, was sick, was imprisoned?

In the passage, they dare to speak up. They dare to ask him directly about the source of their consternation. "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?" In short, "How could this have even been possible with a king such as you?" And in response that mighty King before them says the most astounding thing of all: "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."

Maybe at this point their hearts are opened and they got it. Maybe they didn't. We gathered here for worship today should definitely get it, though! We should all recognize that this great King on his throne of glory is none other than Jesus son of the Palestinian Mary, stepson of the Palestinian Joseph, born in a barn out of wedlock to a teenaged mother, raised in an impoverished Palestinian village under the colonial rule of the Roman Empire. This is Jesus, who had to flee to Egypt with his family as an undocumented refugee, probably migrating through what is today called the Gaza Strip.

This is Jesus of Nazareth, rabbi to a motley crew of fisher people and day laborers, disempowered by their overlords because of their religion and race and class. This is Jesus the healer, who gently lays hands upon people with leprosy and hemorrhaging and blindness and lameness. This is Jesus the friend who spends his time with people possessed by demons and with people outcast because of their professions of sex work or tax collection and with people shamed because of their bodies and with people hated because of their gender and with people excluded because of their language or citizenship status or migration history. This is Jesus the criminal, imprisoned by the Empire, tortured by soldiers, crucified alongside of other prisoners. This is Jesus the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, cousin brother of John, beloved chosen family of Martha and Mary and Lazarus. This is Jesus who lived, who laughed, who loved, who lost. When did we see him hungry, thirsty, naked, imprisoned, a stranger? Well, that was his life!

When the King upon that throne of glory speaks of "the least of these," he does not do so pejoratively as we so often interpret it. He does not create a hierarchy and designate a bottom group upon whom he can look down. Rather, he speaks as somebody who has lived as one of "the least of these." He speaks as somebody who does not just claim "the least of these" as family but who knows with the fullness of his heart that "the least of these" *are* his family indeed.

And when he speaks of "the least of these," he speaks with a deep understanding of the way the powers and principalities of this world have always functioned, the ways of the Pharaohs and the Caesars. He understands that the powers and principalities of this world function and thrive on systems and structures of evil—systems and structures that enact constant violence by maintaining economics that keep people in poverty and drawing red lines that keep people segregated and enacting policies that keep people from health and building walls that keep people out and locking bars that keep people trapped inside. In short, the powers and principalities function and thrive on creating and maintaining the category of "the least of these"—those people who do not have structural power within the system. And so, "the least of these" are the loved ones, the family of Jesus of Nazareth. "The least of these" *is* Jesus of Nazareth. "The least of these" is the great King of the universes.

How's that for a paradigm shift? A complete inversion of the norms and rules of the world! A redefinition of what it means to reign with power! For, this King's power is in his identity as one of "the least of these!" This King's power is in his ability to connect, to understand, to know, and so to love. This King's power is in his willingness to give up everything this life has to offer, to give up very life itself for the people. And this King's power is in the people's ability to connect to *him*, to understand *him*, to know *him*, and so to love *him.* Sure they can look up at the throne of glory in awe and wonder. Sure *we* can look up at the throne of glory in awe and wonder. But we can also look back down and look all around. We can look at each other. We can look especially at the hungry, at the thirsty, at the stranger, at the naked, at the sick, at the imprisoned—and see the kings and queens of the cosmos, the royalty of the universes.

Friends, this is the call of *Matthew* 25. It is the call to flip paradigms and so to dismantle the systems and structures of evil that dominate this world. It is the call to see royalty where the powers and principalities see "the least of these." It is the call to feed, to quench, to welcome, to clothe, to care, to heal, to visit, to liberate, to connect, to join—in short, to love! It is the call to follow a King who dedicated his life, his death, and his resurrection to this same love. It is the call to follow a King who was hungry, who was thirsty, who was a stranger, who was naked, who was sick, who was imprisoned. It is the call to follow the King of the universes, seated upon the throne of glory upon whom all the angels wait and for whom all the nations bow. It is the call to follow the King who is "the least of these." It is the call to follow the King of Love. So, come. Will you join me? Amen.

150 Come, Christians, Join to Sing

MADRID 6.6.6.6 D

Spanish folk melody
Arr. Benjamin Carr, 1824
Harm. David Evans, 1927

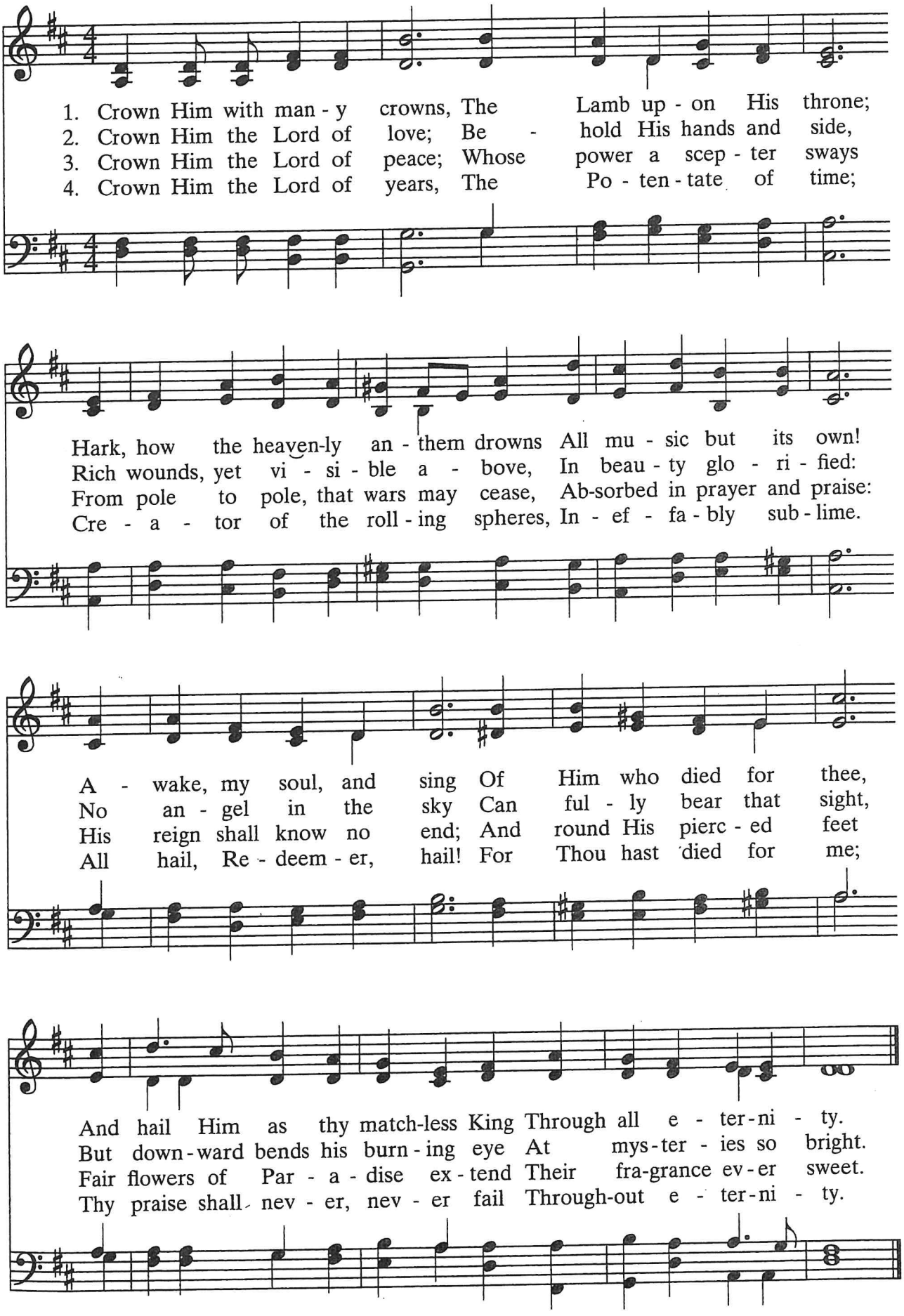
Christian Henry Bateman, 1843



Crown Him with Many Crowns 151

DIADEMATA SMD

Matthew Bridges, 1851 George Job Elvey, 1868



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PHONE: _____

	NUMBER	PRICE	TOTAL
RED	_____	$10.00	$_____
Donation in LIEU of flowers			$_____
TOTAL			$_____

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IN MEMORY OF: _____

DEADLINE: 12/6/2026

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