

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
THE SPIRIT BECKONS - CHRIST IS OUR KING!
Reverend John R. Hanson
Sunday, November 21, 2021, 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

PRELUDE

Julie Hanson

INTRODUCTION

We are reminded of the focus of Christ's life, which is also our calling – to proclaim that “our God reigns.” It is tempting to consider Christ's Reign as a conquering, all-powerful, phenomenon that will violently destroy human power systems, but that would be a misunderstanding. Rather, this theme reveals a Reign that is not of this world, it is a completely different reality that works within our human systems. Christ compels us to live a life of justice, peace, and love. May our witness remind us of God's Reign and enable us to open our hearts to receive it here and now. “Build your kingdom here, we pray!”

THEME AND VERSE

We worship our God, the Alpha and Omega, the one who was, and who is, and who is to come; and Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead. Jesus Christ loves us and liberates us by his blood and brings us into the priesthood of God. We bring glory and praise forever and ever! Amen!

***The LORD has made the world so sure that it cannot be moved. Ever since the world began, God's throne has been established; [God] you are from everlasting.
(Psalm 93:1b- 2)***

MISSION MOMENT

Board of Stewardship

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

HYMN

“Holy, Holy, Holy”

Green # 165

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy, all the saints adore thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,
Which wert and art and evermore shalt be.

Holy, holy, holy, though the darkness hide thee,
Though the eye made blind by sin thy glory may not see,
Only thou art holy; there is none beside thee,
Perfect in pow'r, in love and purity.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

CCLI Song # 1156 CCLI License # 1713417

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION God is good. **All the time.**

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. Pilate asks Jesus if he is the king of the Jews. Jesus replies that he came into the world to testify to the truth.

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."

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION All the time. **God is good!**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

We gather together to worship

in the name of the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Together let us make an appearance before our God and King.

Lord of heaven and earth, we are grateful for your creation, we are impressed with the gift of life and moved by your redemption. We do plan a "thank you" in the Kingdom come, but for now we would rather go our own way. We make our rules rather than study your instructions. We take convenience over discipleship. We talk of the game or argue our point without ever showing your witness. Our hearts are on local things, our plans, short term, our vision, nearsighted. You have the glory forever and ever. Help us experience your kingdom here and now. Forgive us for our sins; open us to your truth.

The King of the universe is present. He brings us the truth, that Jesus Christ the firstborn of the dead frees us from our sin by his blood! We are forgiven! Christ is our King! Now Jesus is recruiting you and me to be faithful priests in his service. Everyone who belongs to the truth will listen to him.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit! Amen.

HYMN

"Jesus, Name Above All Names"

Burgundy # 268

Jesus, name above all names, beautiful Savior, glorious Lord.
Emmanuel, God is with us, blessed Redeemer, living Word.

Praise him, Lord above all lords, King above all kings, God's only Son,
The Prince of Peace, who by his Spirit comes to live in us, master and friend.

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SHARING OF THE PEACE

CHILDREN'S SERMON

“Who’s in Charge?”

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you remembered the oath you swore to David, and you established a glorious kingdom of salvation through Jesus Christ. Train our eyes to see your righteous rule, and as we stand firmly in hope before all the powers of this world, may we hear your voice and be constant in living your truth. Amen.

READING: Revelation 1:4b-8

Jesus Christ is the faithful witness, the first to rise from death, and the ruler of all kings. We are freed by the shedding of his blood, and he has made us a kingdom of priests. Jesus 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.

HYMN

“I Will Sing unto the Lord”

I will sing unto the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously,
the horse and rider thrown into the sea.

I will sing unto the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously,
the horse and rider thrown into the sea.

The LORD, my God, my strength, my song, has now become my victory.
The LORD, my God, my strength, my song, has now become my victory.

The LORD is God, and I will praise him, my Father’s God, and I will exalt him.
The LORD is God, and I will praise him, my Father’s God, and I will exalt him.

SERMON - *What if we considered the “Kingdom” as something that made a difference in our very existence and involvement in this life, and even the lives of those around us... What could we accomplish if we believed it or dared to try to believe?*

HYMN

“Build Your Kingdom Here”

Come set your rule and reign in our hearts again.
Increase in us we pray; unveil why we're made.

Come set our hearts ablaze with hope like wildfire in our very souls,
Holy Spirit come invade us now.
We are your church. We need your pow'r in us.

We seek your kingdom first, we hunger and we thirst,
Refuse to waste our lives for you're our joy and prize.
To see the captives' hearts released, the hurt, the sick, the poor at peace.
We lay down our lives for heaven's cause.
We are your church. We pray revive this earth.

***Build your kingdom here, let the darkness fear.
Show your mighty hand, heal our streets and land.
Set your church on fire, win this nation back.
Change the atmosphere, build your kingdom here we pray.***

Unleash your kingdom's pow'r, reaching the near and far,
No force of hell can stop your beauty changing hearts.
You made us for much more than this, awake the kingdom seed in us,
Fill us with the strength and love of Christ.
We are your church. We are the hope on earth.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BLESSING & PRAYER FOR COMMUNION

Lord God, we come to your table of grace weighed down by the excesses and the sorrows of the past. We come hoping that your presence will not be limited by our human constructs. We come and we thankfully discover the abundance that comes not from possessing your power but that which comes from being possessed by you. Amen.

BENEDICTION & SENDING

We contain God's blessing as we return to our homes. God is with us. May we witness and encourage one another to share our vision of God's kingdom from here into the world.

We live in this world as servants of God.

And may the blessing of our all powerful God go with us. And may the blessing of his son, who shows us how to live re-shaped in his love, and the blessing of the living Holy Spirit, joyfully empower us in our renewed living. Amen?

Amen! We go to love and serve in Jesus' name!

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Worship, as an action, continues to change.

Use this space to guide your thoughts as the Spirit may lead you.

Use this time to center your distractions in order to help activate your worship.

The Reign of God has always been a central focus of the worship of God's people. From the time of the promise to David of an eternal dynasty, the vision of the Reign of God's Monarch has been the hope of God's people. Yet, the challenge has always been to understand God's Reign as of a completely different order from human power systems.

In Daniel, the Reign of God is depicted as glorious and authoritative, but also as being manifest through one who is "like a son of man." In Revelation this one is seen as Jesus, who is revealed in glory, and whose sacrifice is seen as the primary act in bringing God's Reign into the world. Finally, in the encounter between Jesus and Pilate, the difference between human rulership and God's Reign is starkly shown, as Jesus explains that he claims no human kingship, but is the king of a realm that is not of this world. It is a kingdom of truth and justice. The challenge of this week's celebration is to avoid "triumphal-ism." We are not to make God's Reign out to be the same as human power systems, only stronger, more dominant, and longer lasting. Rather, we are to recognize God's Reign in acts of compassion and justice, in service and sacrifice, and in the challenge to human systems to give up their obsession with war and conquest in order to build a world of peace and love for all.

In our own communities and lives, it is easy to set up our own little kingdoms – even when we're doing good or working for justice. It is easy to get caught up in purely human agendas and priorities, but ultimately these will all fail us. So, as we seek to live out our faith in compassion and justice, we need also to embody the priorities of Jesus, and call people to higher, eternal values. This means that we relinquish the need to get "our way" all the time. It means refusing to co-operate with any systems or courses of action that oppress or reject some people. It means committing to the service and sacrifice aspect of the nature of God within our families, churches and neighborhoods.

And it means keeping Christ as both the object of our worship (as opposed to our own desires, agendas or needs) and the model on which we base our lives. It is only when we are willing to commit daily to these values that we can truly claim to be worshipping Christ as King.

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