

ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SANTA CLARITA
THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
PROPER 29 – CHRIST THE KING
10:00 A.M.
NOVEMBER 22, 2020

Prayer of Meditation

Giving grace changes us. Experiencing one more stranger as friend expands our vision of humanity and of God. How has grace expanded you? To whom might you reach beyond, to further invite?

-Br. Luke Ditewig, SSJE

Prelude

Rejoice, the Lord is King

Gospel

THE WORD OF GOD

Priest: Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

People: Glory to God for ever and ever.

Thanksgiving for the Mission of the Church

Almighty God, you sent your Son Jesus Christ to reconcile the world to yourself: We praise and bless you for those whom you have sent in the power of the Spirit to preach the Gospel to all nations. We thank you that in all parts of the earth a community of love has been gathered together by their prayers and labors, and that in every place your servants call upon your Name; for the kingdom and the power and the glory are yours for ever. **Amen.**

Priest and People:

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. **Amen.**

The Collect of the Day

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Priest: Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, whose will it is to restore all things in your well-beloved Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords: Mercifully grant that the peoples of the earth, divided and enslaved by sin, may be freed and brought together under his most gracious rule; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LESSONS

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

Reader: Richard Holdredge

A Reading from the Book of Ezekiel.

For 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, thus 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.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 95:1-7a

Reader: Ken Higginbotham

- 1 Come, let us sing to the Lord; *
let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.
- 2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving *
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.
- 3 For the Lord is a great God, *
and a great King above all gods.
- 4 In his hand are the caverns of the earth, *
and the heights of the hills are his also.

- 5 The sea is his, for he made it, *
and his hands have molded the dry land.
- 6 Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, *
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.
- 7 For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.

The Second Reading Ephesians 1:15-23

Reader: Dave Fencil

A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the 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 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, 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.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn #382

"King of glory, King of peace"

General Seminary

1. King of glo - ry, King of peace, I will love thee;
2. Where - fore with my ut - most art, I will sing thee;
3. Seven whole days, not one in seven, I will praise thee;

and that love may ne - ver cease, I will move thee.
and the cream of all my heart, I will bring thee.
in my heart, though not in heaven, I can raise thee.

Thou hast grant - ed my re - quest, thou hast heard me;
Though my sins a - gainst me cried, thou didst clear me;
Small it is in this poor sort to en - roll thee;

thou didst note my work - ing breast, thou hast spared me.
And a - lone, when they re - plied, thou didst hear me.
e'en e - ter - ni - ty's too short to ex - tol thee.

The Gospel Reading Matthew 25:31-6

Priest: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said, "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 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; 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."

Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The Sermon

The Rev. Christopher Montella
Rector

A period of silent reflection follows the sermon.

A General Thanksgiving

The people say together:

Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you for the splendor of the whole creation, for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love.

We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving care which surrounds us on every side.

We thank you for setting us at tasks which demand our best efforts, and for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us.

We thank you also for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you alone.

Above all, we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ; for the truth of his Word and the example of his life; for his steadfast obedience, by which he overcame temptation; for his dying, through which he overcame death; and for his rising to life again, in which we are raised to the life of your kingdom.

Grant us the gift of your Spirit, that we may know him and make him known; and through him, at all times and in all places, may give thanks to you in all things. Amen.

A Presentation of Gratitude and Prayer

Music

God Provides from Jazz Vespers

Kirk Franklin

Vocalist: Lynette Dupree, Guitar: Frank Browne, Flute: Vince Duzuki

At this time the prayers and pledges offered by the members of our parish family will be presented, offered to God and placed on the altar to be blessed during the celebration of a Holy Eucharist. After today's service the prayer cards will be sealed away and stored to be used as kindling for the new fire at the Easter Vigil.

Prayers of the People

Reader: Desiree Spencer-Walters

Serve Christ with gladness and come before God's presence with a song. Let us pray together, saying, "We give you thanks, O Christ; and call upon your Name."

Christ the King, you have been made head over all things for the Church: may we worthily live as your body in our world. Work your great power in and through us.

Silence

Intercessor: We give you thanks, O Christ,

People: And call upon your Name.

Christ the King, you gather all the nations of the world to yourself: bless the world's suffering with your everlasting mercy. May the oppressed be fed with your justice.

Silence

Intercessor: We give you thanks, O Christ,

People: And call upon your Name.

Christ the King, it is from your hand that all are fed: inspire righteousness in all people that the hungry may be fed and the thirsty given clean water to drink.

Silence

Intercessor: We give you thanks, O Christ,

People: And call upon your Name.

Christ the King, you care for those in prison: give us hearts for all those who are incarcerated. Where there is crime and violence in our city, offer your peace.

Silence

Intercessor: We give you thanks, O Christ,

People: And call upon your Name.

Christ the King, you are good: we pray you seek the lost, bind up the injured, and strengthen the weak.

The congregation may add their own petitions and thanksgivings.

Silence

Intercessor: We give you thanks, O Christ,

People: And call upon your Name.

Christ the King, your faithfulness endures from age to age: may all your saints, at work and at rest, know the hope to which you have called us and the riches of your glorious inheritance.

Silence

Intercessor: We give you thanks, O Christ,

People: And call upon your Name.

Priest:

God of all power and love, we give thanks for your unfailing presence and the hope you provide in times of uncertainty and loss. Send your Holy Spirit to enkindle in us your holy fire. Revive us to live as Christ's body in the world: a people who pray, worship, learn, break bread, share life, heal neighbors, bear good news, seek justice, rest and grow in the Spirit. Wherever and however we gather, unite us in common prayer and send us in common mission, that we and the whole creation might be restored and renewed, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Confession

Let us confess our sins to God.

**God of all mercy,
we confess that we have sinned against you,
opposing your will in our lives.
We have denied your goodness in each other,
in ourselves, and in the world you have created.
We repent of the evil that enslaves us,
the evil we have done,
and the evil done on our behalf.
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us
through our Savior Jesus Christ,
that we may abide in your love
and serve only your will. Amen.**

Absolution

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Peace

Priest: The peace of Christ be always with you.

People: And also with you.

Members of the congregation are encouraged to post "Peace be with you" in the comments or to use the "like" or "love" reaction button to take part in the virtual exchange of God's peace with the rest of the congregation at this time.

Welcome and Announcements

We are pleased to be celebrating the following birthdays: Barbara Moore on November 19th and Anne Sjolund on November 27th.

Stewardship Reflection

Shari Schlaman

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Setting of the Table

Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures, here below.
Praise God, you hosts in heaven above; Praise God the Trinity of Love. Amen.**

Priest: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Priest: Lift up your hearts.
People: We lift them to the Lord.
Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord; who on the first day of the week overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Priest and people say together:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven 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.**

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ has risen.

Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **Amen.**

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

**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,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Breaking of the Bread

A period of silence is kept.

Priest: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

Honor them in remembrance that Christ died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

The church teaches that temporal isolation cannot constrain the sacrament's ineffable power. Calling us to "massive, corporate, spiritual communion,"

The Invitation to Holy Communion

A spiritual communion is a personal devotional that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive Holy Communion at that moment, but in which circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion.

Priest and People say together:

O Jesus Christ, you have instituted for us a great sacrament in your promise of life and love, which we remember now as we hear your words again: “This is my body; this is my blood — given for you.” Feed us in our hearts with faith and trust, draw us closer to you and to each other, and strengthen us for service to our neighbor. We come before you now, with hearts you have fed all our lives with the promise that you have given yourself for us. Keep us strong in that faith until we can meet at your table again. Amen.

Post Communion Prayer

Let us pray.

Priest: Blessed be God who calls us together.

People: Praise to God who makes us one people.

Priest: Blessed be God who has forgiven our sin.

People: Praise to God who gives hope and freedom.

Priest: Blessed be God whose Word is proclaimed.

People: Praise to God who is revealed as love.

Priest: Blessed be God who alone has called us.

People: Therefore we offer all that we are and all that we shall become.

Priest: Accept, O God, our sacrifice of praise.

People: Amen. Accept our thanks for all you have done.

Our hands were empty, and you filled them.

From A New Zealand Prayer Book.

Offertory Prayer

Loving God, you alone are the source of every good gift. Everything we have, and all that we are, comes from you. Now, as we go about our lives, help us to be grateful, accountable, and, with praise and thanksgiving, to give of ourselves generously, through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

Blessing

Go now to follow the way of Jesus:

see others as he did;

dare to give freely as he did;

and to love unconditionally as he did.

Go, embraced by the Source of life, love and hope;

in the company of the Word of life;

encouraged by the Breath of life.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the one,

holy and undivided Trinity be among you

and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Priest: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Closing LEVAS #14

“Soon and very soon”

Andrae Crouch

1. Soon and ver-y soon we are goin' to see the King, Soon and ver-y soon

2. No more cry-in' there we are goin' to see the King, No more cry-in' there

3. No more dy-in' there we are goin' to see the King, No more dy-in' there

4. Soon and ver-y soon we are goin' to see the King, Soon and ver-y soon

we are goin' to see the King, Soon and ver-y soon we are

we are goin' to see the King, No more cry-in' there we are

we are goin' to see the King, No more dy-in' there we are

we are goin' to see the King, Soon and ver-y soon we are

goin' to see the King, Hal-le-lu-jah, Hal-le-lu-jah, we're goin' to see the King!

goin' to see the King, Hal-le-lu-jah, Hal-le-lu-jah, we're goin' to see the King!

goin' to see the King, Hal-le-lu-jah, Hal-le-lu-jah, we're goin' to see the King!

goin' to see the King, Hal-le-lu-jah, Hal-le-lu-jah, we're goin' to see the King!

1.2. Hal-le-lu-jah, Hal-le-lu-jah!

3.4. jah, Hal-le-lu-jah, Hal-le-lu-jah!

Prayers of the People taken from *Praying the Scriptures* by Jeremiah D. Williamson, ©2014 by Jeremiah D. Williamson. All Rights Reserved.

From *The Hymnal 1982*: #481 “Rejoice, the Lord is King”, Words: Charles Wesley (1707–1788), alt. Music: *Gopsal*, George Frideric Handel (1685–1759); arr. John Wilson (1905–1992). Copyright: Music: By permission of Oxford University Press. Music: Arrangement by permission of Oxford University Press.

From *Lift Every Voice and Sing II*: #14 “Soon and very soon”, Words: Andrae Crouch (b. 1942). Music: Andrae Crouch. Copyright: © 1976 Bud John Songs, Inc./Crouch Music/ASCAP.

Spiritual Communion prayer: Amended from a prayer written by Bishop Guy Erwin (ELCA)