

# *Christ the King*

**IS IT POSSIBLE  
TO HAVE JESUS  
AS SAVIOR,  
BUT NOT LORD?**

## *The Lihu'e Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hawai'i*

*Ka Hale Pule 'O Na Lahui Apau . . .*

*Church Of All Peoples . . .*

*. . . Hele Pu Maʻou me Iesu Kristo*

*. . . Walking Together With Christ*

November 21, 2021

*The Lihue Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hawai'i*

4602 Ho'omana Road, Lihue, HI 96766

*The Rev. Dr. JP Paxton Tony Kment, Technology*

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*Welcome to Our Guests*

It is always a joy to share our faith and worship with people visiting from around the world. Please know your presence and participation in our service is most appreciated. At Lihue Lutheran we celebrate Holy Communion at every service. You are certainly welcome in joining us as our Lord comes to us in this holy meal.

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*Prayer Concerns*

Please remember these people in your prayers during the week: The family of Amanda Thayer, Bob & Joann Clash, Sally Rasay, Linda Garrett, Stan Weeks, Ronnie Pacheco, Pagatpatan ohana, Villanueva ohana, Geronimo ohana, David Gragg, Joe Morgan, Zosimo and Virginia Austria, Karen Kinoshita, Jake Whisenhunt, Rick Rentz, Norman Dibble, Kazue Zaima, Virginia Hines-Aflague, John Mattek, Giraldo II (Bobby Giraldo's son), Kristie Schmid (Tony's sister), Lolli Hagen, Abraham Torres, Sr., Kristy Kahananui, Sonny Koerte, Uncle Joe, Mallory Rodriguez, Steve Schantz, Peter Alisna, Tirzah Pope, Pastor Matthew Weber, Joyce Anglemeyer, Stephen Shioi, Peggy Hood, Jason Shimono, Richard Rasay, Nancy Nelson (formely Mandell), Karen & Patrick Pavao, Edward Rasay, Karen Richards (friend of Nancy Mandell), Marcos Larson (Liedeke's son), Dora Jane Rowell, Franklin Parraga, Penny Parraga, Leticia Ancog (Kurt Javinar's sister), Yvonne Shinseki, Al Dressler (Larry's Father), Shirley Hallman (Denese Alcott's Mother), Mercy Ballesteros, Mike LaBerge, Anna Marie & Phil Croghan, Judy Carlson, Caroline Johnson, Sheila Belarmino, Ray Roderick, The Church Council, and leaders in the ELCA. If you have additional prayer requests, please let the church office know. "Ask it in my name . . ." Mahalo for your love.

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*Remembering Our Military*

As we gather for worship, please remember those serving us in the military, and the families of our Hawai'i National Guard. These names have been given by loved ones and family members: Navy – TJ, Javinar, Kristian Matsumoto, Coast Guard - Brian Rodriguez, Navy - Kiana Alisna, Coast Guard - Ke'ale Renta Army - Jason Lumacad, Levi Fajardo: Air Force - Steven Javinar, Ikaika Fajardo, Army - Brandon Perkinson, Drew Cox, Tony Garton: National Guard - Benji MacKenzie, Eddie Resinto, Fred Casticimo, Philip Kamakea, Anthony Y. Torres, Master Sgt. If you know of someone you would like added to our prayer list, please advise the church office.

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*Lihue Lutheran Spotlight*

Hau'oli Lā Hānau to Laura Nishek (11.21), Kalani Kawamura (11.22), Jim Mayfield (11.27). Happy anniversary to Jesse and Elise Guirao (11.8) and Kurt and Noreen (11.26). A big mahalo nui to Shannon Lorenzo and her help with the college and young adults and Auntie Gloria for her help with the youth group.



## Introduction

Even after Israel had experienced the vagaries of kings, the people still longed for a true king to set things right. He would have the king's title of Anointed One (Messiah); he would be the "one like a human being" (Son of Man) given dominion in Daniel's vision. Jesus is given these titles, even though he is nothing like an earthly king. His authority comes from the truth to which he bears witness, and those who recognize the truth voluntarily listen to him. We look forward to the day he is given dominion, knowing his victory will be the nonviolent victory of love.

## Overview

### Love Redefines Power and Dominion

In fairy tales, kings live in a castle, usually located on a hill (a safe place), surrounded by a moat for the utmost protection for the king and family. Modern political leaders often have more technologically advanced means to provide a similar level of safety against would-be attackers. Because of these preconceived notions of what kings are, hearers will need to be reminded that Jesus redefined the title "king." The appointed psalm says, "The waters have lifted up, O LORD, . . . the waters have lifted up their pounding waves. Mightier than the sound of many waters, mightier than the breakers of the sea, mightier is the LORD who dwells on high" (Ps. 93:3-4). While a king might have the ability to sail atop a roaring, chaotic sea, Christ the King is one who stills the waves (Mark 4:35-41).

In John's gospel for today, Jesus says "For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth" (John 18:37). Perhaps the 'this' Jesus is referring to is a motioning with his hands to the cross, the most clear demonstration of God's love for humanity and the truest definition of kingship. Jesus redefines what power is and what people think God's power looks like to fight evil and suffering in the world. Jesus does not resist the way of the cross with force.

Rather than protecting himself from harm in any way, the vulnerable King Jesus dares to demonstrate God's love for all people. Jesus does not run from pain, anguish, or suffering. Rather, the risen Jesus, "the ruler of the kings of the earth" (Rev. 1:5), rushes to the places of disaster and suffering in the world. Jesus goes where storms are ravaging and have ravaged lives and brings life and calm into the chaos.

## Theological Reflection

When Moses encounters the burning bush in Exodus he asks God to give him a name to share with the people, and God replies with the tetragrammaton, YHWH, or as it is translated in the NRSV: "I AM WHO I AM" (Exod. 3:14). It has been suggested that this could also be rendered "I will be who I will be." In Revelation we can hear an echo of this name: "Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come" (Rev. 1:4). The echo connects the resurrected Christ with the God of Exodus. Once again God will free the people from bondage, only at this end of the ages, not just from slavery in Egypt, but from bondage to sin and death.

# *Announcements and Weekly Events!*

## *Welcome, Check-In, and Announcements*

*In the Facebook chatbox share something good God is doing in your life.*

### *Announcements*

- ◇ **Advent** begins November 28
- ◇ **Advent Happy Hour, Dec 1**—join us for finger foods, beer, and a spiritual practice  
Sponsored by the College and Young Adults
- ◇ Deck the Halls **December 4**, 9am-4pm

### *Weekly Events*

- ◇ Youth Group  
**Sunday, Nov 21**, 5:30-7pm special dinner prepared by Arnold Leong
- ◇ Ghetto Sweet Tarts  
**Monday, Nov 22**, 5:30-7pm in the fellowship hall
- ◇ Centering Prayer with Liedeke Bulder  
**Saturday, Nov 27**, @ 9-10am via zoom <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9079773456>
- ◇ BOBS Bible Study—The Christmas We Didn't Expect (3-week study)  
**Tuesday, Nov 30**, @ 5:30-7pm in the fellowship hall **last week!**

# Christ the King

## Order for Worship

### \*Confession and Forgiveness

P Blessed be the Holy Trinity, ✝ one God, whose teaching is life, whose presence is sure, and whose love is endless.

**C Amen.**

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P Have mercy on us, O God.

**C We confess that we have sinned against you and against our neighbor. We have built walls instead of tables and have turned away the stranger. We have sought glory for ourselves and have treasured that which does not satisfy. Help us to love as you love, to welcome those you send, and to treasure mercy and justice. Turn us from our ways to your ways, and free us to serve those in need. Amen.**

P God who makes all things new, forgives you all your sins for ✝ Jesus' sake and remembers them no more. Lift up your heads and your hearts. Yours is the Kingdom of God.

**C Amen.**



### \*Gathering Song

### For the Fruit of All Creation

 Musical score for the Gathering Song 'For the Fruit of All Creation'. The score is written on two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are:
 

1 For the fruit of all cre - a - tion, thanks be to God.  
 2 In the just re - ward of la - bor, God's will is done.  
 3 For the har - vests of the Spir - it, thanks be to God.

For these gifts to ev - 'ry na - tion, thanks be to God.  
 In the help we give our neigh - bor, God's will is done.  
 For the good we all in - her - it, thanks be to God.

For the plow - ing, sow - ing, reap - ing, si - lent growth while we are sleep - ing,  
 In our world - wide task of car - ing for the hun - gry and de - spair - ing,  
 For the won - ders that as - tound us, for the truths that still con - found us,

fu - ture needs in earth's safe - keep - ing, thanks be to God.  
 in the har - vests we are shar - ing, God's will is done.  
 most of all, that love has found us, thanks be to God.

### \*The Apostolic Greeting

**P** The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

**C** And also with you.

Congregation

Marty Haugen & Susan Briehl

Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Chri - ste e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e -  
 le - i - son, e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son.

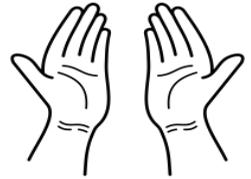
- P For peace between nations, compassion among peoples, and harmony in the Church, let us pray. **(Refrain)**
- P For the hungry to be filled, the lowly lifted up, and the captives to be freed, let us pray. **(Refrain)**
- P For patience in our suffering, hope in our waiting, and all joy in believing, let us pray. **(Refrain)**
- P Help, save, comfort and defend us, O God



A - - - men.

## \*Prayer of the Day

- P Let us pray. Almighty and ever-living God, you anointed your beloved Son to be priest and sovereign forever. Grant that all the people of the earth, now divided by the power of sin, may be united by the glorious and gentle rule of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



**C Amen.**

## First Reading

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

*To the community for whom this passage was written, it seemed as though the oppression they were experiencing would never end. Daniel's message is: It shall end. The Ancient One, who is judge, will call all nations to account and will give dominion to "one like a human being," the Messiah.*

<sup>9</sup>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.<sup>10</sup>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.<sup>13</sup>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.<sup>14</sup>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.

**A The Word of the Lord**

**C Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm

## Psalm 93

Ever since the world began, your throne has been established. (Ps. 93:2)

<sup>1</sup>The LORD is king, robed in majesty; the LORD is robed in majesty and armed with strength.

The LORD has made the world so sure that it cannot be moved.

<sup>2</sup>**Ever since the world began, your throne has been established;  
you are from everlasting.**

<sup>3</sup>The waters have lifted up, O LORD, the waters have lifted up their voice;

the waters have lifted up their pounding waves.

<sup>4</sup>**Mightier than the sound of many waters,  
mightier than the breakers of the sea,  
mightier is the LORD who dwells on high.**

<sup>5</sup>Your testimonies are very sure,  
and holiness befits your house, O LORD,  
forever and forevermore.

## Second Reading

## Revelation 1:4b-8

*The book of Revelation begins by celebrating the Almighty God, who spans all of time. Similarly, Jesus is celebrated as the firstborn from the dead who rules over the world's rulers. He is the one whose return we eagerly await.*

<sup>4b</sup>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, <sup>5</sup>and 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, <sup>6</sup>and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

<sup>7</sup>Look! 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.

<sup>8</sup>“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

A The Word of the Lord

C Thanks be to God.

*\*Gospel Acclamation*

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?  
You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

## Holy 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.*

P The Holy Gospel according to Saint John, the eighteenth chapter.

Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

<sup>33</sup>Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" <sup>34</sup>Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" <sup>35</sup>Pilate 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?" <sup>36</sup>Jesus 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." <sup>37</sup>Pilate 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."

P The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

# Keiki Sermon

## Sermon

### \*Hymn of the Day

### Praise and Thanksgiving

1 Praise and thanks-giv - ing, God, we would of - fer for all things  
 2 God, bless the la - bor we bring to serve you, that with our  
 3 Fa - ther, pro - vid - ing food for your chil - dren, by Wis - dom's  
 4 Then will your bless - ing reach ev - 'ry peo - ple, free - ly con -

liv - ing, you have made good: har - vest of sown fields, fruits of the  
 neigh - bor we may be fed. Sow - ing or till - ing, we would work  
 guid - ing teach us to share one with an - oth - er, so that, re -  
 fess - ing your gra - cious hand. Where you are reign - ing, no one will

or - chard, hay from the mown fields, blos - som and wood.  
 with you, har - vest - ing, mill - ing for dai - ly bread.  
 joic - ing with us, all oth - ers may know your care.  
 hun - ger; your love sus - tain - ing show - ers the land.

## *\*Apostles' Creed*

**P** Let us join together in reciting the Apostles' Creed

**C** I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.



He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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.

## *\*The Prayers of the Church*

**P** Eternal God, you hold firm amid the changes of this world. Hear us now as we pray for the church, the world, and everyone in need.

**A** God, you sent your Son Jesus to testify to the truth. We pray for preachers, missionaries, evangelists, and teachers who carry your forgiveness and love to the world. Fill their words and actions with compassion and kindness so that your truth will shine. God, in your mercy,

**C** hear our prayer.

**A** God, you sent your Son Jesus to liberate all of creation. We pray for all living things longing for the freedom to flourish, from ancient trees and wild grasses to endangered animals and rare insects. Give human beings compassionate hearts to care for them. God, in your mercy,

**C** hear our prayer.

**A** God, you sent your Son Jesus to lead us into the way of peace. Direct the members of international alliances in choosing a nonviolent path toward the future. Give them the humility and wisdom to make just decisions to benefit all. God, in your mercy,

**C** hear our prayer.

**A** God, you sent your Son Jesus to make us into your own people, set free to serve you. We pray for people who serve the well-being of others, especially ministries in our community. Renew them in their work. God, in your mercy,

**C** hear our prayer.

**A** God, you sent your Son Jesus to rule in all times and places. We pray for the friends of our congregation who are unable to join our worship in person and for all who are sick and suffering Penny and Sonny. Join their prayers with ours and unite them with us in the body of Christ. God, in your mercy,

**C** hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

A God, you sent your Son Jesus to be our beginning and our ending. We give thanks for those whose lives have given us a glimpse of Jesus' reign of justice and peace. Empower us to join their witness. God, in your mercy,

**C** hear our prayer.

P God our hope and strength, we entrust to you all for whom we pray. Remain with us always, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**C** Amen*\*The Queen's Prayer*

Piano

O kou a - lo - ha no A i - a i ka La - ni, A  
 No - lai - la e ka - Haku Ma - la - lo kou e - he - u, Ko

Pno

o kou oi - a i - o, He he - mo - le - le hoi  
 ma - kou ma - lu - hi - a, A mau loa a - ku no. A - me - ne.

*English Translation*

1. O Lord thy Loving Mercy,  
 Is high as the Heavens.  
 It tells us of thy truth.  
 And 'tis filled with holiness

3. For thy grace I beseech thee.  
 Bring us 'neath thy protection.  
 And peace will be thy portion  
 Now and forever

*The Sharing of the Peace*

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C** And also with you.

P Let us share the peace of the Lord with those here locally and those joining us online via Facebook live! As the ushers come forward, take a minute to share "Aloha" with those joining us online!



## Offertory Word

On Christ the King and Harvest Home week, we invite you respond to all that God has done with thanksgiving and joy. One way we can respond is by giving back to God out of the abundance that God has given to us. If God puts it on your heart to give, donations can be given here today, mailed in, or given online our website [here](#) or you can copy and paste the weblink below @



[https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-bin/Vanco\\_ver3.vps?a\\_pver3=tYgT1GfNxRUIldiimjHMvORYXmm3bazY6GfrmTtVDZydsksODEa-Up5lt373GHnco2evTpo0mld6BrVzd2nG0p8xSFKZ9u6c4AzLo4CjNx7k=&ver=3](https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-bin/Vanco_ver3.vps?a_pver3=tYgT1GfNxRUIldiimjHMvORYXmm3bazY6GfrmTtVDZydsksODEa-Up5lt373GHnco2evTpo0mld6BrVzd2nG0p8xSFKZ9u6c4AzLo4CjNx7k=&ver=3)

## Offertory Response

## Lord of Aloha


  
 God of the is - lands, Lord of the seas, Ma - ker of beau - ty and source of the breeze,


  
 King of Cre - a - tion, an - cient and new, Lord of A - lo - ha we wor - ship you.


  
 Auth - or of mer - cy, Giv - er of grace, Bles - sed Re - deem - er who died in our place, Fath - er of one O


  
 ha - na are you, Lift - ing our voic - es we sing "Al - le - lu" Lord of A - lo - ha we wor - ship you.


  
 God of the is - lands, Lord of the seas, Ma - ker of beau - ty and source of the breeze,


  
 King of Cre - a - tion, an - cient and new, Lord of A - lo - ha we wor - ship you.


  
 Lord of A - lo - ha we wor - ship you.

## *\*Offertory Prayer*

- P Let us pray. Holy God, the earth is yours and everything in it, yet you have chosen to dwell among your creatures. Come among us now in these gifts of bread and wine and strengthen us to be your body for the world through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- C **Amen.**

## *Invitation to Communion*

A feast of love is offered here for you and for all the saints.

## *\*The Words of Institution*

*(All are welcome to share in this meal with us. The sacraments are provided in accordance to synodical guidelines in collaboration with CDC, state, and local precautions. If you do not have sacraments, please raise your hand and an usher will bring them to you.)*

## *\*The Lord's Prayer*

- P Let us pray the prayer our Lord taught us to pray...
- C **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 for give 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.**



## *\*The Post-Communion Blessing*

- P May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in His grace.
- C **Amen.**

## *\*The Prayer After Communion*

- P Blessed Jesus, at this table you have been for us both host and meal. Now send us forth to extend our tables and share your gifts until that day when all feast together at your Heavenly banquet.
- C **Amen.**

## \*The Blessing

P God, the beginning and the end, who has written your name in the book of life,  
 † bless you and keep you in grace and peace from this time forth and forever more.  
 C Amen.

## \*The Sending Song

## Praise to the Lord, The Almighty

1 Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre - a - tion!  
 2 Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is won-drous-ly reign - ing  
 3 Praise to the Lord, who will pros - per your work and de - fend you;  
 4 Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me a - dore him!

O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and sal - va - tion!  
 and, as on wings of an ea - gle, up - lift - ing, sus - tain - ing.  
 sure - ly his good - ness and mer - cy shall dai - ly at - tend you.  
 All that has life and breath, come now with prais - es be - fore him!

Let all who hear now to his tem - ple draw near,  
 Have you not seen all that is need - ful has been  
 Pon - der a - new what the Al - might - y can do  
 Let the a - men sound from his peo - ple a - gain.

join - ing in glad ad - o - ra - tion!  
 sent by his gra - cious or - dain - ing?  
 if with his love he be - friend you.  
 Glad - ly for - ev - er a - dore him!

### *Dismissal*

**P** Led on by the saints before us, go in peace to serve the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

## *Upcoming Commemorations*

**Clement, Bishop of Rome, died around 100**

**Tuesday, November 23, 2021**

Clement was the third bishop of Rome. He is best remembered for a letter he wrote to the congregation in Corinth, still struggling with the same problems that led to Paul's letters to them. As did Paul, he focused on the need for love among Christians.

**Miguel Agustín Pro, martyr, died 1927**

**Tuesday, November 23, 2021**

Pro grew up in a time when the Mexican revolutionaries accused the church of siding with the wealthy. He became a Jesuit priest, and worked on behalf of the poor and homeless. Falsely accused of throwing a bomb at a government official, he was executed, but not before crying out "Long live Christ the King!"

**Justus Falckner, died 1723; Jehu Jones, died 1852; William Passavant, died 1894; pastors in North America**

**Wednesday, November 24, 2021**

Not only was Falckner the first Lutheran ordained in North America, but he published a catechism which was the first Lutheran book published on the continent. Jones was the Lutheran church's first African American pastor and carried out missionary work in Philadelphia which led to the formation there of the first African American Lutheran congregation (St. Paul's). William Passavant helped to establish hospitals and orphanages in a number of cities and was the first to introduce deaconesses to the work of hospitals in the United States.

**Isaac Watts, hymnwriter, died 1748**

**Thursday, November 25, 2021**

Thought by many to be the greatest hymnwriter in the English language, Watts as a youth was critical of the quality of the metrical psalter of the time. He wrote about 600 hymns—many based on the psalms, but others that are not.

## Christ the King of the Harvest

Today is a liturgically interesting day. We celebrate both Christ the King and Harvest Home. The origin of Harvest Home cannot be determined by historical scholars but it is a remnant of a pagan ritual in which individuals would engage in great celebration at the successful harvest and storage of the season's crops. The term, in its German origin, has been known as Erntedankfest (harvest thanks fest), Erntefersammlung (harvest gathering), Aernkarrich (harvest festival) and Aernbreddich (harvest thanksgiving). Ultimately, the term was replaced with its English rendition, "Harvest Home".

To build the connection between Christ the King and a celebration of the harvest, we are invited to ask ourselves this question, "Is Christ the King of my life?" If Christ *is* the King of our lives, then it will reveal itself in how we respond to all that God has given (worship). This will take many avenues like:

- Love for neighbor
- Service to the church
- Stewardship of one's time, energy, talents, and finances

First and foremost, if Christ *is* the King of our lives, then we don't decide how we ought to live, God does. This is what it means to have a King. The King is in charge and the King calls the shots. It's not defined by some democratic, dialogical process where we can negotiate or even say, "no". To call Christ King is to submit and surrender not just what one does but also one's will. What we want, what we desire, what we do all changes. To call Christ, "King", is to allow Jesus to define, dictate, and determine what we want, desire, and do. It is a complete re-ordering of the operations of our lives so that our will and way conform to the will and way of God, that's what it means to call Christ King.

On this weekend of Harvest Home, there are a couple ways we can think about what it means to call Christ, "King", in terms of all God has provided...

- 1) What do we do with what God has given to us? Do we keep it for ourselves or do we submit and surrender it to the will and way of God (love for neighbor)?
- 2) Do we store up what God has given for us or do we generously give to others from the abundance of what God has given to us?
- 3) Do we live lives of fear (of loss) and cling to earthly possessions or do we have a right understanding that God is the Lord of ALL and gives and provides for all, especially those who trust in Him?

God has called us to be generous as God Himself is generous. To call Christ, "King", is to respond to God's gift (salvation) by giving back to God thanksgiving, joy, and trust and giving generously as God has given generously.

# For Further Reflection

## Theological Reflection

Pilate leaves his headquarters to discover the charges against Jesus. Then he speaks with Jesus, giving him a chance to defend himself. Pilate here seems to be offering Jesus every chance he can to avoid the cross, but Jesus refuses. Jesus knows who he is and who he called to be. In “family systems” thinking this is called being self-differentiated. “Self-differentiation [is] defining oneself clearly, remaining calm, and staying connected to others. Self-differentiation allows us to work through an issue that is promoting anxiety in the system without becoming reactive” (Paul E. Walters and Robert F. Holley, [\*Clear, Calm, and Connected: Reflections on Church Leadership\*](#) [Fortress Press, 2020], p. xvii). In today’s gospel reading we see Jesus remaining clear, calm, and connected. Here we see a model for all of Jesus’ followers when facing anxious times and challenging conversations.

## Pop Culture

Jesus tells us in Revelation, “I am the Alpha and the Omega” (Rev. 1:8). Alpha is the first letter in the Greek alphabet and omega is the last. This is like a store claiming to have everything from A to Z, which is where the online company Amazon got its name. While Jesus is everything for us and everything we need, often we are tempted to turn to places like Amazon where we really can buy just about anything. Maybe we would be better off if we trusted in Jesus for everything and shopped at a store like the fictitious Ralph’s Pretty Good Grocery of Prairie Home Companion fame, where they say, “If you can’t get it at Ralph’s you can get along (pretty good) without it.”

## Let The Children Come

Children are familiar with kings, but Jesus is a different kind of king than we are used to encountering in storybooks and popular culture. If you have a favorite children’s Bible that includes today’s gospel story, read it with the children. The *Spark Story Bible* and the *Whirl Story Bible* both include this story (Augsburg Fortress, 2009, pp. 474–475; Sparkhouse, 2014, pp. 402–405). The illustrations accompanying the texts depict Jesus in a simple robe—not regal at all—in contrast to a very fancy-looking Pilate. What theology is revealed in these pictures or another story Bible you may be using? What does it mean to follow a king who doesn’t look like a king or act like a king? Those things will be grace for the journey for the children and the adults of your congregation.

## Connections with Creation

This Sunday’s readings invite us to rethink the image of Christ the King from the ground up. Rather than golden crowns, thrones, scepters, soldiers, ornate castles, and loyal subjects, we can point to Jesus wearing a crown of thorns, washing feet, riding on a donkey, healing a child, dying on a cross. These are images of the Servant King who turned away from the trappings and temptations of mortal power. Instead he chose the qualities of human relationship that engender trust, sacredness, and precious regard for “the least of these.” His birth, life, crucifixion, and resurrection therefore are not for the salvation just of human beings, but of the earth as well. This is the cosmic Christ who locates himself not only in the heights of the heavens, but in the depths of the soil that birthed him, took him in after his death, and rebirthed him on Easter morning.

# Worship Reflection

What biblical texts stood out to me and why?

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What do I feel God is trying to say to me in and through this sermon?

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Is the Holy Spirit prompting me to change something in my heart or life? If yes, what is it? What is one step I can take to make a positive change in my life this week?

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Where did I see/hear God in the sermon?

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