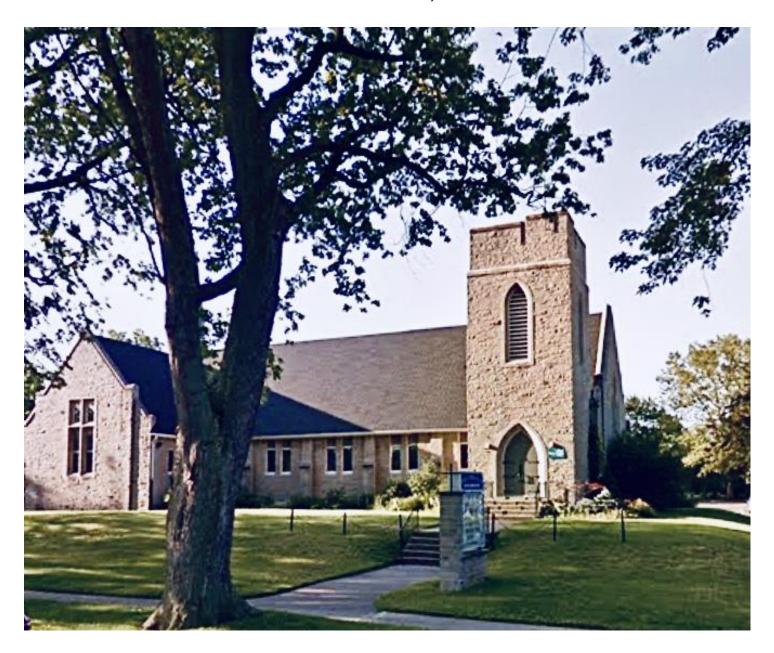
CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY

November 26th, 2023



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

140 Russell Avenue St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 1W1 Church: 905-685-8294

www.christlutheransc.ca

Office Hours: Thursday to Friday—9 a.m. – 12 noon

Bulletin Announcements: Please send to secretary@christlutheransc.ca.

Deadline for submission is Thursday at 9 a.m.

Pastor: Pastor Todd Hoeffs (289-362-0113) sr.pastor@christlutheransc.ca Parish Assistant: Louise Gondosch (905-329-8579) parish.assistant@christlutheransc.ca business.manager@christlutheransc.ca **Business Manager:** Karen McCumber

Secretary: Pat Kimpel secretary@christlutheransc.ca

Facebook: Lisa Gall www.facebook.com/ChristLutheranChurchSC **Bulletin by email:**

chairman.outreach@christlutheransc.ca

A recording of Sunday's service will be uploaded to YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpING TKTI9c OIBbMqGwLw

Prayer: Lord God, heavenly Father, send forth Your Son, we pray, that he may lead home his bride, the Church, that we with all the redeemed may enter unto Your eternal kingdom: through Jesus Christ, Your Son. our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

DAILY SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:

Monday: Phil. 2: 12-18 Wed.: Mark 13:33-37 Friday: Heb. 10: 32-39 Thurs: Matt. 25: 14-30 Tuesday: Heb. 12: 12-17 Saturday: Heb. 12: 22-29

OUR DEEPEST CONDOLENCES to the family and friends of **Ray Ehlert** who recently passed away. He is survived by his wife Margaret of 60 years, 2 children, Steven (Jacqueline) and Allen (Manuela). as well as 4 grandchildren, (Jessica, Curtis, Ethan and Liam.

Musician: Mayumi Munoz Reader: Paul Mason

EVENTS THIS WEEK:

9:00 - 9:50 am. - Coffee Hour, Sunday School, CHAT Bible Study Today:

10:00 am - Worship

10:00 - 11:00 am - Luther Manor Bible Study Monday:

7:30 p.m. - Choir Practice

9:30 - 11:00 am. - Precious Moments Tuesday:

Thursday: 10:00 - 11:30 am. - SOUL

SUNDAY SCHOOL: Sunday morning from 9:00 - 9:50 a.m. Preschool in the nursery and Grades 1-6 together. Bring your children, stay for Coffee Hour!

TODAY: We are making Advent Calendars today. We hope that this will be an encouragement to daily be in the Word. Praying God's Blessings on our families.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM: We are so excited to be having a program this year! We encourage parents and grandparents to bring children to Sunday School as we will be starting song and bell practices.

YOUTH & CONFIRMAND CHAT: 9:00 - 9:50 all Youth & Confirmands are invited to a CHAT/Bible Study. One of our youth leaders Dan Figueroa will be leading today and the next 2 weeks. Grab a coffee, tea or juice and meet in the youth room. If you have some future topic ideas let us know!

SPECIAL COFFEE HOUR: Today after service, please join us downstairs and enjoy some fellowship time and shop the remnants of yesterday's Bazaar!



CHRIST'S CAFÉ

9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. for Coffee, Tea & Treats!!

Anyone willing to help serve or bring treats, please contact: Judy Mason 905-641-7546

TREE TRIMMING & DOCORATING THE CHURCH



(You are invited to decorate the Christmas Trees and Church)

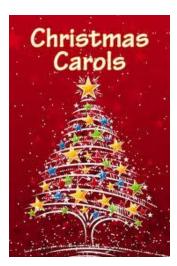
Sunday, November 26th @ 4:00 p.m.

Dinner of Lasagna, Salads & Desserts to follow!!

Please sign up for attendance in the narthex & for help with the side dishes or email: secretary@christlutheransc.ca

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH-SNYDER CHRISTMAS CRAFT & BAKE SALE: Saturday, December 2, 9 am -2pm. 3837 Netherby Road, Stevensville.

ADVENT LESSONS AND CAROLS 2023: December 3, 4:00 p.m. at Concordia Lutheran Seminary, 470 Glenridge Ave. Free-will offering. Parking available at the building for those with limited mobility. Others please part in nearby Brock Lots E or O. *Featuring Scripture readings and hymns, choral music, organ, brass and violin.*



Christmas Carol Sing-a-Long

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 6:30 PM Fellowship to follow

Please bring along a favourite dessert or treat to share. Beverages will be provided.

Everyone Welcome

LWML-C Zone/National Events: You are invited to any or all of the events below.

LWML-C/Mary Martha Christ Lutheran Events:

Tuesday, December 19, 5:30 pm – Advent/Christmas Potluck (blessing) Dinner & Program

Last Sunday Attendance:		Nov. 19th, 2023	Attn: 10 a.m. –121	SOUL:	
	<u>Budget</u>	Weekly Need	Last Sunday	Year To Date	<u>+ or – ()</u>
Current	297,841.00	5,840.02	2,398.45	232,420.07	(8,143.81)
LCC Missi	ons 17,000.00	333.33	135.00	13,655.00	(75.77)
Property Ir	mprovement:		154.00	5,481.00	, ,

A MEMORIAL DONATION has been given to SOUL in memory of Margarete Higenell by Twila Gall.

<u>FLOWERS</u> have been placed on the altar this morning to the Glory of God by Don & Lois Fretz on the occasion of their 49th Wedding Anniversary. Congratulations!!

<u>SOUL FUNDRAISER:</u> We netted \$276 from the fabulous Christmas Urn Workshop. Thanks to Wendy Shook & all 26 people who came out. The Watering Can (Vineland) does a tremendous step by step lesson & ensures all leave with a professional looking decoration that lasts until Easter.

SPECIAL THANKS to Tim & Elly Reck for organizing and making the photo directory session happen

USED STAMPS: Start saving and collecting your used stamps now! They will be gathered at the LWML-C Convention and donated to a charity who will in turn use them to purchase spiritual resources like Bibles.

<u>THANK YOU</u> to everyone who gave men's boots and shoes for the Mobile Closet. Good footwear is important when you live on the streets. Our abundance allows us to bless others.



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOX GIFT

Operation Christmas Child has become a Holiday tradition for many of us here at Christ Church. The love and care put into every shoebox gift has changed the lives of children worldwide, and I think we can say it has changed us as well. Together, let's continue to make these children an important part of our Christmas celebration by extending Christ's love and compassion.

(www.samaritanspurse.ca)

HOW TO PACK YOUR SHOEBOX

- 1. Pick up a designated shoebox from the narthex.
- 2. Decide on the category and age. Girl/Boy 2-4; 5-9; 10-14
- 3. Fill the box, mark it and put an elastic around it.
- 4. Enclose a \$10.00 cheque (made out to Christ Lutheran) to cover postage to send your box and put it in the offering basket designated "Samaritan's Purse" CLC will tax receipt your donation and mail donations to Samaritan's Purse as a lump sum.
- 5. Drop your box off at the Church by Sunday, November 12th.

SUGGESTED GIFTS

Toys: slinky, yo-yo, kazoos, animals, stickers, dolls, balls, cars

School Supplies: pens, paper, stamps, markers, calculators, pencil crayons & sharpener,

colouring books

Hygiene Items: soap, toothbrush, comb, washcloth, **NO** toothpaste or shampoo hard candy only, sunglasses, ball caps, socks, flip flops, watches,

hairding T shirts underwaar small nieture haaks flashlights hattaria

hairclips, T-shirts, underwear, small picture books, flashlights, batteries

Please **DO NOT** include: used items, war related items, medicines, cosmetics, breakable items,

perishable foods or liquids (shampoo, etc.), gum



<u>Granny Squares still needed</u>: This is an ongoing project we will gratefully accept more completed 6 inch knitted or crocheted Granny Squares in any pattern or colour. We would also appreciate any yarn that you may have, leftover yarn or full balls of yarn. In the narthex there is a white cube with yarn and hooks that you are welcome to take (or donate). There is another basket for completed squares. Once there are enough, we will make a Caring Squares blanket for whoever may be in need of a hug. On behalf of the Caring Squares, if you have any questions, call Lorraine at 905 964 5837)

<u>NEEDED</u>: Grace Mennonite Church, (677 Niagara St.) welcomes donations of homemade shawls and or small blankets for our Bears and Blankets program for Elders in Long Term Care. We have provided 117 care-kits thus far. We have requests for 171. Our care-kits go to Seniors who don't get many visitors or who are lonely. Please contact Jan at 289-990-4839 or janscats@gmail.com. Thank you!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:



Today is Sunday and you are reading this. I am writing this on Wednesday night anticipating the arrival of Kareem, Hamida, Ameer, and Asser tomorrow at 5 P.M. at the Toronto airport. Kareem can't sleep tonight! The boys were tired and sleeping. Kareem was helping Hamida with the last minute things needful to be done before they leave for the airport at 8 A.M. Their flight is 1:15 P.M., so it will be a very long day for the whole family. Whenever refugees leave the camp there are things they must leave behind, and they will give them to others who are still waiting for their turn to go to other countries. Kareem found out a couple days ago that they will be allowed more luggage weight than originally told to them. Ameer will be able to bring his little cars that he loves to play with. Little Asser is looking forward to seeing the Canadian flag. Both boys love our flag.

Our committee has done an awesome job of getting everything done for their arrival. Thank you to everyone both in our church family and in our community who have donated things for their home. Groceries and sundries have been purchased and donated so they can

start having meals in their new home. The beautiful quilts Gloria made are on the beds and everything has been made up for the family. Once they have had time to settle in a bit the committee will plan a social for the whole congregation to meet them. In the meantime there will be opportunities for members to meet and welcome them.

We have basically most of the things the family will need. Ivy has asked if anyone has a small 2 step stool for Hamida to reach things in the cupboards to let her know. Both of the schools in the area provide English as a second language for Ameer right in the schools, so he doesn't have to go out of the neighbourhood schools. All school registration must be done online. Canadian telephone numbers, cell plans, and wifi have been obtained for Kareem and Hamida. There is still much to do to provide for their resettlement here in Canada.

<u>UPDATE</u>--MOST RECENT ARRIVAL NEWS FROM PASTOR MAKEY: Their plane came in at 4:35 am Thursday night which was early but it took 2 hours for them to get through immigration procedures. God has kept them safe. Kareem cannot thank the congregation enough for what they have done for him and his family. And I know how sincere his thank you is. (they are safe at home in Canada now ©))))))))

Kareem and Hamida are so very thankful for everything you have done for them. You have all been a great blessing and a shower of God's love.

God bless, Your Committee, Ivy, Lorraine, Susan, Tim, Howard, Pastor John

LUTHERAN SERVICE BOOK SETTING ONE

Christ the King Sunday Last Sunday in the Church Year November 26, 2023 + 10 AM Worship



2. Jesus, loving Shepherd, Promised Messiah, Lamb of God. Prince of Peace, Son of the Father, Son of Man, Light of the World.

3. Jesus, Way of salvation, King of kings and Lord of lords; The Way, the Truth and the Life, Mighty Creator, Saviour and Friend.

TEXT and MUSIC: Naida Hearn

HEARN
7.8.8.8.

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CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS"

In the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

But if we confess our sins, God, Who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. [Brief silence for reflection]

Let us then confess our sins to God our Father:

Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us, forgive us, renew us and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your Holy Name. Amen.

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake, forgives you all of your sin. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

SPOKEN KYRIE

O Lord, have mercy on us;

O Christ, have mercy on us;

O Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and give us Your peace. Amen.



PRAYER OF THE DAY:

Let us pray: Lord God, Heavenly Father, Whose will it is to restore all things to Your beloved Son, Whom You anointed Priest forever and King of all creation: we humbly pray that all the people of the earth, now divided by the power of sin, may be united under the glorious and gentle rule of Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; for He lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE WORD

The Old Testament: *Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24*

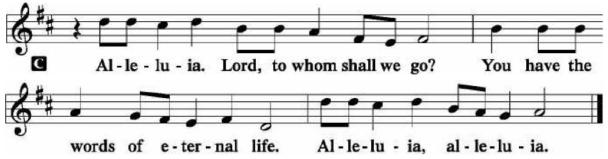
"This is what the Lord God says: I, myself, will search for my sheep. I will take care of them. A shepherd will take care of his scattered flock when it is found. In the same way I will take care of my sheep. I will save them from all the places where they are scattered. I will do this on a cloudy and dark day. I will bring them out from the nations. I will gather them from the countries. I will bring them to their own land. I will pasture them on the mountains and in the ravines of Israel. And I will feed them in all the places where people live in the land. I will feed them in a good pasture. They will eat grass on the high mountains of Israel. They will lie down on good ground where they eat grass. They will eat in rich grassland on the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock and lead them to rest, says the Lord God. I will search for the lost. I will bring back those that were scattered. I will put bandages on those that were hurt. I will make the weak strong. I will destroy those sheep that are fat and strong. I will tend the sheep with fairness.... "So this is what the Lord God says to them: I, myself, will judge between the fat sheep and the thin sheep. You push with your side and with your shoulder. You knock down all the weak sheep with your horns. You do this until you have forced them away. So I will save my flock. They will not be hurt anymore. I will judge between one sheep and another. Then I will put one shepherd over them, my servant David. He will feed them. He will tend them and will be their shepherd. Then I, the Lord, will be their God. And my servant David will be a ruler among them. I, the Lord, have spoken.

This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

The Epistle: Ephesians 1:15-23

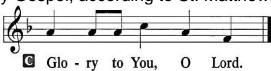
[St. Paul writes:] I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation 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. This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

ALLELUIA VERSE:



Holy Gospel: St. Matthew 25:31-46

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew, the 25th chapter:



[Jesus says:] '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.' This is the Gospel of the Lord:



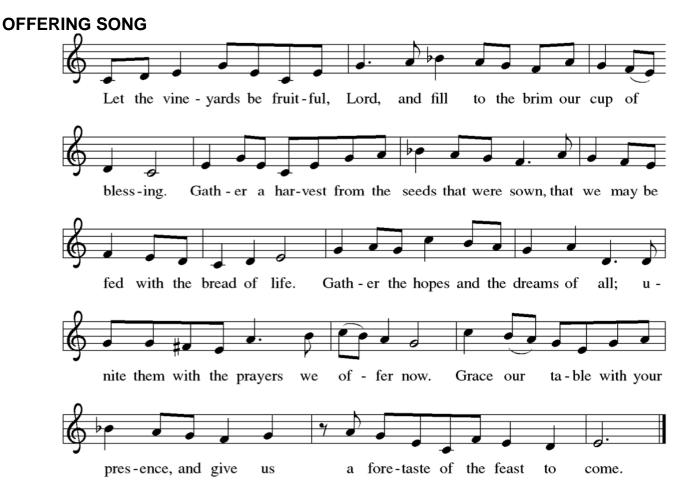
THE NICENE CREED:

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by Whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man. And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, Whose kingdom will have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life + of the world to come. Amen.



 Will you let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you;
 Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant, too. https://www.scribd.com/doc/255681696/The-Servant-Song

MESSAGE



THE OFFERINGS are gathered.

THE PRAYER OF THE CHURCH:

Lord Jesus Christ, Saviour and Judge eternal: thank you for including us in your new creation through baptism, and for crossing us from death to life by your own death and resurrection. Build up our confidence in you so that we have no fear of Judgment Day, but rather rejoice in the new and perfect life you have in store for us.

Lord, in your mercy: hear our prayer.

Strengthen your church so that she never ceases to magnify the gospel to all people. Preserve us from skepticism, and give us courage to witness to the truth of Your saving power. Preserve our national Synod church body, our partner churches around the world, and all believers who share in the Gospel.

Lord, in your mercy: hear our prayer.

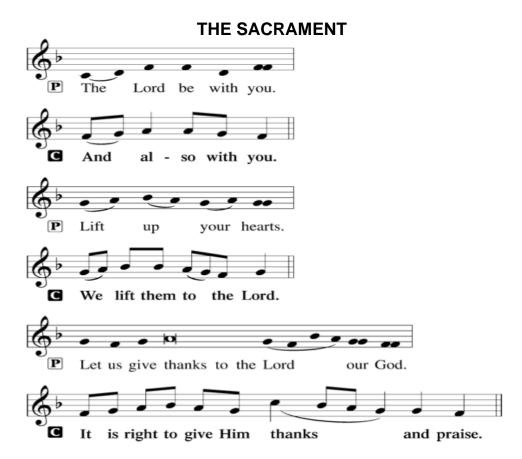
Open the eyes of those who use violence, terrorism and sabotage to find the error of their ways. Especially we remember.....Have mercy on all who do wrong, and turn them to you in repentance and faith.

Lord, in your mercy: hear our prayer.

Have mercy on the sick and suffering. Give healing and relief so that you may be praised. We remember today.....and all who cope with chronic pain in all of its hurtful forms, so that all find their strength and hope in You.

Lord, in your mercy: hear our prayer.

Thank you for all who rejoiced in the hope of eternal life through Your blood and who are now with you in glory. Build us up when danger and death approach, and let our lives here on earth end in peace and quietness as we leave to see you face to face. All this, and for whatever else we should ask, we pray in your holy name, for you live and reign with the Father and the Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**



It is truly good, right and joyful, that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to You, O Lord, O Holy Father, Almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord – Who is the King of kings and Lord of lords and You have seated him at Your right hand in glory, and put all things under his feet, that he may present them You restored in beauty, truth, and love. And so, with the church on earth, and the company of Heaven; we praise Your name and join their unending hymn:



THE LORD'S PRAYER Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name....

comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na

WORDS OF OUR LORD:

Our Lord, Jesus Christ, on the night in which He was betrayed, took bread and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying: "Take, eat; This is My + Body which is given for you, this do, in remembrance of Me. In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying "Drink of it all of you, this cup is the New Testament in My + Blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

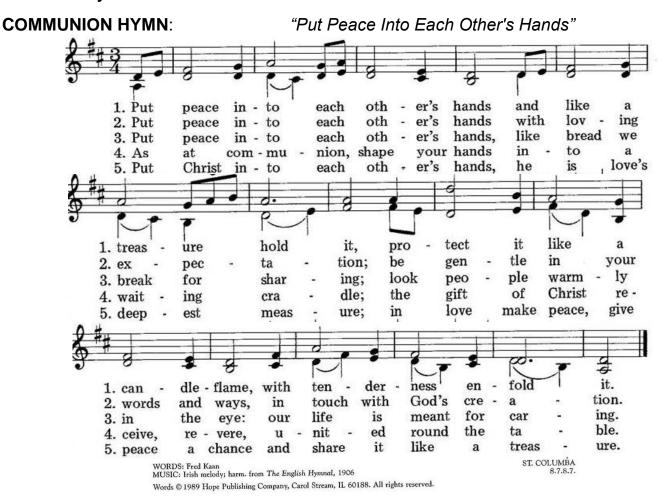
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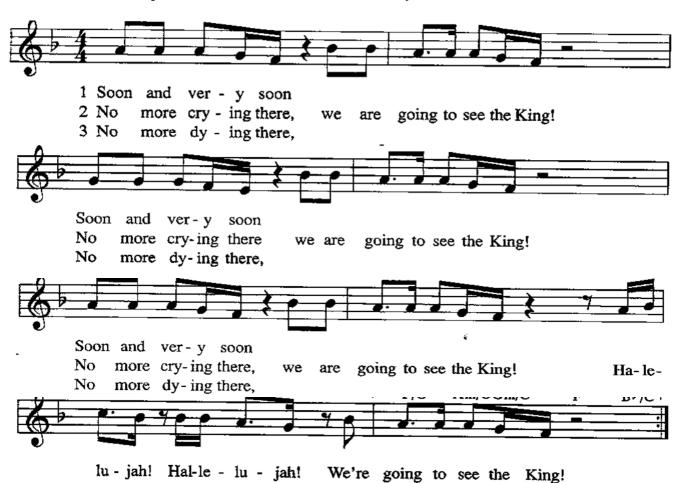
The peace of the Lord be with you always. And also with you.



HOLY COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

For those who have need, please feel free to stand at the rail if kneeling is difficult. The common cup and trays of individual glasses are available. Gluten free wafers are also available. Light purple glasses of Communion wine mixed with water are in the centre ring of the silver trays.





- 4. We've come from ev'ry land, we are going to see the King. God's got us by the hand; we are going to see the King!
 - Our sins got washed away. We'll meet up in Kingdom land;
 Hallelujah, hallelujah! We're going to see the King!
 - 5. Soon and very soon -- we are going to see the King! Soon and very soon-- we are going to see the King! Soon and very soon-- we are going to see the King! Hallelujah, hallelujah! We're going to see the King!

Andre Crouch © Reprinted from: www.hymnary.org All God's People Sing CPH © 1982 Verse 4 is a paraphrase to Andre Crouch's song bridge.



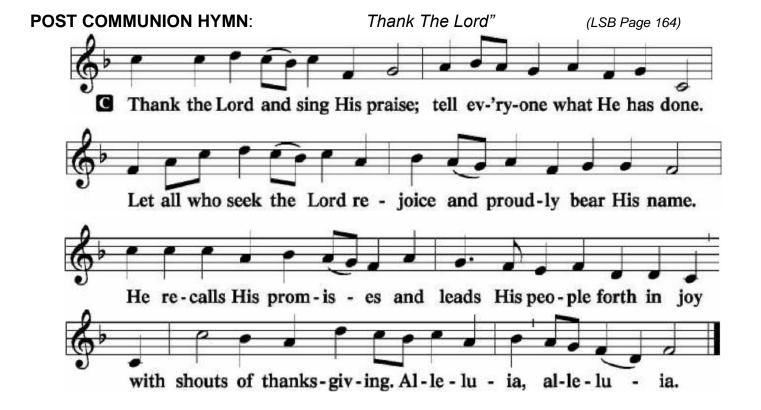


When it was first published, the author called this text "Christus Paradox," because so many attributes of Christ stand in tension with each other. Mindful of the works of Søren Kierkegaard, she drafted it on a commuter bus after "a particularly bad day" of prison ministry.

TEXT: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1984 MUSIC: French melody, 17th cent. Text © 1991 GIA Publications, Inc. PICARDY 8.7.8.7.8.7 (alternate harmonization, 347)

CCLI# 1296903

https://www.firstpreswh.org/daily-devotional/you-lord-are-both-lamb-and-shepherd-hymn-274/



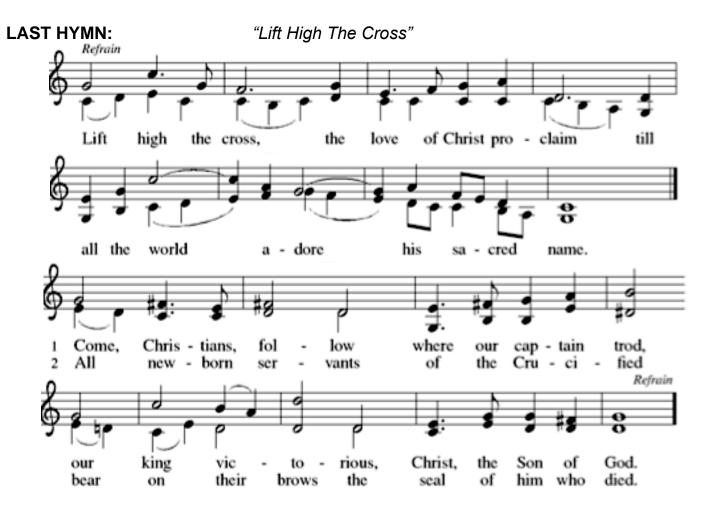
POST COMMUNION PRAYER:

Let us pray: Almighty God, Who has given Your Son, Jesus Christ, as a Sacrifice for sin and the True Example of a godly life, give us grace that as we have received Him in the Holy Communion Feast we may daily abide in Him, hearing and believing His Holy Word and living out our days in peace and joy; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION:

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favour, + and give you peace.

Amen.



- 3. O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree, raise us, and let Your cross the magnet be.

 Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim; til all the world, adore, His sacred name.
 - 4. Let ev'ry race and ev'ry language tell, of Him Who saves our souls from death and hell. Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim; til all the world, adore, His sacred name.

Text: George W. Kitchin, 1827–1912; rev. Michael R. Newbolt, 1874–1956 Music: CRUCIFER, Sydney H. Nicholson, 1875–1947 Text and music € 1974 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

https://mlutheran.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Web_June-25-_LARGELBW1_Pentecost-2023.pdf

REV. TODD HOEFFS Christ the King Sunday Matthew 25:31-36 Hands are for helping November 26, 2023

Last week in Dollarama. Coming from church service, wearing my collar. Bumped into a lady shopping. Oh, you're a priest or pastor? Yes, I'm a pastor. Where? CLC on Russell.

Oh yes, I know that place. I was there in 2010 for a funeral. Brody's Funeral He was my son's BEST friend and we still miss him. God bless you. Sometimes we don't know the long reaching effects of the ministry we provide. Whatever you do to the least of these my brothers & sisters, you have done unto ME. The Least are the small, either in stature [like a child or youth], or marginalized, Or vulnerable, or sad, lonely. In Greek its MICRO. We know that word. It's commonly known, Which tells us the least are everywhere. Some get caught up on the brothers and sisters, That these must either be relatives by blood or faith. Then that would mean the sheep on the right hand side of the King in Jesus' parable Only helped those they knew...And they didn't even know or realize the help they gave. Let's not forget earlier in Jesus' ministry He said "my brothers and mother and sisters are those who hear MY Word and keep it." Every person of the world is adopted into God's family by Baptism and faith.

Jesus lived as a person of the world And identifies Himself with us all. The truth of the matter is we do not always know whom a brother or sister is? We might think everyone in here or in every church sits with a halo around their head. That's not always the reality. Beyond these walls are places where brothers and sisters live. Why else would Jesus tell His disciples to fish for people using a huge dragnet? Catch everything So that everyone has the opportunity to receive the Living Lord And enjoy the sheep flock of our Great Shepherd.

Because of God's love for us, we rely on grace to care for the least. When you serve any brother or sister, you are serving Jesus Himself. This can involve a little or a lot.

Most of all it involves care and love. Giving of our abilities to help someone else.

Which at times can be hard to give. We feel drained and distracted, And that usually means were trying to live life on our own Apart from God or those He places in our lives to help us.

Like who we may ask? Help, who helps me? Who am I supposed to help? I've got enough to do....That element of surprise always stands out in this story. Jesus constantly repeats warning that last day when the world ends will come when we least expect it.

When Jesus as the Son of Man comes in glory. When the sheep are separated from the goats, Like the wheat is separated from the weeds. The reason for separating sheep from goats makes sense for farming reasons And for eternal life reasons. Goats have to graze in pastures earlier than sheep because sheep pull out the grass root and all. Sheep have better wool. Goats are more independent. Sheep are quiet, goats can be bullies. Sheep easily get into messes they can't fix, goats cause messes they can't clean up. And yet both very similar

in body structure. In a large herd it can be hard telling them apart. As humans, we are both sheep and goats. We are lost and refuse to be found. We are sinner and saint. We know it all, we know nothing at all. We have faith and yet only act faithful because of Jesus. We are completely forgiven. A sheep is led by its shepherd. A goatherd is led by his goat. Sheep follow, goats do not like following. Goats can learn to follow when they see faith and life is so much more than just themselves. Both sheep and goats are expected to help the least of these their brothers and sisters. A single failure to care for the least is all it takes to be condemned. Who can stand up to that test? We don't give money to every charity that asks. Sometimes we avoid the eyes of the person sitting just outside my car window asking for help. How often have we visited people in prisons? And yet miraculously,, a single instance of faithfulness is all it takes. One small gift is the same as giving your all to Jesus Himself. Everyone on earth is truly a mix of sheep and goat. It is only through Christ's redeeming that any of us can be considered worthy. We rarely count the cost of helping the least. Both sheep and the goats are surprised to learn they have encountered the Good Shepherd whenever they met "the least of these." Whether caring for the needs of others or ignoring those needs, the surprise is the same: "Lord, when did we see you...?" they ask. Life is filled with busy time consuming acts. It rarely occurs to us that we are doing anything special or unusual. It isn't that caring for the poor, the sick, and the hungry makes you into a sheep instead of a goat. Caring for the poor, the sick, and the hungry simply shows the world whether you already are a sheep ... or a goat. The way you respond to 'the least of these' shows your true identity. If your identity lies only in yourself, or what you think makes you important in the world, you won't see the needs around you as something that should matter to you. For none of us desires to be apart from God in darkness and hell with Satan. Selfish living bears a self-inflicted ending. But when identifying with Jesus, When He is YOUR Identity in the world, When the Gospel is your centre and only motivation, you see Jesus in others, whether they are sick or poor or hungry or in prison – you see them as Jesus sees them, and you see Jesus in them. When meeting the Lord in the least instead of the greatest, the righteous will respond out of righteousness, and those who are *not* righteous ... will not. Some will even get angry at your serving. They got angry at Jesus, too. Jesus is telling this parable right before the Kingdom of God will be complete with death on a cross. Within 48 hours, Jesus will wash his disciples' feet and tell them "I have set an example that you should do as I have done for you" (John 13:15). Love one another. Greater Love has no one that this, that they lay down their life for their friends. Greater love expressed with arms wide open, hands and feet nailed down to wood. Jesus has shed His Blood, given up His life, entered into death and rise again To pave the way to life for all who follow Him. It will only cost us kindness, caring, helping, listening, loving. We can stop *looking* for Jesus, stop *wishing* you could see him face-to-face, and start realizing you see Jesus in every single person you encounter. Start seeing Jesus in the ones who annoy you or drains you or bothers you Or you are disinterested in knowing. Start seeing Jesus in...the ones who need the food we collect, the ones who are victims of crime, and the ones who commit those crimes; the oppressed and their oppressors;... the ones who've hurt you, and the ones you've hurt. The sick and the well, The young, the older and all in between. The proper and the panhandler. All have value because Jesus places Himself with them. We see Jesus in the water of Baptism. In the Bibles we have on our shelf, on our lphones, in our heads, even the parts we haven't read or can't remember. We see Jesus in the Communion Bread and Wine when we meet at His table.

We will walk out these doors and find Jesus waiting for us in the world. We meet Jesus in a stranger's eyes, in the hand of the poor, in our neighbor that we wave to from across the street, in our loved ones as we meet for holidays, or in the weary cashier at the check stand. This is why we are saved by grace and live in the here and know. We help create a just and peaceful world. The burning heart of the Gospel is making sure we include everyone. When I was driving down Queenston Street the other day I happened to notice going past the Positive Living, Where I drop off the Bear Paw cookies we collect –I saw people handing them out to people on the street and the joyful expression on the faces of those eating. There Jesus could easily be identified in the faces and faiths of those there. Not because we helped them or that we are so great, but because they are so gifted to enjoy the same Jesus we enjoy! He's just waiting for you to recognize him, to receive him, to trust his forgiveness, to enter into his joy. And when you see Jesus in the least as well as the greatest, they won't be 'least' or 'great' anymore. They will become part of us, one in Christ. And you may be surprised that, when you see Jesus in them, they will be able to see Jesus in *you*. Amen.

Christ The King Sunday

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SOLDIERS CLOTHES **FATHER** SAVE **CRIMINALS FORGIVE** CHOSEN **PUNISHED** ONE GOD KINGDOM DIVIDED TRUTH **JESUS** HIMSELF VINEGAR CHRIST WRITTEN **DEEDS** WRONG LOTS FEAR **SKULL** MOCKED

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