Sunday Worship Service – November 22, 2026

Worship words from *Sundays and Seasons* marked with *
Other material from various sources as indicated in the footnotes.

Welcome and Announcements

A Moment of Reflection

Call to Worship [1] (adapted from Psalm 90)

God of our Beginning,
From generation to generation, you have been our dwelling place-
Our home where grace abounds.
Before the mountains were born, before the earth was formed-
You are. Timeless and Eternal.
We first dwelled with you as divine thought, then as children,
born of love and breathed into fertile earth.
We, your children, bear your image.
Now, here, we gather in praise and remembrance of the First Love.
Humbled in the expanse of your sovereignty, we seek to begin anew.
What first you dream, O God, help us to awaken…

Pause for Reflection

In the silence of our understanding,
when words fail and hearts yearn to be made new,
We hear you calling from the kingdom of heaven within,
"My children. Return."

Return & Renewal (Confession & Forgiveness)

Return to the Lord your God who is gracious,
and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

God of all mercy and consolation,
your love is steadfast. Your love is patient.
God of our near and far, you meet us where we are –
each peak and valley of our lives.

Restore us by your Spirit's power.
Open our eyes to you, our source of life.
Come sanctify our hearts and minds.
May we walk your pathways to the glory of your name!

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[1] *Call to Worship; Return & Renewal,* and *Words of Assurance* from "Liturgy of the Beloved" © Johnston-Urey Music, All Rights Reserved. Used with Permission.

As in the Garden of our Unknowing,
We found division in worldly wisdom.
Long have we wandered from the wisdom of your love-
Help us to find our way back home.

Forgive us, Lord, as we forgive,
heeding the call to love as you have loved.
Let Mercy reign in ev'ry heart.
May the Way of Christ be the pattern of our lives.

Down through the ages, your love is changeless-
across the nations, each generation.
You are the cleansing rain. You wash away our pain,
and by your grace we have been saved.

Words of Assurance

God of our Unending, your love is as boundless as the heavens.
Your grace is a river that flows without ceasing.
In Jesus, you weave yourself into the fabric of our humanity-
Divine Mercy made manifest in our own time.

Therefore, Beloved, hear the good news:
In love you were made, and to love you shall return.
In the name of ☩Jesus Christ every distance is bridged,
Every division is healed, and every heart is made whole.
May Christ be your heart's everlasting desire.
May the Words of Life be ever upon your lips!
Amen.

Kyrie ***"I Desire Mercy"*** [2]

We'll sing for you in starlight, we'll sing throughout our days
In wonder and in tenderness, with ev'ry breath we take
As we remember the promise that you bring, O Kyrie:
"I desire Mercy. Not sacrifice, but Mercy."

We'll pray for all your children, that we may be as One,
Connected by one Holy Breath, one dream of unity.
And we'll remember, your words of life that lead to lasting peace:
"I desire Mercy. Not sacrifice, but Mercy."

[2] *Kyrie (I Desire Mercy)* and *Spoken Response* from "Liturgy of the Beloved" © Johnston-Urey Music, All Rights Reserved. Used with Permission.

Your everlasting promise. The life you ask we lead.
I desire Mercy, the doorway to everlasting peace.
O Kyrie of all our days, may we be your song.
May ev'ry heart awaken.
We are being sung. We are Being, prayed.

Spoken Response

Beloved, Christ is our guide.
With us, for us, within and throughout.
Truly, the kingdom of heaven has come near.
There is no future more worthy of celebration than now!
O Day of Peace, enter in!

Choir Anthem *"Rejoice"*

Prayer of the Day *

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Let us pray:
O God of power and might, your Son shows us the way of service, and in him we inherit the riches of your grace. Give us the wisdom to know what is right and the strength to serve the world you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

Because Israel's kings proved to be bad shepherds, Ezekiel declares that the Lord will assume the role of shepherd in Israel. The Lord will also set over them a shepherd-messiah, "my servant David," who will feed and care for the people. A reading from the Book of Ezekiel, the 34th chapter:

The LORD God proclaims: I myself will search for my flock and seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out the flock when some in the flock have been scattered, so will I seek out my flock. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered during the time of clouds and thick darkness. I will gather and lead them out from the countries and peoples, and I will bring them to their own fertile land. I will feed them on Israel's highlands, along the riverbeds, and in all the inhabited places. I will feed them in good pasture, and their sheepfold will be there, on Israel's lofty highlands. On Israel's highlands, they will lie down in a secure fold and feed on green pastures. I myself will feed my

flock and make them lie down. This is what the LORD God says. I will seek out the lost, bring back the strays, bind up the wounded, and strengthen the weak. But the fat and the strong I will destroy, because I will tend my sheep with justice.

So the LORD God proclaims to them: I will judge between the fat and the lean sheep. You shove with shoulder and flank, and with your horns you ram all the weak sheep until you've scattered them outside. But I will rescue my flock so that they will never again be prey. I will even judge between the sheep! I will appoint for them a single shepherd, and he will feed them. My servant David will feed them. He will be their shepherd. I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David will be their prince. I, the LORD, have spoken.

Here ends the reading.
Inspire our understanding, Spirit of God.

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 1:15-23

In this passage, God is praised for revealing ultimate divine power in raising Jesus from the dead. The resurrected, exalted Christ is Lord of both the church and the entire universe, now and in the age to come. A reading from the Letter to the Ephesians, the first chapter:

Since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, this is the reason that I don't stop giving thanks to God for you when I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, will give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation that makes God known to you. I pray that the eyes of your heart will have enough light to see what is the hope of God's call, what is the richness of God's glorious inheritance among believers, and what is the overwhelming greatness of God's power that is working among us believers. This power is conferred by the energy of God's powerful strength. God's power was at work in Christ when God raised him from the dead and sat him at God's right side in the heavens, far above every ruler and authority and power and angelic power, any power that might be named not only now but in the future. God put everything under Christ's feet and made him head of everything in the church, which is his body. His body, the church, is the fullness of Christ, who fills everything in every way.

Here ends the reading.
Inspire our understanding, Spirit of God.

The Living Word (Gospel Acclamation) [3]

In the beginning was the Word,
the Living Word of God, the Light of Life Unending.

You shine in us on ancient starlight,
in our Book of Memories and Future Dreams.

Sing we halle, hallelu!
You are the Word of Life Eternal.
Holy Wisdom, found within!
You speak to us and we remember:

"I am the Book no one can close,
The Story of our time, before all time, together.
I am the Voice that never falters, I, the Echo of Beyond.
I am the Way, the Truth, the Life." The Living Word.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 25:31-46

The holy gospel according to Matthew, the 25th chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

"Now when the Human One comes in his majesty and all his angels are with him, he will sit on his majestic throne. All the nations will be gathered in front of him. He will separate them from each other, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right side. But the goats he will put on his left.

"Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who will receive good things from my Father. Inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you before the world began. I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothes to wear. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.'

"Then those who are righteous will reply to him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? When did we see you as a stranger and welcome you, or naked and give you clothes to wear? When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?'

[3] *Gospel Acclamation "The Living Word"* from "Liturgy of the Beloved" © Johnston-Urey Music, All Rights Reserved. Used with Permission.

"Then the king will reply to them, 'I assure you that when you have done it for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you have done it for me.'

"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Get away from me, you who will receive terrible things. Go into the unending fire that has been prepared for the devil and his angels. I was hungry and you didn't give me food to eat. I was thirsty and you didn't give me anything to drink. I was a stranger and you didn't welcome me. I was naked and you didn't give me clothes to wear. I was sick and in prison, and you didn't visit me.'

"Then they will reply, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and didn't do anything to help you?' Then he will answer, 'I assure you that when you haven't done it for one of the least of these, you haven't done it for me.' And they will go away into eternal punishment. But the righteous ones will go into eternal life."

The gospel of our Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon: About a Century Ago

Hymn of the Day ***"In Nineteen Hundred Twenty Five"*** [4] (tune #886)

1. **In nineteen hundred twenty-five, as hate and violence grew,**
   O Christ, your churches emphasized: we follow only you!
2. **As one who gave himself in love, you showed us all God's Way:**
   As one who reigns in heaven above, you call us to obey.
3. **No earthly king, no race or land, should think that it is best.**
   We see your reign and understand that all, in you, are blest.
4. **Lord, may we welcome strangers here and humbly help the poor.**
   The world calls us to pride and fear — but your love calls us more.
5. **As hate and violence surge again, remind your church anew**
   that we're committed to your reign. Lord, may we follow you!

[4] Text © 2025 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved. (www.carolynshymns.com)

A Contemporary Creed for Christ the King Sunday [5]

Let us confess our faith together using a Contemporary Creed for Christ the King Sunday:

As followers of Jesus Christ, living in this world—
which some seek to control, and others view with despair—
we declare with joy and trust: Our world belongs to God!

From the beginning, through all the crises of our times,
until the kingdom fully comes, God keeps covenant forever:
Our world belongs to God!
God is King! Let the earth be glad!
Christ is victor: his rule has begun!
The Spirit is at work: creation is renewed!
Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!

Jesus ascended in triumph,
raising our humanity to the heavenly throne.
All authority, glory, and sovereign power are given to him.
There he hears our prayers and pleads our cause before the Father.
Blessed are all who take refuge in him.
Our hope for a new creation is not tied to what humans can do,
for we believe that one day every challenge to God's rule will be crushed.
His kingdom will fully come, and our Lord will rule.
Come, Lord Jesus, come.

Prayers of Intercession *

United with the great cloud of witnesses, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Christ our King, prepare your people for your reign to come among us. Where the church is wary, make us bold; where we are complacent, stir us to action; where we are anxious, assure us of your never-ending care. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Christ our King, bind up the wounds of all your people. Give courage to all who experience uncertainty, guide all people facing difficult decisions, and lift the spirits of any who are in need. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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[5] *Contemporary Creed* from **The Worship Sourcebook, Second Edition** © 2013 Faith Alive Christian Resources, Grand Rapids, MI

Christ our King, your justice embraces all people and calls us into a mutual fellowship of love and care. Challenge your Church to live out this concern in acts of compassion and liberation. As we do to and for others, so we serve you. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Christ our King, give to governments and all who rule a deep concern for the needs of their people. Give us an openness to welcome the stranger in peace and hospitality. May we share of our wealth and poverty. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Christ our King, in you the thirsty find refreshment, the hungry are fed, the naked are clothed and prisoners are visited. Leave no one ignored and abandoned. Extend the boundaries of our concern beyond those who are easy to love. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Christ our King, the sick, the lame and the infirm hold a special place in your concern. Give us grace to ensure that the care that is needed is provided. Be with those who are in hospital or convalescent facilities (*names*). As your faithfulness endures from age to age, so we rejoice before your glory. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your steadfast love, faithful God, we entrust all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus, your beloved. **Amen.**

The Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

The Assembly greets one another with a word of peace.

Offering / Offering Prayer *

We offer these gifts as a sign of love, devotion, and praise to the one we acknowledge as ruler over all things, that we may participate in the realm of Christ as it continues to spread throughout the world.

(an Offering plate is placed on the altar)

Please join me in the Offering Prayer:
Eternal God, our time, talents, and treasures are gifts from you.
Receive what we offer, and all that you entrust to us,
until hungry no more, all the world is fed,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving [6]

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give our thanks and praise to our Lord God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise!

Preface [7]

It is indeed right to give you our thanks and praise, O God,
for your love is forever, faithful from age to age.

You are our maker, to who we belong,
for you created the earth and you shepherd all who live in it.
When your people were scattered and oppressed,
you promised through your prophets to gather them home
and feed them on the rich pasture of their own land.

In your child, Jesus, the promises have been fulfilled:
a shepherd king who seeks the lost and binds up the wounded.
When he was killed, you raised him from the dead
and seated him at your side in the heavenly places.
Now your immeasurable power is at work in us who believe
to clothe us in compassion and righteousness
so that we might be fit for the kingdom
which you prepared for us from the foundation of the world.

Therefore you raised him to life
and exalted him above every other power.
Now you embrace all who in action confess him as Lord,
baptising them in his name into the life of your Kingdom.

With all the saints and angel choirs and all the heavenly host,
We praise your name, O Christ, and join their unending hymn:

Sanctus

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blest is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!

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[6] From "Liturgy of the Beloved" © Johnston-Urey Music, All Rights Reserved. Used with Permission.

[7] *Preface* from **Laughingbird: Liturgical Resources with an Australian Voice** (https://laughingbird.net)

In Remembrance of Me (sung Words of Institution)

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed,
took the bread and blessed it, and broke it for his friends.
"This is my body given for you," he said to them that night.
"Take and eat it, all of you in remembrance of me."

In the same way, after supper, he lifted up the cup.
He offered praise and blessings, and to his friends he said,
"This is my blood shed for all, the Covenant made new.
Drink of it, all of you, in remembrance of me.

Amen, this is goodbye for now, for I'll not drink again,
Until I drink this cup anew in Heaven with you."
Together, with all the faithful across every time and place,
we pray as our Lord taught us, using the words knit upon our hearts…

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Communion Invitation

These are the gifts of God, given for all. Come, be refreshed.

Communion Instructions

Communion Distribution (begin with communing the online congregation)

***Hymn during Communion "Crown Him with Many Crowns"* #855**

1. **Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon his throne;**
   hark, how the heav'nly anthem drowns all music but its own.
   Awake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee,
   and hail him as thy matchless king through all eternity.
2. **Crown him the virgin's Son, the God incarnate born,**
   whose arm those crimson trophies won which now his brow adorn;
   fruit of the mystic rose, yet of that rose the stem,
   the root whence mercy ever flows, the babe of Bethlehem.

3. **Crown him the Lord of love – behold his hands and side,**
rich wounds, yet visible above, in beauty glorified.
No angels in the sky can fully bear that sight,
but downward bend their burning eyes at mysteries so bright.

4. **Crown him the Lord of life, who triumphed o'er the grave**
and rose victorious in the strife for those he came to save.
His glories now we sing, who died and rose on high,
who died, eternal life to bring, and lives that death may die.

5. **Crown him the Lord of years, the potentate of time,**
creator of the rolling spheres, ineffably sublime.
All hail, Redeemer, hail! For thou hast died for me;
thy praise and glory shall not fail throughout eternity.

Hymn during Communion "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!" **#634** (vs. 1-3,5)

1. **All hail the pow'r of Jesus' name! Let angels prostrate fall;**
bring forth the royal diadem and crown him Lord of all.
Bring forth the royal diadem and crown him Lord of all.

2. **O seed of Israel's chosen race now ransomed from the fall,**
hail him who saves you by his grace and crown him Lord of all.
Hail him who saves you by his grace and crown him Lord of all.

3. **Hail him, you heirs of David's line, whom David Lord did call –**
the God incarnate, man divine – and crown him Lord of all.
The God incarnate, man divine – and crown him Lord of all.

5. **Let ev'ry kindred, ev'ry tribe on this terrestrial ball**
to him all majesty ascribe and crown him Lord of all.
To him all majesty ascribe and crown him Lord of all.

Communion Blessing

May the precious body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, strengthen you, and keep you in his grace now, and unto life everlasting.

Prayer after Communion *

Holy God, we have received your never-ending mercy in this meal. You continuously seek the lost, bind the injured, and feed your people abundantly. Now send us out, awake to your presence, now and forever. Amen.

Hope Everlasting (Benediction) [8]

Oh, where do we go from here?
Whom do we follow, which path do we take?

We'll follow wherever You lead.
We'll follow Your heart's desire,
And seek to be Your peace for a world in need.

Now, may the God of all hope fill you with joy and peace, by faith,
And may your hope everlasting, by the power of the Spirit, abound!

(repeat song)

Commission

Go in peace, inspired by the risen Christ to love and serve!
Thanks be to God.

Postlude – Joshua Hendricksen

[8] *Hope Everlasting* from "Liturgy of the Beloved" © Johnston-Urey Music, All Rights Reserved. Used with Permission.