

Our Sunday Service Together

Sunday November 24th 2024



An Acclamation for the Season

All: Alleluia, alleluia! Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessings on the coming kingdom of our father David!

Preparation

All: This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Through the brokenness of Christ, we become one body
as one body we now gather in the name of Christ to offer our praise and thanksgiving, to receive God's holy word, to pray for the needs of the world,
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins, that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

Our Confession

God the Father forgives us in Christ and heals us by the Holy Spirit. Let us therefore put away all anger and bitterness, all slander and malice, and confess our sins to God our redeemer.

All: Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord, we come to you in sorrow for our sins, and confess to you our weakness and unbelief.

We have lived by our own strength, and not by the power of your resurrection.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived by the light of our own eyes, as faithless and not believing.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived for this world alone, and doubted our home in heaven.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

Be still for a moment in confession and in receiving God's Grace in Christ

All: May Almighty God, who in Jesus Christ has given us a kingdom that cannot be destroyed, forgive us our sins, open our eyes to God's truth, strengthen us to do God's will and give us the joy of his kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Risen Lord. **Amen.**

The opening prayer

All: The night has passed, and the day lies open before us; let us pray with one heart and mind.
Silence is kept.

All: As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and for ever. Amen.

The Psalmody Psalm 93 *We say the psalm aloud*

The Lord is king and has put on glorious apparel; the Lord has put on his glory and girded himself with strength.

He has made the whole world so sure that it cannot be moved.

Your throne has been established from of old; you are from everlasting.

The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their pounding waves.

Mightier than the thunder of many waters, mightier than the breakers of the sea, the Lord on high is mightier.

Your testimonies are very sure; holiness adorns your house, O Lord, for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

Scripture Reading Revelation 1.4b-8

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

⁷Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail. So it is to be. Amen.

⁸'I am the Alpha and the Omega', says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

At the end of the reading we say:

All: This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Gloria

All: 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 Gospel John 18.33-37

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

At the end of the reading we say:

All: This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

A Reflection for the day

'I am the Alpha and the Omega', says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty'

Amidst the anxiety of this age, this season of change and turmoil amongst nations, within our own nation, within the natural world, there is peace to be had from this declaration – God has been there in times of great change, when waters and oceans were dark and tempestuous, and is with us today and will be in whichever future appears.

In the court of Herod and Pilot there are great discussions about who this Jesus actually is. The various political leaders play off against one another, looking for someone else to take responsibility and find a solution to the conundrum, for the paradox that sits before them. Pilot and Herod both seek for an understanding based on their expectations of kingship; but this is not a kingdom or a monarch from 'round here' – Jesus is a concept of rule and exercising of authority quite foreign to anything they know of.

'But you are a king?' Pilate asks. 'You say I am a King' Jesus replies. It would seem there has been something said that enables the question, or is it declaration to be uttered. Jesus, in his reply challenges the concept held by Pilot of what a king is, and his words continue to stir our thoughts as well when declare with our lips 'Jesus is Lord'.

As Pilot had his concepts of King so would he also have had his concepts of the gods. The real challenge to us today is not so much to consider our concepts of Kingship, but those we hold of God – the 'Alpha and Omega'; the beginning and end of all things!

In thinking of the enormity of God, 'who was and is and is to come', we naturally diminish our vision, reduce our gaze for the sight and enormity of this God is too much for our minds to comprehend. In some ways we think in family sized, utilitarian accessory manner for a safe and comprehensible image of God.

As too, maybe, the notion that this vast, heart stopping mystery, this uncontainable or tameable God, holy in every way, could 'step down' in to our existence is beyond comprehension. Yet this is what Advent and Christmas will present to us in the coming weeks. God so loves the world he came and joined with us, 'got his hands dirty' even as his heart remained holy and pure.

Here is the reality of matters; God is Alpha and Omega, and all thing in-between. God has lived, lives with us today and will be with us as we journey through life's valleys, be they darkened or bathed in sunlight. This is our God, this is our Lord, this is our King; and we bow down in worship!

The Creed

All: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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.

Prayers

We make our intercessions

Let us with confidence present our prayers and supplications to the throne of grace.

Come to your world as King of the nations. Enable our Leaders to stay on the course you have set for them. Be their wisdom and good counsel. Help them to distil the voices. Shine the light of your presence upon our Prime Minister, our Government and all who advise them.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayers.

Come to your world as King of the nations. We bring to God all those who suffer in body, mind, spirit or with grief. We ask that in God's great loving kindness they might know God's sustaining presence amidst their pain. We pray for those who are stretched beyond their own capacity to cope and remain hopeful – that in the roar of these waterfalls God would bring a sense of coherence, comfort and strength.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayers.

Come to your world as King of the nations. At this time, we pray for the isolated and the lonely, for those suffering at home from domestic abuse and especially those admitted to hospital because of abuse. We give thanks for all seeking to minister to the least of these', for those working in the NHS, for social workers, for food bank helpers, night shelter workers, those who support people forced into the sex industry to make ends meet, for children who miss school to care for others.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayers

Come to your world as King of the nations. Lift us up to meet you, that with all your saints and angels we may live and reign with you in your new creation.

Lord in your mercy hear our prayers; Amen!

The Collect

All: God the Father, help us to hear the call of Christ the King and to follow in his service, whose kingdom has no end; for he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, one Glory. Amen.

Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

All: 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, the power, and the glory
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Conclusion

All: Christ, as a light illumine and guide me this day.
Christ, as a shield overshadow me.
Christ under me, Christ over me;
Christ beside me on my left and my right.
This day be within and without me.
Amen.