

# Holy Eucharist

Proper 28A, Pentecost 24

November 15, 2020

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85887946777?pwd=eig4MEdsMUh6clV6b2dUblFOQ3I2Zz09>

Meeting ID: 858 8794 6777

Passcode: stb

## Prelude

## Announcements

## Opening Hymn

Hymnal 617

*Eternal Ruler of the ceaseless round*

*Unison or harmony*

1 E - ter - nal Ru - ler of the cease - less round  
2 We would be one in ha - tred of all wrong,  
3 Oh, clothe us with thy heaven - ly ar - mor, Lord,

of cir - cling plan - ets sing - ing on their way,  
one in the love of all things sweet and fair,  
thy trust - y shield, thy word of love di - vine;

guide of the na - tions from the night pro - found  
one with the joy that break - eth in - to song,  
our in - spi - ra - tion be thy con - stant word,

in - to the glo - ry of the per - fect day;  
 one with the grief that trem - bleth in - to prayer;  
 we ask no vic - to - ries that are not thine;

rule in our hearts, that we may ev - er be  
 one in the power that makes thy chil - dren free  
 give or with - hold, let pain or plea - sure be;

guid - ed and strength - ened and up - held by thee.  
 to fol - low truth, and thus to fol - low thee.  
 e - nough to know that we are serv - ing thee.

*Presider* Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.  
*People* **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

*The Presider begins the Collect for Purity*

### **Collect for Purity**

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: **Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### **Song of Praise**

*Presider and People say together*

**Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to God's 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.**

### **Collect of the Day**

*Presider*           The Lord be with you.

*People*             **And also with you.**

*Presider*           Let us pray.

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*All sit.*

### **First Reading**

Judges 4:1-7

A reading from the book of Judges.

<sup>1</sup>The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, after Ehud died. <sup>2</sup>So the LORD sold them into the hand of King Jabin of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor; the commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-ha-goyim. <sup>3</sup>Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD for help; for he had nine hundred chariots of iron, and had oppressed the Israelites cruelly twenty years.

<sup>4</sup>At that time Deborah, a prophetess, wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel. <sup>5</sup>She used to sit under the palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim; and the Israelites came up to her for judgment. <sup>6</sup>She sent and summoned Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, "The LORD, the God of

Israel, commands you, 'Go, take position at Mount Tabor, bringing ten thousand from the tribe of Naphtali and the tribe of Zebulun. <sup>7</sup>I will draw out Sisera, the general of Jabin's army, to meet you by the Wadi Kishon with his chariots and his troops; and I will give him into your hand.'

*Reader* The Word of the Lord.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

## **Psalm 123**

<sup>1</sup>To you I lift up my eyes,

to you enthroned in the heavens.

<sup>2</sup>**As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters,  
and the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,**

<sup>3</sup>So our eyes look to the LORD our God,  
until he show us his mercy.

<sup>4</sup>**Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy,  
for we have had more than enough of contempt,**

<sup>5</sup>Too much of the scorn of the indolent rich,  
**and of the derision of the proud.**

## **Second Reading**

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

A reading from the First letter of Paul to the Thessalonians.

<sup>1</sup>Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. <sup>2</sup>For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. <sup>3</sup>When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! <sup>4</sup>But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; <sup>5</sup>for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. <sup>6</sup>So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; <sup>7</sup>for those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. <sup>8</sup>But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. <sup>9</sup>For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>10</sup>who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. <sup>11</sup>Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

*Reader* The Word of the Lord.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

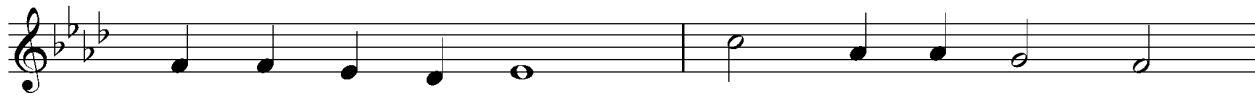
*All stand as they are able.*

**Sequence Hymn**  
*Come, labor on*

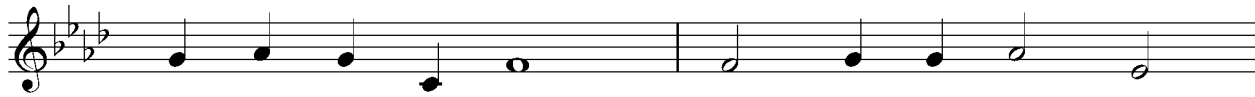
Hymnal 541



1 Come, la - bor on. Who dares stand i - dle  
4 Come, la - bor on. Claim the high call - ing  
5 Come, la - bor on. No time for rest, till



1 on the har - vest plain, while all a - round us  
4 an - gels can - not share— to young and old the  
5 glows the west - ern sky, till the long sha - dows



1 waves the gold - en grain? And to each ser - vant  
4 Gos - pel glad - ness bear: re - deem the time; its  
5 o'er our path - way lie, and a glad sound comes



1 does the Mas - ter say, "Go work to - day."  
4 hours too swift - ly fly. The night draws— nigh.  
5 with the set - ting sun, "Ser - vants, well done."

**Holy Gospel**

Matthew 25:14-30

*Priest* The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Matthew.  
*People* **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

<sup>14</sup>[Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven will be as when] a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them;<sup>15</sup>to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. <sup>16</sup>The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. <sup>17</sup>In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. <sup>18</sup>But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. <sup>19</sup>After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled



accounts with them. <sup>20</sup>Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' <sup>21</sup>His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' <sup>22</sup>And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' <sup>23</sup>His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' <sup>24</sup>Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; <sup>25</sup>so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' <sup>26</sup>But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? <sup>27</sup>Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. <sup>28</sup>So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. <sup>29</sup>For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. <sup>30</sup>As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' "

*Priest* The Gospel of the Lord.

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

## **Sermon**

*All stand as they are able.*

## **Nicene Creed**

*Presider* Let us affirm the faith of the Church using the words of the Nicene Creed:

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.  
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,**

**was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven**

**and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*All remain standing as they are able.*

## **Prayers of the People**

*Presider* Let us rise from our spiritual complacency and offer our prayers to God, responding, “Lord, hear our prayer.”

*Intercessor* That our local and federal judges may have the wisdom of the prophet Deborah, whose strength was revealed in passing judgment for condemnation when necessary and for growth when warranted; let us pray. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Silence is kept.*

That we may clothe each other with faith and love, hope and salvation, encouraging one another in discipleship and building up one another for the growth of Christ’s Body, the Church; let us pray. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Silence is kept.*

That we may expose our gifts to the light of day, using them as instruments of salvation for those who live on the margins of society, and for those who, though rich, have an emptiness too painful to expose; let us pray. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Silence is kept.*

That our treasures of time and money may be used wisely, to our personal benefit and for the betterment of our Church and society; let us pray. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Silence is kept.*

That we may humbly open our hands to receive the Bread of Life, and joyfully drink the Cup of Salvation, becoming one with Christ in his death and risen life; let us pray. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Silence is kept.*

That all who have died may come to the glory of that place where the noise of daily life has given way to the peace of eternal rest, [remembering \_\_\_\_\_]; let us pray. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Silence is kept.*

Trusting in the One who sweeps away our sins and invites us to begin again, let us continue our prayers, praying for our Bishops Bonnie, Michael, Justin, Julio, Moises, Elizabeth, Donald and Craig. We pray for all ministers, priests, deacons, ministry teams, those in formation; and our brothers and sisters worshipping at St Peter's, Hillsdale; and Church of the Transfiguration, Bani, in the Dominican Republic.

We add to these prayers those who are sick, unhappy, lonely or bereft, [remembering \_\_\_\_\_], that they may be healed and comforted, let us pray. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Silence is kept.*

In thanksgiving for [\_\_\_\_\_ and] all God's gifts to us, let us pray. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Silence is kept.*

*Presider* O God, you have taught us to keep all your commandments by loving you and our neighbor: Grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit, that we may be devoted to you with our whole heart, and united to one another with pure affection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## **Confession of Sin**

*The Presider says*

Since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. *Hebrews 4:14, 16*



*The Presider then says*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*Silence may be kept.*

*Minister and People*

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

*The Priest stands and says*

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

### **The Peace**

*Presider*            The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People*             **And also with you.**

*Then the Ministers and the People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

*The Presider then says*

Through Christ let us continually offer to God the sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his Name. But do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. *Hebrews 13:15, 16*

# Holy Communion

## *How the Holy Communion is prepared*

The Officiant, Deacon, other Eucharistic Ministers, and any participating Acolytes must wash their hands, or use hand sanitizer, before celebrating and before distribution. Gloves will not be used.

The Officiant alone will bring the bread and wine from the credence table to the Altar at the time of the offertory. All of the elements for Holy Communion will be placed on the Altar for the Eucharistic Prayer.

The Officiant alone stands at the altar, with others 6 feet or more away.

The **priest's wafer and chalice** will be uncovered in front of the officiant during the Eucharistic Prayer. They **are for the officiant alone**. They are consumed entirely by the officiant, or appropriately disposed of after the service.

The priest's wafer and the people's wafers will be kept separate at all times. The **people's wafers will be a container** on the Altar, which will remain covered throughout the Eucharistic Prayer. During consecration, the Officiant will touch the container, not the wafers.

The **distribution** of consecrated wine is not permitted at this time (as of June 19, 2020 Diocese of Michigan directive).

## *How the Holy Communion will be distributed*

Everyone distributing communion will use hand sanitizer before they begin distribution. Gloves will not be used.

Communicants will be encouraged to use hand sanitizer before receiving. Hand sanitizer will be available in each pew.

The bread will be distributed at the communion rail, while maintaining six feet of distance between households. The people will be directed forward to receive.

Masks must continue to be worn during the distribution of communion. Communicants should only lift their mask and consume the bread when they are back in their pews, or at least six feet **away from** the distribution point.

The Minister will place the bread in the hand. The distribution will happen without directly touching the hand of the person receiving. Hand-to-mouth distribution is not permitted. If hand-to-hand contact happens, the minister will re-sanitize.

If a blessing is preferred, the blessing will be given without touch.

The people stand as a minister brings forward the alms basin.

## Offertory Hymn

Doxology

**Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, you heav'nly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

*The people remain standing.*

## Great Thanksgiving

*Presider* The Lord be with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Presider* Lift up your hearts.

*People* **We lift them to the Lord.**

*Presider* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People* **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

God of all power, Ruler of the Universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.  
**Glory to you for ever and ever.**

At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.  
**By your will they were created and have their being.**

From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill. You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you, and betrayed your trust; and we turned against one another.  
**Have mercy, Lord, for we are sinners in your sight.**

Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous Law. And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son, born of a woman, to fulfill your Law, to open for us the way of freedom and peace.  
**By his blood, he reconciled us. By his wounds, we are healed.**

And therefore we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, saints and martyrs, and with all those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

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

*The people continue to stand, or kneel as they are able.*

*The Presider continues*

And so, Creator God, we who have been redeemed by your Christ, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring before you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

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

Remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving:

**We celebrate his death and resurrection, as we await the day of his coming.**

Lord God of our forebears; God of the Matriarchs and Patriarchs; God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name.

**Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread.**

Accept these prayers and praises, Holy One, through Jesus Christ our great High Priest, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, your Church gives honor, glory, and worship, from generation to generation. **AMEN.**

*The Presider then continues*

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray:

**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.**

## Breaking of the Bread

*A period of silence is kept.*

*The Presider says*

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;  
**Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

*The Presider says*

In union, O Lord, with the faithful at every altar of your Church, where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, we desire to offer our praise and thanksgiving. We present to you our souls and bodies, with the earnest wish that we may always be united to you. And if we cannot now receive you sacramentally, we beseech you to come spiritually into our hearts. We unite ourselves to you, and embrace you with all the affections of our souls. Let nothing ever separate us from you. **Amen.**

These are the Gifts of God for the People of God.

## Communion Hymn

Tune: *Angel's Story*

*O Jesus, I have promised*

1 O Je - sus, I have prom - ised to serve you to the end; re -  
2 O let me hear you speak - ing in ac - cents clear and still, a -  
3 O Je - sus, you have prom - ised to all who fol - low you that

main for - ev - er near me, my Mas - ter and my Friend: I  
bove the storms of pas - sion, the mur - murs of self - will. O  
where you are in glo - ry, your ser - vant shall be too; and,

shall not fear the bat - tle if you are by my side, nor  
speak to re - as - sure me, to has - ten or con - trol; now  
Je - sus, I have prom - ised to serve you to the end; O

wan - der from the path - way if you will be my guide.  
speak, and make me lis - ten, O guard - ian of my soul.  
give me grace to fol - low, my Mas - ter and my Friend.

*After Communion, the Presider says*

Let us pray.

*Presider and People*

**Loving God,  
we give you thanks  
for restoring us in your image  
and nourishing us with spiritual food  
in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.  
Now send us forth a people  
forgiven, healed, renewed;  
that we may proclaim your love to the world  
and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.**

## **Blessing**

*The priest blesses the people, saying*

May the blessing + of the God of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar, and of Jesus Christ, born of our sister Mary, and of the Holy Spirit, who broods over the world as a mother over her children, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

**Concluding Hymn**  
*On Christ the Solid Rock*

LEVAS 99

1. My hope is built on noth - ing less Than Je - sus' blood and  
 2. When dark - ness veils His love - ly face, I rest on His un -  
 3. His oath, His cov - e - nant and blood, Sup - port me in the  
 4. When He shall come with trum - pet sound, O may I then in

1. right - eous - ness; I dare not trust the sweet - est frame, But  
 2. chang - ing grace; In ev - 'ry high and storm - y gale, My  
 3. whelm - ing flood; When all a - round my soul gives way, he  
 4. Him be found; Dressed in His right - eous - ness a - lone, Fault -

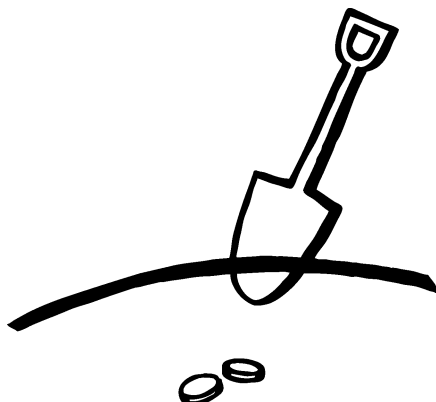
1. whol - ly lean on Je - sus' name.  
 2. an - chor holds with - in the veil. On Christ, the so - lid Rock, I stand, All  
 3. then is all my hope and stay.  
 4. less to stand be - fore the throne.

oth - er ground is sink - ing sand, All oth - er ground is sink - ing sand.

## Dismissal

*Presider* Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
*People* **Thanks be to God.**

## Postlude



### REGARDING OFFERINGS TO ST. BARNABAS CHURCH

**To make an offering to St Barnabas**, please mail your check to the church: 20500 W Old US-12, Chelsea MI 48118-1309. Mail is being collected daily.

### CONTINUING OUR DONATIONS OF FOOD AND FUNDS TO FAITH IN ACTION

Faith in Action is providing leadership in collecting donations to support households in need in the Chelsea and Dexter areas.

**Needed right now:** Shelf-stable groceries and financial donations; cleaning products and personal products are always needed, as these items cannot be purchased with food stamps. You may bring your donations to FIA, or to Nancy who will see that they get there. **If you bring food directly to FIA**, please let Nancy know, so she can continue to keep our records of donation. ***Food will also be collected at the church TODAY, November 15, the next BC meeting date. The building will be open for you to leave your donations on the table.***

Donations to help us combat the continuing effects of the pandemic can be made by PayPal at [www.faithinaction1.org](http://www.faithinaction1.org), by Facebook, or by mailing a check to *Faith in Action*, 603 S. Main Street, Chelsea MI 48118. **If you need help, please call FIA at (734) 475-3305**



## Enrichment for Our Spiritual Journey



**The Way of Love** material can be found here:

<https://episcopalchurch.org/way-of-love>

**Join St Barnabas'** twice-weekly Zoom check-in! Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. Contact Marion if you need the link.

**Watch** Washington National Cathedral's live-streamed Eucharist and Daily Office services, <https://cathedral.org/calendar/>

**Join in** a short, weekly, meditation with Presiding Bishop Curry here: <https://episcopalchurch.org/habits-of-grace>

**Watch** Bishop Bonnie Perry's sermons, <https://www.edomi.org/whatsheaid/sermons/>

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### Upcoming Commemorations

- Nov. 15 Francis Asbury, 1816, and George Whitefield, 1770, Evangelists
- 16 Margaret, Queen of Scotland, 1093
- 17 Hugh, 1200, and Robert Grosseteste, 1253, Bishops of Lincoln
- 18 Hilda, Abbess of Whitby, 680
- 19 Elizabeth, Princess of Hungary, 1231; and,  
Mechthilde of Hackeborn, 1298, and Gertrude the Great, 1302, Mystics
- 20 Edmund, King of East Anglia, 870
- 21 William Byrd, 1623, John Merbecke, 1585,  
and Thomas Tallis, 1585, Musicians

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### November 15, 2020 – Pentecost 24 (A) *Advent and Christmas Resources*

New and updated Advent and Christmas resources for congregations, dioceses, and communities of faith are available, with additional resources coming soon. Available now: Preparing to Become the Beloved Community Advent curriculum; Way of Love Digital Invitation Kit; updated Journeying the Way of Love Advent calendar and curriculum; AdventWord 2020. Be sure to sign up for daily Advent and Christmas emails. Find Advent and Christmas resources from The Episcopal Church here: [iam.ec/advent](http://iam.ec/advent).

New for Advent 2020 is a five-session podcast series, Prophetic Voices: Preaching and Teaching Beloved Community, hosted by the Rev. Isaiah “Shaneequa” Brokenleg, Episcopal Church staff officer for Racial Reconciliation. Prophetic Voices explores where that dialogue intersects with

faith. Join Brokenleg and invited guests as they share prophetic voices and explore the readings for each week of Advent and Christmas Day through the lens of social justice. The following resources are also available now:

**Preparing to Become the Beloved Community:** Revised to reflect the Year B readings, this resource features reflections by people from across The Episcopal Church who are committed to the work of fostering Beloved Communities where all people may experience dignity and abundant life and see themselves and others as beloved children of God. The Episcopal Church Racial Reconciliation Department will produce a version of the curriculum for Year C in 2021, and a version for Year A in 2022.

**Journeying the Way of Love Advent curriculum and Advent calendar:** A four-week Advent curriculum and Advent calendar pegged to readings and themes from the first two chapters of the Gospel of Luke that incorporates Way of Love practices and the nativity/infancy narrative of Jesus.

**Digital Invitation Kits for Advent and Christmas:** Continuing the invitation to connect The Way of Love more deeply to the seasons of the year, these kits include customizable posters, postcard, and flyer; a social media-ready graphic; and a Facebook cover image.

**#AdventWord:** For the seventh year in a row, #AdventWord will gather prayers via a global, online advent calendar beginning Sunday, November 29.

**Daily Advent and Christmas emails:** From Advent 1 through Christmas Day, daily emails will feature the reflection from AdventWord, the daily practice from the Journeying the Way of Love Advent calendar, and a resource from The Episcopal Church. For the Twelve Days of Christmas, the newsletter will highlight one new Way of Love resource from the last year.

**Watch for these resources in the coming weeks:** *Sermons for Advent and Christmas* from *Sermons That Work*; bulletin inserts; EMM Advent Vigil; Episcopal Church Global Partnerships Global Advent Reflections; a Christmas video message; Christmas readings; and a digital Christmas card.

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**The texts for Christ the King Sunday in Year A** mine no words: from the beginning of the Ezekiel text to the end of the Matthew text, they work together to tell the story of what kind of reign we can expect from Christ. On a Sunday like this one, some questions may be helpful to explore around the whole concept of Christ as king:

- What strengths and challenges come up when you imagine Christ as a king or God as a ruler? How does this image resonate or not resonate with you, from where you are located in the 21st century?
- How might Christ's life, death, and resurrection rule us differently than human governments and rulers?

### **Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24**

In Ezekiel, we are given a less familiar text about a more familiar image: God as the shepherd of the sheep. Writing from Babylon, Ezekiel has experienced the fall of Judah and deportation to Babylon. Ezekiel is currently under the thumb of a very different kind of kingship—the rule of an authoritarian, conquering king, legitimated by religion, who consumes the weak and those unable to defend themselves. This makes his vision of God’s leadership and reign all the more significant. The lost will be found, the weak tended, the injured bandaged, the lean fed. The fat, the ones who grew big and strong by unjustly feeding off the weak, will receive their just rewards. These images are vital ways of showing what kind of leader God chooses to be, and what the reign of Christ will entail.

- What unjust human rule do you notice in the world around you? How might this vision of God as king, caring for the lost in the flock, speak hope into these situations?

### **Psalm 100**

In this psalm of praise, God is named as creator and king, faithful and merciful to all the lands. Unlike our other readings for Christ the King Sunday, the central function of the people in this song is to rejoice, to be joyful, to praise and move toward God. With the world as it is, crisis after crisis abounding, it can be easy for us to be ultra-focused on God’s condemnation of what is unjust, punishments or retributions for those who refuse to serve the least of these. Yet, through this psalm, we are reminded that following God is also about joy: joy in God’s creation, joy in our own selves as God created us, joy in receiving mercy, and joy in God’s faithfulness to us.

- When was the last time you experienced a moment of true joy? How can you pray with that moment, lift it up to God, and be thankful for it?
- How can you cultivate moments of joy in your life, even amid hard circumstances?

### **Ephesians 1:15-23**

Paul is, if anything, an amazing teacher on the nature of Christ. Here, he speaks as though Christ’s reign is already here, and it is a powerful image of the one raised from the dead, who now holds authority over the entire cosmos. No empire or leader can take this power from our crucified Lord, now raised. Christ’s power and authority come from that act of laying everything down and walking through death into life again, on behalf of all those on this earth in need of new life. Because of this, God has lifted up his name, placed all of creation under his feet and into his body. In the context of Christ the King Sunday, this invites us to wonder how that authority is at work in our own lives.

- Who—or what—has authority over you in your daily activities?
- How might we live if we trusted that Christ did indeed have the only authority that mattered? What small step would you take first?

### **Matthew 25:31-46**

In this passage, the reign of God is clearly seen as a time of reckoning. Matthew is consistent here in his distrust of religion that does not act in the best interest of the hungry, poor, and lost. Christ the King is the one who will implement a just rule for the world, a rule that privileges those who are in league with the weak, rather than those who are in league with the strong. Likewise, Christ as King can be found in those all around us who are strangers, hungry, naked, sick, in prison, and thirsty. The good news of this passage is the promise that, someday, the world will be turned over—and those who do the work of serving the least will be those who celebrate and rejoice with God. In our current world, with human powers reigning as they are,

it can feel as though care for the least of these is an exercise in futility. These efforts may feel like a useless drop in an ocean of pain and injustice, but the promise to us in this passage is that in God's reign, in God's dream, in God's time, these drops create an ocean of restoration. God notices what we are doing, even if the powers and the authorities of this world seem to have no interest—and in time, it will matter.

- Who in your neighborhood is feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, healing the sick, or welcoming the stranger? How may the reign of Christ be found there among them?
- Based on who Christ claims to be in this passage, who in your neighborhood is Christ right now?

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**Concluding prayer** at the Intercessions adapted from *The Armed Forces Prayer Book*, 1951.

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**Our Mission:**

We seek to grow as diverse disciples of Jesus Christ, and to serve Jesus by serving others in the world, guided by the values of Ancient Rites, Open Minds, and Affirming Hearts.



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