

**SUNDAY November 23, 2025      “Reconciled Because of Christ”**

**Ezekiel 34:11-16,20-24 Colossians 1:15-20**

**Luke 23:33-43 John 14:25-27 Revelation 21:1-8**

*“All Glory laud and Honour to you, Redeemer, King. To whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring. You are the King of Israel, and David’s royal Son now in the Lord’s name coming our King and blessed one.* This is the chorus and first verse of a hymn we sung on Palm Sunday- the day when we remember Jesus triumphal entry into Jerusalem as he rode on a borrowed donkey. The people tore palm branches off the trees and waved them over Jesus as he moved along the road into Jerusalem. The people declared him to be the King, the Royal Son of David, the blessed one of God. But we know that in a few short days Jesus was sentenced to death on the cross. Why did Jesus die and how did the King, the Promised One of God die, rise again and is still called King of Kings and Lord of Lords?

It is Reign of Christ Sunday and it is the day when we need to celebrate as we consider what we have learned about Jesus since that Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Resurrection Day of Easter. Jesus overcame death and offers us new life. Jesus is the Son of God yes, but he is also the one promised by God to enable us to receive the gift of eternal life - but we must believe. Reign of Christ is symbolized with red and white: red for the blood Jesus shed on the cross leading to his death. And white for the linens which covered Jesus’ body and were left folded where he lain after death and rose to new life. The symbols of Jesus is the cross- upon which he died and left behind and the crown, not the crown of thorns which was placed on his head in mockery, but as the King of the kingdom of God, the One who sits with God the creator and also rules in our hearts and lives.

The Reign of Christ is a feast day and we are reminded as Christians to focus on Jesus as the true ruler with the hope of God’s reign being fully realized in the future. This Sunday marks the end of the church’s liturgical year and reinforces a commitment to live as Jesus’ disciples not by the world’s wisdom. The idea of Jesus reigning was foretold hundreds of years before his life on earth. Through the prophets, God teaches about the relationship he wants with His people and shows them what is important for us to know today.

The Old Testament prophet Ezekiel in 34, describes God as the True shepherd who seeks out and rescues his sheep. Those who have gone astray will be returned as will the injured and weak. They will be judged and divided and cared for. Those unfaithful to God will be

scattered far and wide. Those who follow will live in a covenant of peace and they will be showered with blessings.

But of course, the people did not listen to Ezekiel's prophecies and turned away from God. This led God to promise that a Saviour would come, one who would lead the people against the norm of the world. He was born in unusual circumstances-- which we will focus on in Advent- and lived a human life. Until it was time to fulfill his life's work and purpose as the Rabbi, Son of God, and teacher.

With close followers helping him, Jesus taught around the areas of the Sea of Galilee and many people listened, were healed and believed him to be the Messiah, the Christ, the Saviour. His following grew. But the people were just not sure. The one who was to save them was not a prince or foreign dignitary; he had no special education, or features as a person. He was the son of God, yes, but raised as a carpenter. He came to save them not with horses and chariots, but on a lone donkey. Yet there was something about him that appealed to people. Who is Jesus?

They were not sure. Just like many of us. We say we know and love Jesus, that we are committed to serving his church and fulfilling his mission but we are unsure of what this means. Our mission as a church is to increase the flock of people who follow and believe. We are to make disciples for Christ. We are to help people KNOW Jesus, GROW in their relationship and GO on mission with Jesus. How are we doing? Were those who became disciples long ago still making disciples today? We know the answer to this.

But what we also know is that God in Christ doesn't give up. Because there are people like Pilate who just can't get their heads around the idea of Jesus being a King, but not of any known kingdom. In Luke 23, we read what the people from the crowd shouted at Jesus. "If you are the King of the Jews- save yourself!" There was reluctance even at the time of Jesus' dying that he was from God. They did not believe He was the Messiah. But only a few hours later did the guard by his side state, "Certainly this man was innocent."

There is hope in Jesus. For in Christ's resurrection, we also receive the promise of the Holy Spirit. Jesus then blesses those who believe by stating: Peace I leave with you my peace I give to you I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not let them be afraid. "Are you afraid? There is no reason to fear if you believe in Jesus. He came to earth and he fulfilled his purpose, we are the sheep that God is looking for, we just need to

answer His call and listen. We just need to answer as his faithful sheep and follow the teachings Christ laid out for us. We are to trust and follow in faith. This is because Jesus is supreme as Paul wrote to the church in Colossae. Jesus is head of the church, the beginning, the firstborn from the dead so that he might have first place in everything. But do you place Jesus first? He is the King, the teacher and risen saviour? And is he before anything else in your life?

These are not easy questions to answer-whether you have been hearing the message of Jesus Christ all your lives or you are new to faith in Jesus. Yet these questions come to the direct asking point of: Do you believe in Jesus. And do you believe that God is working in you through His spirit because of Jesus teachings, and because of his life, death and resurrection and because of the gifts we understand which He gives-- hope, peace, joy and love.

John's Revelation of what is to occur someday gives us even more hope than we can fully understand. It states that Jesus is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end and it is through Christ that a new heaven and new earth will emerge. And in that new heaven/earth there will be life eternal. There will also be - God superior to all and they will follow. There will not be any more tears because there will no longer be death- we need not suffer with crying and pain or mourning- because Jesus conquered death and life will be good. Those who live will be God's children and God will be their God. And there will be peace. But until that day comes we need to focus on Jesus. Because it is because of Jesus that there is reconciliation. We know that there is division everywhere in our world and in our own hearts and lives. Jesus however turns this around and says believe and follow me and we may be at peace.

On this Reign of Christ Sunday- let us reflect on Jesus- the infant, man, teacher, saviour. And let us place Jesus in his rightful role== as the One who came to save those who were lost; the one who through his teachings, enables us to become one in Him and the One who leads us into eternity, if we have faith and believe.

Let us pray:

God of grace and hope we praise you and ask that in your wisdom that you would guide us by your truth and love until we and all your people make manifest your reign of justice and compassion. We pray that your kingdom will come and that there will be peace; we pray that all who hunger and thirst will be nourished and all are welcome and forgiven. We ask these things as we seek to know you as the One who reigns in our hearts and minds and in the world. Amen