

*As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.
May we together experience the presence of God*

+++++

We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord



Prelude

Welcome

Announcements/Joys & Concerns

This week marks the end of the Christian year. Next Sunday will be the first Sunday of Advent, and it will begin another journey with the church through the life and witness of Jesus the Christ, our Lord and Savior.

So, today we end with a statement of allegiance to the one who reigns over us. Sometimes called Christ the King Sunday or Reign of Christ Sunday. Either way, we declare our ultimate allegiance not to a nation, not to an ideal or dream, but to a person. Our faith in its most basic form is about a relationship with this person Jesus, whom we call Christ, or the Messiah. He is the one who reigns over us, the one in whom we find our identity and our being. When we surrender to Christ, we will find ourselves more completely. When we bow to this Christ, we stand stronger and taller than at any other time, with any other allegiance. This week should be a joyous celebration in the life of the church, a time of thanksgiving and of preparation for what is to come. Let us begin this time of celebration by uniting in our call to worship Him today.

CALL TO WORSHIP

It is done.

God has always been in charge—

yesterday and today.

Even when things seem out of control,

God's reign is on its way.

Let us prepare the way for God.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus,

**you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross,
that all people might come within the reach of your saving embrace.**

Clothe us in your Spirit, that we,

stretching out our hands in loving service for others,

may bring those who do not know you to an awareness and love of you;

who with the Father and the Holy Spirit live and reign,

One God forever! Amen!

***HYMN OF PRAISE FWS #2113 “Lamb of God”**

Author: Twila Paris

Publication Date: 2001

Copyright: © 1985 Straightway Music/Mountain Spring Music

Copyright: © 1985 Straightway Music/Mountain Spring Music

**Your only Son, no sin to hide
But you have sent him from your side
To walk upon this guilty sod
And to become the Lamb of God**

**O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God
I love the holy Lamb of God
O wash me in His precious blood
My Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God**

**Your gift of love they crucified
They laughed and scorned Him as He
died The humble King, they named a
fraud And sacrificed the Lamb of God**

**I was so lost I should have died
But you have brought me to your side
To be led by your staff and rod
And to be called a lamb of God**

We Hear God’s Word

Gospel Reading..... Luke 23:33-43

New Revised Standard Version

3 When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus[a] there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [[34 Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”]][b] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. 35 And the people stood by watching, but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah[c] of God, his chosen one!” 36 The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine 37 and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” 38 There was also an inscription over him,[d] “This is the King of the Jews.”

39 One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding[e] him and saying, “Are you not the Messiah?[f] Save yourself and us!” 40 But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? 41 And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.” 42 Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come in[g] your kingdom.” 43 He replied, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

The Word of God for the People of God, **Thanks be to God!**

CHILDREN’S SERMON

FAITH HYMN UMH #206 "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light"

Author: Kathleen Thomerson (1966)

Copyright: © 1970, 1975 Celebration

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JR2IaDqj-r0>

**I want to walk as a child of the light
I want to follow Jesus
God set the stars to give light to the world
The star of my life is Jesus**

Chorus:

**In Him there is no darkness at all
The night and the day are both alike
The Lamb is the light of the city of God
Shine in my heart Lord Jesus**

**I want to see the brightness of God
I want to look at Jesus
Clear Sun of righteousness shine on my path
And show me the way to the Father (Chorus)**

**I'm looking for the coming of Christ
I want to follow Jesus
When we have run with patience the race
We shall know the joy of Jesus (Chorus)**

"Message"

PRAYER FOR THE DAY

Blessed are you, Lord God, for you have visited and redeemed your people. Your Savior has conquered death and is exalted above every power in heaven and earth where he reigns. We sing our thanksgiving and offer our praise to your majestic name.

By the power of your Holy Spirit, knit together once more your Church. Grant that your Church might honor you with a united purpose of proclaiming grace and freedom to all the world. Make us prophets of the Most High.

In this day we exalt Christ as our King, we remember the many who are lifted up in other ways. We name those about whom we are most concerned now in voice and in our hearts. Look with mercy on those who are nailed to crosses of pain and suffering, from those forces which destroy the body, affect the mind and drain the spirit. Give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. Remember all these, and us, in your realm of light we pray using the words that Jesus taught us. Our Father...

Offertory & Doxology (UM Hymnal 95)

(Wykoff only)

Offertory Prayer

Almighty, Creator God, we humbly bring our gifts to you this day. On Calvary's cross, your son redefined for the world what it meant to rule, what it meant to be a king. In his life, teaching and interacting with people, Jesus redefined what it means to give in a way that pleases God. May we in this season live and give in a way that reflects the reign over us and the one who lives within us. In the exalted name of Christ, we pray. Amen. (Luke 23:33-43)

Departing Hymn UMH #261 "Lord of the Dance"

Author: Sydney Carter (1963)

Refrain First Line: Dance, then, wherever you may be

Publication Date: 1989

Copyright: © 1963, Stainer & Bell, Ltd., London, England (Admin. by Hope Publishing Company)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dLIqhbY64eQ>

**1 I danced in the morning when the world was begun,
and I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,
and I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth.
At Bethlehem I had my birth.**

[Refrain:]

**Dance, then, wherever you may be;
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he.
And I'll lead you all wherever you may be,
and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.**

**2 I danced for the scribe and the Pharisee,
but they would not dance and they would not follow me;
I danced for the fishermen, for James and John;
they came to me and the dance went on. (Refrain)**

**3 I danced on the sabbath when I cured the lame,
the holy people said it was a shame;
they whipped and they stripped and they hung me high;
and they left me there on a cross to die. (Refrain)**

**4 I danced on a Friday and the sky turned black;
it's hard to dance with the devil on your back;
they buried my body and they thought I'd gone,
but I am the dance and I still go on. (Refrain)**

**5 They cut me down and I leapt up high,
I am the life that'll never, never die;
I'll live in you if you'll live in me;
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he. (Refrain)**

Benediction

Though the days increase in their darkness, the Lord of light and love reigns supreme.
May the power of God's love be in your hearts and reflected in your lives now and always.
Go in peace and may God's peace be with you. AMEN.

***POSTLUDE**