

Call to worship

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come into God’s presence with singing. Enter God’s gates with thanksgiving, and God’s courts with praise. Give thanks to God, bless God’s name. For the Lord is good; God’s steadfast love endures forever, and God’s faithfulness to all generations. Amen.

Opening Prayers: -

Gracious God, as we remember this day, Christ the King, help us to welcome him afresh into our own hearts and lives. Accept the praise and worship we bring you and give us a real sense of expectation as we look towards his coming kingdom. We welcome the King, **we welcome Christ glory in the highest.**

Gracious God, we ask that you take the faith we offer, Weak though it may be, and deepen it through this day, So that we truly welcome Christ as our King, And worship him with joyful praises, now and always We welcome the King, **we welcome Christ glory in the highest, Amen.**

Prayer of Confession: -

Sovereign God, we confess before You, that we have not loved our neighbour as ourselves. We have lied to ourselves and excused our actions. We are too busy taking care of ourselves and our families. We will have time later. We do not have enough resources to help ourselves and others. Someone else will do it. Forgive us for skirting our own responsibility, for making excuses, for not following Your commandments. Help us to come to You. Help us to end our excuses and instead to pick up the cross, put to death the things that are holding us back, and follow You.

We pause for a few moments, to bring confessions of heart and mind to God

God’s justice is restoration. God’s justice mends us all. It may be painful when we go through it, but God will see us through to the other side. You are forgiven, even when it hurts to forgive. You are loved, even when it is hard to love. Go and show mercy, compassion, and forgiveness, and live into God’s ways of righteousness, justice, and peace. Amen.

Hymn: STF 333 – Majesty, Worship his Majesty

Majesty, worship his majesty;
unto Jesus be glory, honour and praise.
Majesty, kingdom authority,
flows from his throne unto his own,
his anthem raise.

Majesty, worship his majesty,
Jesus, who died, now glorified,
King of all kings.

So exalt, lift up on high the name of Jesus,
magnify, come glorify Christ Jesus, the King.

Jack Hayford
Words and Music: © 1981 Rocksmith Music,
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Readings:

Revelation 1: 4 – 8:

⁴ This letter is from John to the seven churches in the province of Asia. Grace and peace to you from the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come; from the sevenfold Spirit before his throne; ⁵ and from Jesus

Christ. He is the faithful witness to these things, the first to rise from the dead, and the ruler of all the kings of the world. All glory to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by shedding his blood for us. ⁶ He has made us a Kingdom of priests for God his Father. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen. ⁷ Look! He comes with the clouds of heaven. And everyone will see him—even those who pierced him. And all the nations of the world will mourn for him. Yes! Amen! ⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the end,” says the Lord God. “I am the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come—the Almighty One.”

John 18: 33 – 37: -

³³ Then Pilate went back into his headquarters and called for Jesus to be brought to him. “Are you the king of the Jews?” he asked him. ³⁴ Jesus replied, “Is this your own question, or did others tell you about me?” ³⁵ “Am I a Jew?” Pilate retorted. “Your own people and their leading priests brought you to me for trial. Why? What have you done?” ³⁶ Jesus answered, “My Kingdom is not an earthly kingdom. If it were, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish leaders. But my Kingdom is not of this world.” ³⁷ Pilate said, “So you are a king?” Jesus responded, “You say I am a king. Actually, I was born and came into the world to testify to the truth. All who love the truth recognize that what I say is true.”

Sermon

Are you sitting comfortably, I want to start this message with a Story . . . A long time ago, in a kingdom far far away, there was a Prince, who one day would be king. He wanted to find a wife, so that when he becomes King, he would have a queen by his side. After lots of parties, none of the girls in the Princes Court, made his eyes light up and his heart flutter. One day, riding out of the castle, the prince rode through the town just down the road. As he rode through the market square, he caught sight of a beautiful girl, who was selling sturdy pottery from her market stall. As he looked at her going about her business of selling pottery, he noticed how she treated her customers with respect and fairness, yet always made sure she got a good deal for her family business.

Needless to say, **he fell in love**. But – she was a commoner, he was a prince – how could he to get her to know him, without her being awestruck because he was a prince. Perhaps he could disguise himself as a labourer, and get to know her in the marketplace, then when they were in love and ready to marry he would reveal his true identity – but he didn’t want marry out of manipulation. In the end the prince decided to renounce his claim to the throne, and moved into the town where the girl lived, and began to work as a carpenter. He loved the feel of wood in his hands. He would get to know all the people in the community, go to church with them, have parties with them, help build their houses and of course, shop with them in the market place. By doing this he hoped that he would become the young women’s friend and someday confess his love for her. And that is exactly what he did!

A king creates as well as leads their kingdom. We know from history that there are Good Kings and not so Good Kings – and their kingdoms reflect the leadership over them. Our opening story shares the deep relationship between King and Kingdom. And it parallels Christ’s Kingly relationship with Humanity. The king who disguises themselves as a carpenter, to learn about the state of his kingdom, to build relationship with his people, to care, live and walk alongside them, in every way and to find love– so that it may guide, grow and enhance his kingship.

So lets dive into our Reading from the Gospel of John, and see where the spirit takes us.

Today we celebrate Christ the King – our crucified and risen, King, Saviour and Redeemer. Today we celebrate a king with wounded hands of lathe and Cross. Although Jesus is a King – maybe he is not a king as we might know with all the trappings of Pomp and circumstance. NO. He is the humble boy, born in a stable, the light of

the world, Emmanuel, God with us, the Prince of Peace, and the redeemer of all people. Its important that we honour Jesus as the Servant King, that he was and ever will be. So its important to remember that these words of Jesus are his last words, before being handed over to die on the cross, and Jesus is pointing directly to the coming reign of God's kingdom over all.

Pilate asks Jesus "Are you a king"? And Jesus answers in kind – "you say that I am a king, everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice". This makes me think, in those crucial moment in the Gospel Narrative – WHO HAS THE POWER? Governor or Prisoner? But really in that moment – if we were stood in the crowd – you would not have questioned that Pilate held all the power in this situation. Yet, like death itself, God, Christ overcome the odds.

But - Within this we are offered a different kind of leadership. Jesus' kingdom is not about amassing control Jesus' kingdom is not about ultimate rule over and above others. Jesus' kingdom is about RELATIONSHIP – because it comes from God. What kind of King is Jesus? Forgiveness & Trust, Respect & Compassion, Integrity & Self-giving love, Love and yet more Love. Christ is our king, through the source of all power and authority – God. And he is the way, the truth and the life.

But in all of this – I think quite clearly Jesus is speaking to each one of us. He is challenging us to think about our identity, as part of the kingdom of God, as individuals and as a community of faith. What is God Calling you to be, at this moment, in this place, amongst us, or in all the world? Pilate says to Jesus – Are you a king? Jesus Says to us: Will you wear my crown? Will you share my love? Will share my hope and peace with all the world?

If you have something to hand you can place on your head a Crown, do that now.

What hat is God calling you to, today? How can you share the truth of the cross? How can you share the Light of the world, with the people of our communities around Dorset South and West? We all have a role to play. Each one of us is important to God, we are all treasured by God. God wants us to be part of sharing his truth. God calls each of us this Christ the King Sunday to his ways of Love, Justice and peace. Since we have been made the Kings and Queens of God's Kingdom, it is our calling to work for that Kingdom of God.

It is our calling to strive for a different World. It is our calling to bring about "thy kingdom Come". And does that in the words revealed in our reading from Revelation: - "I am the Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the end," says the Lord God. "I am the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come—the Almighty One." Where we are reminded that God is the creator and beginning of all things, and is with us, in this world and next, until the end of age. So I urge you today, Love, Worship and remember Christ the King . . . Amen

Hymn: STF 319 – Christ Triumphant

1 Christ triumphant, ever reigning,
Saviour, Master, King!
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,
hear us as we sing:

Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name!

2 Word incarnate, truth revealing,
Son of Man on earth!
Power and majesty concealing
by your humble birth:

3 Suffering servant, scorned, ill-treated,
victim crucified!
Death is through the cross defeated,
sinners justified:

Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name!

4 Priestly king, enthroned for ever
high in heaven above!
Sin and death and hell shall never

stifle hymns of love:

5 So, our hearts and voices raising
through the ages long,

ceaselessly upon you gazing,
this shall be our song:

Michael Saward (b. 1932)
Words: © Michael Saward / Jubilate

Prayers of intercession

Let us offer our prayer
with all God's people
through Jesus Christ our Lord
who ever lives to pray for us.

Take a moment to offer your own prayers into these situations, especially those situations, places and people that are close to your hearts and minds today

We pray for the needs of the world . . .

We pray for the Church . . .

We pray for all in trouble or distress . . .

We pray for all who make a new beginning today . . .

God of compassion and mercy, listen to our prayer. May what we ask in Jesus Christ your Son be done according to his word, who said, 'Ask, and you will receive, seek, and you will find, knock, and the door will be opened to you.' To you, merciful God, through your Son, in the life giving Spirit, be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer:

As our Saviour taught his disciples, we pray: **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.**

A prayer for all we offer to God this day

We offer these small gifts to our great God, like children approaching a loving parent, crudely wrapped in love and decorated with our worship. Receive these gifts, loving God, And by your divine spirit, turn them into joy for the sake of your kingdom. Amen

Blessing

You are the sisters and brothers of the great Servant King. No humble task is beneath him, no mercy is withheld; no person is to him a waste of space. May your faith be big enough to learn from him, and to daily welcome the in flooding of his humble yet resolute Spirit. The grace of Christ Jesus be your only boast, the love of God be your unfailing resource, and the fellowship of the Spirit be your deepest joy.