

Traditional Home service

Sunday 20th November

OPENING PRAYER

Eternal Father, whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven that he might rule over all things as Lord and King:
keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace, and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

PRAYER OF PENITENCE

Come, let us return to the Lord and say:

*O King enthroned on high,
filling the earth with your glory:
holy is your name,
Lord God almighty.
In our sinfulness we cry to you
to take our guilt away,
and to cleanse our lips to speak your
word,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

PRAISE

Let everything be said and done in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through Jesus Christ. Sing psalms, hymns and sacred songs:

Let us sing to God with thankful hearts.
Open our lips, Lord:
and we shall praise your name.

HYMN 1 (Crown Him with Many Crowns)

READINGS - Jeremiah 23.1-6
Colossians 1.11-20
Luke 23.33-43

TALK

CREED

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 OF INTERCESSION

*Spend some time praying for our nation,
our community and our families.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

*HYMN 2 (At the Name of Jesus Every
Knee Shall Bow)*

CONCLUSION

Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with you all; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

HYMNS TO USE

1 Crown him with many crowns,
the Lamb upon his throne.
Hark! how the heavenly anthem drowns
all music but its own.
Awake, my soul, and sing
of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless king
through all eternity.

2 Crown him the Lord of life,
who triumphed o'er the grave,
and rose victorious in the strife
for those he came to save;
his glories now we sing
who died and rose on high,
who died eternal life to bring,
and lives that death may die.

3 Crown him the Lord of love;
behold his hands and side,
rich wounds, yet visible above,
in beauty glorified;
no angels in the sky
can fully bear that sight,
but downward bends their burning eye
at mysteries so bright.

4 Crown him the Lord of years,
the potentate of time,
creator of the rolling spheres,
ineffably sublime.
All hail, Redeemer, hail!
for thou hast died for me;
thy praise shall never, never fail
throughout eternity.

1 At the name of Jesus
ev'ry knee shall bow,
ev'ry tongue confess him
King of glory now;
'tis the Father's pleasure
we should call him Lord,
who from the beginning
was the mighty Word.

2 At his voice creation
sprang at once to sight,
all the angel faces,
all the hosts of light,
cherubim in heaven,
stars upon their way,
all the heav'nly orders
in their great array.

3 Humbled for a season
to receive a name
from the lips of sinners
unto whom he came,
faithfully he bore it
spotless to the last,
brought it back victorious
when from death he passed;

4 Bore it up triumphant
with its human light,
thro' all ranks of creatures
to the central height,
to the throne of Godhead,
to the Father's breast,
filled it with the glory
of that perfect rest.

5 In your hearts enthrone him;
there let him subdue
all that is not holy,
all that is not true;
crown him as your captain
in temptation's hour;
let his will enfold you
in its light and pow'r.

6 Christians, this Lord Jesus
shall return again
in his Father's glory,
with his angel train;
for all wreaths of empire
meet upon his brow,
and our hearts confess him
King of glory now.

Sermon - Adrian Morton
Col 1:1-11; Luke 23:33-43 Jesus is King

Its Christ the King Sunday today.
So our readings direct our thoughts to Jesus
being King.

Let's look at the Luke reading first.

It describes of course the crucifixion.
And the written notice above Jesus, which
read:

"This is the King of the Jews."
Which annoyed intensely the Jewish
authority of the day.

Yet there are many scriptures that tell us
Jesus is not only a King but the King of
kings.

Revelation 19 says *"On his robe and on his
thigh he has a name written, King of kings..."*

In 1 Timothy 6 speaks of Jesus as *"he who is
blessed and only Sovereign, the King of
kings and Lord of lords."*

Yet the cross reveals Jesus as King in a
place of utter weakness.

A crucified suffering King.
Placed between two criminals.
Hung on a cross.
And image of humiliation, rejection, cursing,
failure and defeat.

The idea of a crucified King, a crucified God,
to whom worship was due, in the ancient
world was regarded as totally inappropriate
to God.

It was blasphemy to suggest such a thing.

It was the most unreligious concept.
An absolute scandal.
Yet on the cross, we see King Jesus.
Dying for your sin and my sin.
Reconciling all things to himself.

Making peace with us through the blood of
the cross... as it says in the Colossians
reading.

And also in that Colossians reading we get
an altogether different picture of Jesus the
King.

He is the firstborn of all creation.
All things were created through Him and for
Him.
He himself is before all things, and in Him all
things hold together.

He has ultimate supremacy.
He has the first place in everything.
In Him all the fullness of God was pleased to
dwell.

And through Him, God was pleased to
reconcile to himself all things whether on
earth or in heaven.

So you couldn't get more important.
This majestic all superior King of Kings.
And Jesus is this King.

Jesus being identified as King demands a
response from us, from people .

Its either true or not true.
And I think it forces people to come down on
one side or another.

In our Luke reading we see 4 responses to
Jesus as King:

i. The rulers sneered, saying:

"He saved others; let him save himself if he
is the Christ of God, the Chosen one."

In other words, prove yourself Jesus.

ii. The soldiers mocked him:

"If you are the King of Jews, save yourself".

People mock because of insecurity, jealousy,
low self-esteem....also to keep someone at a
distance.

Its a way of avoiding being involved with
someone...

iii. One of the criminals insulted him:

"Aren't you the Christ, save yourself and us!"

Again, I think people insult out of insecurity.

Its born out of an inner anger to cover up a weakness in themselves.

All these three negative responses to the crucified King Jesus we still see today.

People will still sneer, mock and insult when confronted by the crucified King Jesus.

How can that really work.
it doesn't make any sense.

The fourth response of course comes from the second criminal:

the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

Its a response of humility.

Its a recognition of your own condition.

This criminal recognised his utter hopeless position.
He had nowhere else to turn.

And out of that place he simply reached out to the crucified Jesus.

"remember me when you come into your kingdom."

And he received mercy and acceptance.
And a secure future!

The Colossians description of Jesus the King also demands a response.

If Jesus is the image of the invisible God.
If by Him all things were created...
If in Him all things hold together.

Then He is worth our allegiance.
He is worth aligning our lives with Him.

He is worthy of our attention.

He is worth emptying ourselves of our pride,
our self-reliance, our self sufficiency.

He is worthy of our obedience.

And as we do that, we start to recognise and experience that the cross, a symbol of weakness and powerlessness has the ability to transform our lives.

And the lives of others.

Those who throw themselves at the mercy of God receive much mercy in return.

As a nation we now have a King.
Its the first time in my life.

King Charles is important, he will influence our nation.

But He is not King of kings!

In Charles' kingdom, understandably not many get to confide with the King.

Unless I do something dramatic and something ever so worthy, I don't think I'll ever speak to the king personally.

He is understandably distant to the ordinary person.

Yet Jesus invites us to be close to Him.
He invites us to Know Him.
We get to relate to Jesus as friend as well as King.

Charles' kingdom has a geographical area, though it is now shrinking.
Hong Kong is under Chinese sovereignty.

Jesus' Kingdom only grows... from glory to glory.

Isaiah prophesied, *"There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace."*

And we get to be involved in seeing His kingdom grow.

He calls us to partner with Him...

Jesus' kingdom is also everlasting.

I would suggest, that Charles's kingdom is not everlasting.
It will come to an end.

Someone will either conquer us as a nation or more likely the world will end.

Again from our Colossians reading, Paul prays:

“... the Father... has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the Kingdom of light.”

For sure the inheritance of the saints refers to seeing the kingdom grow in our life time.

But also of course, it refers to our eternal inheritance.

We have a ‘hope laid up in heaven’ that Paul has already spoken about in v5.

I don’t think I’m in line to inherit anything from Charles’s kingdom!

I want to finish this morning, just dwelling on v12:

the Father has ‘qualified us’....

We are fit ‘for purpose’ in other words...

Jesus as King demands a life response from us.

Yet often we don’t feel worthy or qualified.

And if you ever do feel unworthy, unqualified to be part of what God is doing in the world, always come back to this verse.

You have the qualifications...

Its has nothing to do with how well educated you are.

What social standing you happen to be part of.

How talented or gifted you feel you are.

When you simply have faith in Jesus, like the criminal of the cross.

The moment you say yes to Jesus,

He brings us into His kingdom of light.

We get transferred.

And if we allow Him, the Holy Spirit within us will whisper to us:

‘You are qualified to share in the inheritance of the saints in the Kingdom of light.’

Amen!