

LAST SUNDAY OF THE CHURCH YEAR

November 21, 2021

Return of the King

The Last Sunday of the Church Year is here as we prepare to celebrate the return of Christ our King. When will it be? How will we know so that we are ready? There are the signs in nature, the sight of the Son of Man, and the angels. For these things, we keep an eye on the sky while we watch and wait, living our lives under God's grace as His righteousness draws near.

+ PREPARATION +

OPENING HYMN: #398 – [*Hail to the Lord's Anointed*](#)

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCES *Isaiah 51:4, 6; Psalm 39:7; 93:2, 5; Mark 13:33*

Pastor: Give attention to Me, My people, and give ear to Me, My nation; for a law will go out from Me, and I will set My justice for a light to the peoples.

People: **And now, O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in You.**

Pastor: Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and they who dwell in it will die in like manner; but My salvation will be forever, and My righteousness will never be dismayed.

People: **Your throne is established from of old; You are from everlasting.**

Pastor: Your decrees are very trustworthy; holiness befits Your house, O LORD, forevermore.

People: **Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *Luke 23:42; Philippians 1:6*

Pastor: As we live in the last days, waiting for Jesus to return, we are called to remember His promises and that we are His people. Yet, sometimes we forget what He has asked us to do. As God's beloved, we are called to build ourselves up in our most holy faith.

People: **Lord Jesus, we confess that we neglect being built up by Your Word and Spirit. Forgive us and remember us.**

Pastor: As God's beloved, we are urged to pray in the Holy Spirit.

People: **Lord Jesus, we confess that we neglect to converse with You in prayer and to guide our prayer life according to Your Word and Your will. Forgive us and remember us.**

Pastor: As God's beloved, we are urged to keep ourselves in the love of God.

People: **Lord Jesus, we confess that we neglect to remember our Baptism. Forgive us and remember us.**

Pastor: As God's beloved, we are urged to wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

People: **Lord Jesus, we confess that we neglect to embrace the mercy that is ours in You as we look forward to Your return. Forgive us and remember us.**

Pastor: As God's beloved, we are urged to have mercy on those who doubt.

People: **Lord Jesus, we confess that we fail to love others as You have first loved us. Forgive us and remember us.**

Pastor: As God's beloved, we are urged to share our faith with others.

People: **Lord Jesus, we confess that we neglect opportunities to share Your saving grace with others. Forgive us and remember us.**

Silence for private confession

Pastor: As Jesus was on the cross, the thief next to Him asked, "Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." As Jesus remembered the thief, He remembers you are His beloved child, and He remembers your sin no more. As a called and ordained servant of Jesus the Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: And I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

People: **Amen. Thanks be to God!**

+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +

PSALM *Psalm 39:4–5a, 7–8, 12a; antiphon: 2 Peter 3:13b*

Pastor: We are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

People: O LORD, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days;

Pastor: let me know how fleeting I am!

People: Behold, You have made my days a few handbreadths,

Pastor: and my lifetime is as nothing before You.

People: And now, O Lord, for what do I wait?

Pastor: My hope is in You.

People: Deliver me from all my transgressions.

Pastor: Do not make me the scorn of the fool!

People: Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear to my cry;

Pastor: hold not Your peace at my tears!

People: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Pastor: We are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

KYRIE

Pastor: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

People: Amen.

SALUTATION and PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray.

Lord God, You reign, robed in majesty over all that was, is, and will be. You are the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. As we wait for Your triumphant return, keep us steadfast in the one true faith and lead us to live lives that reflect Your presence so that You may work through us as You save others by snatching them from the fire; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Daniel 7:9-10,13-14*

⁹As I looked,
thrones were placed,
and the Ancient of days took his seat;
his clothing was white as snow,
and the hair of his head like pure wool;
his throne was fiery flames;
its wheels were burning fire.

¹⁰A stream of fire issued
and came out from before him;
a thousand thousands served him,
and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him;
the court sat in judgment,
and the books were opened. . . .

¹³I saw in the night visions,
and behold, with the clouds of heaven
there came one like a son of man,
and he came to the Ancient of Days
and was presented before him.

¹⁴And to him was given dominion
and glory and a kingdom,
that all peoples, nations, and languages
should serve him;
his dominion is an everlasting dominion,
which shall not pass away,

and his kingdom one
that shall not be destroyed.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL *Revelation 7:14b; Psalm 84:5*

These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

**Blessèd are those whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.**

EPISTLE *Jude 20–25*

(Remember your identity in Christ.)

²⁰But you, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit; ²¹keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. ²²And have mercy on those who doubt; ²³save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

²⁴Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, ²⁵to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

VERSE *Revelation 22:13*

Alleluia. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Alleluia.

HOLY GOSPEL *Mark 13:24–37*

(The end is near.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the thirteenth chapter.

People: Glory to You, O Lord.

²⁴[Jesus said:] "In those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶And then they will see the Son of Man coming in

clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

²⁸"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³²"But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. ³⁵Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the cock crows, or in the morning— ³⁶lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. ³⁷And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake."

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

HYMN OF THE DAY: #525 – [*Crown Him with Many Crowns*](#)

SERMON

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And 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 into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,**

**the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life + everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

After each petition:

Pastor: ... let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

At conclusion:

Pastor: ... through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

**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 and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

CLOSING PRAYER

Pastor: Let us pray.

Lord Jesus, as we wait for Your return, lead us by Your Spirit to remember that we are Your people. Build us up in this most holy faith, and keep us in Your love as we wait for Your mercy that leads to eternal life. As those who have received mercy, we ask You to empower us to be merciful. As You have saved us by grace through faith, work through us as You save others by snatching them out of the fire; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION *Numbers 6:24–26*

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

People: **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

People: **Thanks be to God.**

CLOSING HYMN: #804 – [*O Worship the King*](#)

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