

Worship Sheet 21.11.21

Lord, as we come into your presence this morning help us to lay all distractions aside. Help us Holy Spirit to worship in Spirit and in truth, to have our ears opened to what you are saying, amen.

Hymn: 337 There is a higher throne

Prayer: Lord as we worship this morning we want to lift your name up to exalt you and declare that you are the King of kings and the Lord of lords, the one who is seated on the throne above all powers and principalities. All of heaven declares your Lordship and we join our voices with those of heaven to declare 'Worthy are you, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!' Lord, you are a mighty and awesome God, faithful and loving and we say be lifted up in this place, be lifted up in our hearts and be lifted up in our lives, amen.

And in a moment of quiet bring to the Lord those things which have caused a blockage in your fellowship with him....

Lord, we thank you for the blood of Jesus that sets us free, we thank you for your mercies which are fresh every single day and we ask that you will help us to be open to your Holy Spirit as He leads us deeper into you and the things of you, in Jesus name, amen.

Lord's Prayer: Our Father...

Readings: 2 Samuel 23: 1 - 7
Psalm 132
Revelation 1: 4b - 8
John 18: 33 - 37

This Sunday is known as 'Christ the King'. It stands on the threshold of Advent as we prepare for the coming of Jesus both at Bethlehem and his coming again. It brings together all the readings we have had throughout the year as it announces 'Christ the King' but it also prepares us to remember who it is who was born in the stable and who it is who will be returning in power and great glory.

Hymn: 327 Jesus is King

I wonder what goes through your mind when you hear the word 'King'! We've just had Remembrance Day so perhaps your thoughts move to Queen Elizabeth and her father, King George VI? Perhaps you think of things like Lion King - or Elvis?! Whatever your thoughts, much of our imagery when we think of 'king' or 'royalty' will be linked to the idea of privilege and power.

I wonder where our thoughts turn when we think of Christ The King? As we look at Jesus on the cross, we gain a whole new perspective of Kingship. There is no sense of privilege here. We don't see any fine robes, instead we see a naked, scarred body; the crown is not one set with jewels instead it has sharp thorns; and the hands we see have no rings of power, but instead have nails

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hammered in, which hold him to a cross instead of seated on a golden throne.

From the beginning of John's gospel, Jesus has been declared as the King of Israel (Jn 1: 49) Yet, this is not a King the world recognises - it didn't then and it doesn't now. This is a King who serves rather than is served, and it is through his crucifixion that his Kingship is seen rather than through political power. His crucifixion makes clear that his Kingship offers an alternative to earthly kingship

Pilate is a political figure, he is the one in charge - or so he thinks - yet, as John has done throughout his gospel, whenever someone questions Jesus, putting Jesus on trial so to speak, the reader knows that it is those who question Jesus who are on trial. Part of the irony here is that we can see it is Pilate who is on trial, and how ironic that it is Pilate who uses his authority to declare Jesus' Kingship.

Jesus' questions get to the heart of the matter and reveal the heart of those questioning him. Pilate later asks, 'what is truth?', but we know that Jesus is Truth - 'The Way, the Truth and the Life'.

Pilate asks Jesus who he is - do we too need to know and discover afresh who Jesus is? Who is Jesus in our lives? We serve a King like no other, yet are we willing to accept Jesus as King? Are there other things that we choose to put on the throne of our lives rather than the King of kings?

Hymn: 331 King of kings

Prayers: Lord on the cross your majesty and glory was made known, your Kingship for all to see, yet so often we fail to see you for who you really are. Forgive us Lord we pray as we learn to surrender our lives to you.

Lord Jesus you are the one who testifies to the truth - that you alone are the Lord of life. Help us to listen to you and learn from you as we follow you, that your Kingdom may come on earth as it is in heaven.

You are the Alpha and the Omega, the one who is and who was and who is to come. May we faithfully serve you and reflect your glory in all we do that your justice and peace, mercy and love would be seen in all we do. To the glory of your name, amen.

Hymn: 317 At the name of Jesus

Blessing: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. And the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore, amen.