

Trinity-Grace United Church

November 24th, 2024

“Reign of Christ”

The church in community, collaboration,
communion & solidarity - Week 6

ORDER OF SERVICE

PRELUDE

Naoki Natsume

WELCOME

CANDLE LIGHTING

INTROIT: “As Long As We Follow” (MV 140)

1st time - soloist

2nd time: ALL

As long as we follow
in the way that God is leading,
we know God’s reign will surely come.

Refrain

We know this, we know this!
Yes, God’s reign will surely come.

OPENING RESPONSES

(One/All)

We don’t see it, but its effect is clear;
We don’t hear it, but its message is never silent;

We don't feel it, but its influence constantly moves us.

Reaching through every system,
Flowing through every interaction,
Silently moving the world toward its God-designed purpose,
**More powerful than the strongest army,
Yet infinitely gentle;**

More significant than the most influential government,
Yet without coercion or manipulation.
**The kingdom of God is organically, subversively at work,
And it is here.
We open our hearts and minds to it in this time of worship.**

GATHERING PRAYER

One: From Bethlehem to Nazareth,
From Jordan to Jericho
From Bethany to Jerusalem,
From then to now,

All: Come, Christ Jesus.

One: To heal the sick,
To mend the brokenhearted,
To comfort the disturbed,
To disturb the comfortable,
To cleanse the temple,
To liberate faith from convention,

All: Come, Christ Jesus.

One: To carry the cross,
To lead the way,
To shoulder the wrongs of the world and take it away,

All: Come, Christ Jesus.

One: Today,
In this place,
To us,

All: Come, Christ Jesus.

HYMN: "Eternal Christ, You Rule"

(VU 212)

1. Eternal Christ, you rule
keeping company with pain;
enduring ridicule,
rejected, still you reign.

2. Eternal Christ, you rule
speaking pardon from the cross;
forgiving pounded nails;
death did its worst and lost.

3. Eternal Christ, you rule
taking children by the hand;
the proud return to school;
the meek receive the land.

4. Eternal Christ, you rule
fasting forty days alone;
the tempter played the fool,
expecting bread from stone.

5. Eternal Christ, you rule
keeping company with pain;
with love and truth as tools,
come build in us your reign

PRAYER FOR RELEASE & RENEWAL

Divine Sovereign of All Seasons,

As the liturgical year draws to its close,
we watch the temperatures drop degree by degree,
nature itself bowing to the rhythm you ordained.
Like the garden yielding its final gifts—
dried beans rattling in their pods, stubborn artichokes,
persistent herbs—we present our year's harvest before you.

The maple releases its copper coins,
the walnut its golden offerings,
joining creation's testament to your majesty.
Each morning we study the weather forecast,
knowing that transformation approaches
in the form of frost's crystalline blessing.

As all things submit to winter's authority,
we remember your reign over every season:
over abundance and dormancy,
over death and resurrection,
over ending and beginning.
Christ, you are Lord of the turning year.

In the familiar howl of autumn wind,
we hear the whispers of your coming kin-dom.
As frost claims the garden in silver silence,
teach us that every ending in your hands
becomes a holy beginning.
Let us trust in your perfect timing,
knowing that beneath the frozen earth,
your new creation is already stirring.

When our hearts resist the dying of the year,
remind us that you are Source and Completion,
present in both frost and thaw.
Like the beans that dried upon the vine,
holding within their shells the seeds of future feast,
may we trust in your providence through every season.

Grant us vision to see your kin-dom
in every falling leaf and failing light,
in every cycle of death and rebirth.
As we stand at the threshold of a new church year,
may we bow with all creation
in reverence and wonder.
Amen.

Time for silent prayer

Response: "Santo, Santo" (VU 951)

Santo Santo Santo

Mi corazòn teadora!

Mi corazòn te sabedecir:

Santo eres Dios!

Holy Holy Holy

My heart, my heart adores you

My heart is glad to say the words:

You are holy, God!

SHARING PEACE

One: May the peace of Christ be with you all.

All: And also with you!

We take a moment to greet each other in the peace of Christ.

ENCOUNTERING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

One: God of wisdom,

as we listen to your Word recorded by generations of your people,

fill us with understanding by the power of your Holy Spirit.

Reveal the mysteries of faith to us, so that we may grow in faithfulness,

following Jesus, your Living Word.

All: Amen.

READING: John 4: 1-42 (David Bentley Hart Version)

¹When therefore the Lord learned that the Pharisees had heard of Jesus making and baptizing more disciples than John – ²Although in fact Jesus himself did not baptize, but rather his disciples did – ³He left Judaea and departed into Galilee again. ⁴And it was necessary for him to pass through Samaria. ⁵Thus he comes to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

⁶And a font of Jacob's was there. So then Jesus, wearied by the journey, sat down by the font; it was about the sixth hour. ⁷A woman comes from Samaria to draw water. Jesus says to her, "Give me a drink." ⁸For his disciples had gone away into the city so that they might buy food. ⁹So the Samaritan woman says to him, "How do you, being a Judaeon, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?"

¹⁰Jesus answered and told her, "if you recognize God's gifts and who it is saying to you 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." ¹¹She says to him, "Lord, you have no bucket and the well is deep; so where do you get the living water from?" ¹²Surely you are not greater than our Father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, and his sons and livestock too?

¹³Jesus answered and told her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; ¹⁴But whoever drinks from the water that I shall give him will most definitely never thirst, throughout the age; rather the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain springing up to the life of the Age." ¹⁵The woman says to him, "Lord, give me this water so that I am not thirsty and do not continually come here to draw."

¹⁶He says to her, "Go call your husband and come here." ¹⁷The woman replied and said, "I don't have a husband." Jesus tells her, "You speak well to say, 'I do not have a husband.'" ¹⁸For you have had five husbands, and he whom you have now is not your husband; this you have said truthfully."

¹⁹The woman says to him, "Lord, I see that you are a prophet. ²⁰Our fathers worshipped on this mountain; and you people say that the place where it is necessary to worship is in Jerusalem." ²¹Jesus says to her, "Trust me, madam, an hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You people worship what you do not know, we worship what we know; because salvation is from the Judaeans;

²³But an hour comes, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for indeed the Father looks for those worshipping him so; ²⁴God is spirit, and it is necessary that those worshipping worship in spirit and truth.” ²⁵The woman says to him, “I know that the Messiah is coming”; - the one called Anointed - “when that one arrives he will announce all things to us.” ²⁶Jesus says to her, “I am he: I who am speaking to you.”

²⁷And at this point the disciples come to him and were astonished that he was conversing with a woman, but no one said, “What do you want?” or “Why are you speaking with her?” ²⁸The woman, therefore, abandoned her water jar and departed into the city, and tells the people, ²⁹“Come, see the man who told me everything that I have done; might this not be the Anointed?”

³⁰They went out from the city and came to him. ³¹In the meantime, the disciples implored him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” ³²But he said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.” ³³So the disciples said to one another, “Could someone have brought him something to eat?”

³⁴Jesus says to them, “My food is that I may do the will of the one who has sent me and may bring his work to completion. ³⁵Do you not say, ‘four months yet, and then comes the harvest’? I tell you, look, lift up your eyes and see the fields, because they are already white for harvesting.

³⁶The reaper is receiving wages and gathering fruit for life in the Age, so that the one sowing and the one reaping rejoice together. ³⁷For in this saying is true: ‘That one is the sower and another is the reaper.’ ³⁸I have sent you to reap that for which you have not labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

³⁹And many of the Samaritans of that city had faith in him on account of the woman testifying: “He told me all the things I had done.” ⁴⁰So when the Samaritans came to him they implored him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹And many more had faith as a result of his teaching.

⁴²And they said to the woman: “We have faith no longer on the account of your talk; for we ourselves have listened and we know that this man is truly the savior of the cosmos.”

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

All: Open our hearts, Spirit of Life.

EXPLORING THE WORD

“Divine Presence and Material Reality: A Reign of Christ Reflection”
with Shadia Qubti

RESPONDING

HYMN: “Water flowing from the mountains” (MV 87)
During the hymn, the offering box is brought forward

1. Water flowing from the mountains
Water flowing o’er the earth
Water comes to us, so precious
Living water gives us birth [**Refrain**]

Refrain

Drink deep this source of life
Drink deep and know
For living water sings,
And living water brings the love
That makes our spirit grow

2. Water rushing down the rivers
Water rushing to the sea
Water comes to us, so precious
Living water gives us free. [**Refrain**]
3. Water springing from the dry place
Water springing in the sun
Water comes to us, so precious
Living water for each one [**Refrain**]

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

Trinity-Grace is grateful for the many ways we are gifted and called to contribute to God's mission through this faith community.

Prayer of Dedication

One: Alpha and Omega, our beginning and our ending, bless us.
Bless this church and its needed ministry.
Bless these gifts entrusted to us as they support the church, which is granted to our care.
Bless the work of this community of faith and its promotion of justice, solidarity, advocacy and human dignity.
Alpha and Omega, receive these offerings for the benefit of your world.

All: Amen.

CONNECTING IN COMMUNITY

Announcements, celebrations & prayer requests.

PRAYERS OF GRATITUDE AND CONCERN (The Prayers of the People)

Periods of silence will be left for you to offer your own prayers

THE PRAYER OF THE DISCIPLES (The Lord's Prayer)

SUNG

Our father, our Mother,
loving God in whom is heaven:
May your name be made holy,
may your reign come.

May your will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us today the bread we need
and forgive us our debts
as we have forgiven our debtors.

And do not put us to the test

but free us from evil,
for yours is the dominion
and the power, and the glory forever.
Amen.

United Church of Christ, USA, 1995 (adapted). Music: Wendy Edey, 2002

HYMN: "Hope of the World" (VU 215)

1. Hope of the world, O Christ of great compassion,
speak to our fearful hearts by conflict rent;
save us, your people, from consuming passion,
who by our own false hopes and aims are spent.
2. Hope of the world, God's gift from highest heaven,
bringing to hungry souls the bread of life,
still let your Spirit unto us be given
to heal earth's wounds and end its bitter strife.
3. Hope of the world, afoot on dusty highways,
showing to wandering souls the path of light;
walk now beside us lest the tempting byways
lure us away from you to endless night.
4. Hope of the world, who by your cross has saved us
from death and dark despair, from sin and guilt;
we render back the love your mercy gave us;
take now our lives, with them your kingdom build.
5. Hope of the world, O Christ, o'er death victorious,
who by this sign has conquered grief and pain,
we would be faithful to your gospel glorious.
You are our Lord! You shall forever reign.

*The Christ candle is extinguished.
Our prayers rise and are received into God's heart.*

SENDING & BLESSING

(One/All)

The Realm of God is coming;

We will prepare faithfully.

The Realm of God is coming;

We will work for peace and justice.

The Realm of God is coming;

We will seek reconciliation and healing.

The Realm of God is coming;

We will work to end prejudice.

The Realm of God is coming;

We will share grace and compassion.

The Realm of God is coming;

We will have hope at last.

The Realm of God is coming;

We go out in the name of Jesus,

The Reign-maker. Amen.

Sung Response: "Amen"

(VU 974)

(Sing 3x)

Amen, Amen, Alleluia, Amen!

Amen, Amen, Alleluia, Amen!

POSTLUDE

*During the postlude you are welcome to sit and listen,
or to get up and move around.*