

Order of Worship

Christ the King / Reign of Christ Sunday
November 22, 2026

Gathering and Announcements *Count Your Blessings*

Prelude *Majesty* – by Jack Hayford

***Call to worship** (adapted from Psalm 100)

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.

Worship the Lord with gladness! Come into God's presence with singing!

Know this! The Lord is God!

We are God's people, and the sheep of God's pasture.

So, enter God's gates with thanksgiving, and come into the sanctuary with praise.

Let us give thanks to God and bless God's holy name.

For the Lord is good;

God's steadfast love endures forever! God's faithfulness is for all generations!

Come, let us worship God!

Opening Hymn #268** ***Crown Him with Many Crowns

***Call to confession**

This is a holy time and a holy place set aside for holy people; yet what makes us holy is not our perfection, it is Christ's. Every sin that is found outside of the church is found inside of it. The only difference is that here we acknowledge our sin and lay it before the one who has the power and authority to redeem us. Trusting in the promise that God is for us, let us confess our sins together:

***Prayer of confession**

Almighty God, you are God of all creation, from beginning to end. All authority and power to direct the ways of the world are in your hands.

Yet you saw fit to outfit humankind with the same freedom to choose and act that you have. We thank you for this power, but confess we often misuse it. We choose to do the things we know not to do. We take advantage, even as we sense our conscience pulling us away from what is wrong. We deny our own agency and claim "it is what it is" about the sufferings and injustices of the world when we should be working to make a change. Forgive us, Merciful God, of our shallowness of heart and slowness of action. Fill us with the Spirit of Christ, the advocate for the least among us, that we be empowered to do justly, love kindness and walk humbly before you. Through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

(Silence is kept)

Assurance of pardon (adapted from Romans 8:33-34)

Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. So believe the Good News:

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Amen.

Choral Anthem *Joyful Thanks* – by Joseph Martin

Prayer for illumination

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh upon your people gathered here today. Allow the fulness of your power, your majesty, your authority and your righteousness to fill this moment. Stir something up in us. Shake us from our reverie. Convict us of the truth we need to hear. And if we have asked you for too little, we pray you do something beyond what we can ever ask or even imagine. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Scripture readings Psalm 100; Matthew 25: 31 - 46

Sermon *A Throne of Wood and a Crown of Thorns* Rev. Kathy Vineyard H.R.

***Affirmation of faith** (From the Theological Declaration of Barmen)

As Jesus Christ is God's assurance of the forgiveness of all our sins, so in the same way and with the same seriousness, is he also God's mighty claim upon our whole life. Through him befalls us a joyful deliverance from the godless fetters of this world for a free, grateful service to his creatures.

Therefore we reject the false doctrine, as though there were areas of our life in which we would not belong to Jesus Christ, but to other lords — areas in which we would not need justification and sanctification through him. Amen.

Hymn # 273 *He Is King of Kings

Call for the offering

The Apostle Paul declared that God loves a cheerful giver. Though God has all authority, and every right to levy a tax and demand a portion of what we have, God instead invites us to choose for ourselves how we will respond to the grace and the providence we have received. So whether we have much to give or much to receive, let us joyfully celebrate this offering.

Offertory *Give Thanks* – arr. Mary McDonald and Larry Shackley

Doxology # 606 *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

***Prayer of dedication**

Almighty God, all that we have comes from you, and we give thee but thine own. Bless now these gifts, that the reign of Christ may become manifest in the uplift of the poor, seeking out the lost and lonely, re-storing dignity to those whom the world has dehumanized, so that the fulness of Christ's glory may be revealed in the life and ministry of your church. Through Christ, in Christ, and with Christ we pray: Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Gracious and Loving God, through your son and our savior Jesus Christ you have removed every barrier between our deep needs and your abundant providence. You have shown us what it means to be fully human and provided us with a model of power that gives life, instead of taking it.

With gratitude, we honor the gift of your son, and the assurances he shared with the world of your great love. We receive with joy all that you provide, and trust that you celebrate with us in every one of our joyful moments.

Holy Jesus, you know us by name. Hear us now as we lift up by name those who need your tender care.

Empower us today with your vision of care for the least among us. Loosen our grip upon what we try to control and keep for ourselves and instead allow us to give of ourselves for the sake of those who live lives of less than complete human dignity.

We pray today for the poor and the disabled, the marginalized and victims of oppression. We pray for those who are imprisoned, and who are caught in the snare of addiction. We pray for the world, a world in need of your pastoral power. Lend your wisdom and compassion to the leaders and authorities of this world that justice may be done and righteousness lived.

Assure us, once again, that the fulness of who you are is in us, moving with us, going before us and following behind. Bind us all in one holy communion where we may be fully known, each and every one of us, and called "Beloved." We pray all this in the name of Christ and join in praying the prayer he taught us to pray: **"Our Father…".**

Hymn of Sending # 384** ***Soon and Very Soon

Charge and benediction

Having heard the good news of the Gospel, go out to live the love and justice of Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit to serve the lost and the least. And as you go, may the Lord bless you and keep you. May God make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May the Lord lift up the light of their countenance upon those whom you love, both this day and forevermore. **Amen!**

Postlude *Thanksgiving Medley*

Jessye Whitis, Music Director and Pianist; Carol Tyson, Organist;
Bruce Vineyard, Liturgist

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2026 Liturgy written by Rev. Dr. Aaron Pratt Shepherd.