

Pointless love

The Congregation of Mark the Evangelist
November 26 2023
Reign of Christ A

Preparing for Worship Today

- Welcome to this service of worship at Mark the Evangelist!
- Congregational responses are printed in ***bold italics***.
- If you get here early enough, **please read through the text of today's readings prior to our hearing them**. The text can be found at the end of the order of service. We will have brief conversation/response time to the readings after hearing them, and before the sermon – all to make our hearing a little sharper!
- Pray for those who will be leading us in our worship today!



LitBit: The feast of Christ the King

The feast of Christ the King (or the Reign of Christ) was instituted by Pope Pius XI in 1925, making it a comparatively recent addition to the liturgical calendar. The celebration was established in the context of growing European nationalisms and a dispute between Italy and the Roman church regarding the sovereignty of the Vatican. It was originally celebrated on the last Sunday of October (the Sunday prior to All Saints, November 1), but was moved in 1969 by Pope Paul VI to the end of "Ordinary". This location, at the "end" of the liturgical calendar, highlights the eschatological or end-time orientation of the celebration. The lectionary readings on this day refer to the coming consummation of all things under Christ. The take-up by many protestant church of the new common lectionaries of the 1970s, '80s and 90's saw the feast become a regular feature also in protestant worship cycles. The liturgical colour for the Reign of Christ is white or gold.

A SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

Prelude V Lubeck, *Praeludium & Fuge* [Cmoll]

The Gathering of the People of God

Sung Processional

This round can be sung in numerous parts; feel free to join in wherever you like!

Part 1
All cre - a - tion un - der hea - ven, lift your heart, lift your voice!

Part 2

Part 3
God comes bring - ing health and whole - ness; lift your heart, lift your voice!

Part 4
Listen for repetion of this bar to finish

**All creation under heaven,
lift your heart, lift your voice!
God come bringing health and wholeness,
lift your hear, lift your voice! (repeat...)**

Call to Worship

The Lord be with you!
And also with you!

The LORD himself is God;
he himself has made us, and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

Psalms 95.7

All creation, lift your hearts and praise the LORD...

Prayer of invocation

Hymn 444 Dear Shepherd of your people

'...give us hearts to pray....'

The Word Spoken: Scripture and Preaching

The Testimony of Scripture

Your word, O Lord, is a lamp to our feet
and a light to our path.

Psalms 95 *O come, let us sing to the Lord*

*After the Refrain is sung, the psalm will be intoned responsively, with the cantor taking the first line of each verse and the congregation responding with the second (in the music, at the asterisk *).*

REFRAIN Hal H. Hopson

Praise the Lord. Praise the

Lord. Praise the name of the Lord.

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THE TONE

- 1 O come, let us | sing to the Lord;
let us heartily rejoice in the rock of | our salvation.
- 2 Let us come into his presence | with thanksgiving
and be glad in | him with psalms.
- 3 For the Lord | is a great God
and a great king a-|bove all gods.
- 4 In his hand are the | depths of the earth
and the heights of the mountains | are his also.
- 5 The sea is his, | for he made it,
and his hands have | moulded the dry land.

6 Come, let us worship | and bow down
and kneel before the | Lord our Maker.

7 For he | is our God;
we are the people of his pasture and the | sheep of his hand.

Matthew 25.31-46 *And when the Son of Man comes in his glory*

This is the gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The Preaching of the Word

*The sermon text will normally be available
after worship and online*

A 'sermon of stillness' – a moment for quiet reflection – usually follows the preaching

Prayer of Confession

The musical notation is for the Prayer of Confession, featuring Cantor and Congregation parts. It is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The Cantor part is on a single staff, and the Congregation part is on a single staff. The lyrics are: Kyr-i - e, Kyr-i - e, Kyr-i - e, el - ei - son. Kyr-i - e, Kyr-i - e, Kyr-i - e, el - ei - son. Chris-te, Chris-te, Chris-te el - ei - son. Chris-te, Chris-te, Chris-te el - ei - son. Kyr-i - e, Kyr-i - e, Kyr-i - e, el - ei - son. Kyr-i - e Kyr-i - e Kyr-i - e, el - ei - son.

Cantor sings first, with congregation repeating:

***Kyrie, Kyrie, Kyrie eleison;
Christe, Christe, Christe eleison;
Kyrie, Kyrie, Kyrie eleison.***

(Lord/Christ have mercy)

Declaration of Forgiveness

(Please stand if you are able)

...hear, then, Christ's word of grace to us:

Your sins are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

Doxology *via TIS 717 Give thanks with a grateful heart*

**Give thanks with a grateful heart,
give thanks to the Holy One,
give thanks because he's given
Jesus Christ His Son.**

**And now let the weak say I am strong,
let the poor say I am rich
because of what the Lord has done for us.**

Give thanks, give thanks, give thanks.

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

The Apostles' Creed

***I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.***

***I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 the People

(Names for inclusion in the prayers may be recorded in the book in the narthex)

The Visible Word: Eucharist

Hymn 517 Hallelujah, sing to Jesus

(If you are able, please remain standing until after the Lord's Prayer)

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

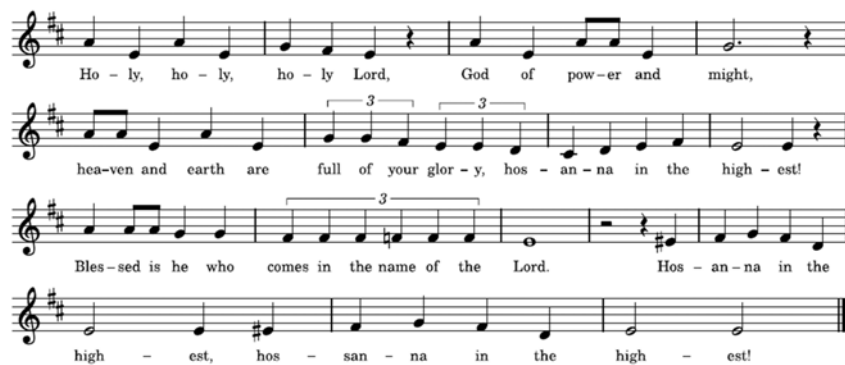
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

(The prayer continues...)



Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory,

hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest!

Hosanna in the highest!

(The prayer continues...)

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.

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours

now and for ever. Amen.

(The people sit)

The Breaking of the Bread

...Let us receive what we are,

let us become what we receive

The body of Christ

The Communion

The Uniting Church recognises this Table as the Lord's and, so, open to all who would normally commune in their home congregations.

GATHERING: *We'll gather in a circle around the table for the distribution of the elements; please wait until all have received and the prayer is said before returning to your seats.*

If you can't stand or walk to the front but would like to receive communion, please raise your hand if the celebrant has not already noticed you.

Offering

Many members now make their offering by electronic transfer; the plate will be passed for those who prefer to make cash/envelope offerings. The prayer dedicating the offerings 'captures' the full range of gifts.

Notices

The Sending Forth of the People of God

Hymn

Word of Mission and Blessing

Postlude J Pachelbel, *Wir glauben all' an einen Gott*

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We'd love to hear your feedback on the service.

Our email address is:

enquiries@marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au

Our website is:

<http://marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au/>

TODAY'S READING

Read the following texts-for-the-day before the service and consider:

Could you imagine how we might hear this text differently from those who first heard it? That is, where might we mishear the text?

Matthew 25:31-46

'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" ⁴⁰And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." ⁴¹Then he will say to those at his left hand, "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴²for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." ⁴⁴Then they also will answer, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?" ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." ⁴⁶And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.'

PEOPLE TO COMMEMORATE

Isaac Watts, G. F. Handel & J. S. Bach, faithful servants



Isaac Watts (1674 – 1748)

Isaac Watts is sometimes called “the father of English hymnody”, not because there were no hymns in English before him but because of the strength of his theology, his poetic skill and the inspiration he gave to later hymn-writers from Charles Wesley onward.

Isaac's father (also called Isaac) was in prison when his son was born because the older Isaac was a strong Dissenter,

i.e. one of those who would not conform to the Church of England, the Church “established” by law. Until the 19th century only members of that Church could attend university, so the younger Isaac was educated at a nonconformist academy near London. In 1699 Watts began his ministry as assistant at Mark Lane Independent Chapel in London and three years later was appointed the senior minister there. In 1712 he became seriously ill and was invited to live with the family of Sir Thomas Abney in Hertfordshire. His health was always fragile and he remained with the Abney household for the rest of his life, becoming the family chaplain. Despite his poor health he was able to continue a limited ministry at the Mark Lane congregation and he also continued writing. His philosophical and theological works were highly regarded.

Watts's first volume of hymns, many of them based on the psalms, was published in 1707. Another volume published in 1715 went through 95 editions by 1810, a testament to their huge popularity. A 20th century commentator George Sampson wrote that “Watts shaped out the pattern of the congregational hymn as we know it”. Some of his hymns which are in common use today are “I'll praise my Maker while I've breath” (a paraphrase of Psalm 146), “Our God, our help in ages past” (a paraphrase of Psalm 90) and “When I survey the wondrous cross”, which is regarded by some as the greatest of all hymns in the English language. Twenty-seven of his hymns and paraphrases are included in the hymnal “Together in Song” (1999), a number exceeded only by Charles Wesley.

Very few hymns have demonstrated the staying-power of the hymns of Watts. His profound knowledge of Scripture, his theological scholarship and his poetic ability combined to produce 600 hymns, many of them of outstanding quality. Whether writing about creation, the person of Christ, salvation, the Word of God or Christian living, Watts nearly always goes to the heart of the matter. The noted writer Brian Wren (born 1936), whose many hymns are sung across the English-speaking world, has acknowledged his considerable debt to Watts.

by Rev D'Arcy Wood

The Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

www.oikoumene.org/resources/prayer-cycle

Malaysia

Malay kingdoms existed in the peninsula already in the 10th century. Islam arrived in the 14th century. The area was colonized successively by the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the British. The struggle for independence began after the Japanese occupation of World War II. The Federation of Malaya was founded in 1957. It became the Federation of Malaysia in 1963, when Sabah and Sarawak in northern Borneo, and Singapore were added. Singapore left the Federation in 1965. The population is made up of Malay, Chinese, Indian, indigenous groups, and migrant workers from several parts of Asia. Islam (Sunni) is the official religion. Malaysia's policy is to maintain the ethnic and religious diversity in careful balance. The country has succeeded in building a modern economy based on production and processing of oil and petroleum, a high-tech manufacturing industry, and services. The Catholic Church is the oldest and largest Christian church. Protestant missions arrived in the 19th century. The Anglicans, which are part of the Province of South East Asia, are the largest protestant church, followed by the Methodist Church of Malaysia. There are several active Pentecostal and Evangelical churches. The Council of Churches is the ecumenical body. The National Evangelical Christian Fellowship, established in 1983, is affiliated with the WEA. These two bodies, and the Catholic Church, together form the broad-based Christian Federation of Malaysia. The Orthodox Syrian Church in Malaysia is part of the WCC through the Orthodox Syrian Church in India, to which it belongs.

Singapore

Singapore was under the Sultanate of Johore (Malaysia). It became a British colony in 1867. Occupied by Japan in World War II, it acquired the status of a self-governing colony in 1959, joined the Federation of Malaysia in 1963, and became independent in 1965. The island state developed rapidly from a situation of mass poverty and lack of resources into a highly successful free-market economy based on manufacturing, export, and finance. Singapore has a very diverse population and a centrally regulated society, in which the freedom of individuals and groups is conditioned by

the objective of stability and harmonious relationships between the different ethnic and religious groups. In 1987, the Christian Conference of Asia's headquarters in Singapore were closed by the government and it was expelled, accused of supporting "subversive movements". In 1991 Singapore introduced the "Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act", to regulate religions and religious activities. The Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches were established in Singapore during the colonial period. With the exception of the Catholics, they are together in the National Council of Churches. The Assemblies of God (Pentecostal) and other Charismatic and Evangelical churches came in the 20th century. The Mar Thoma and Orthodox Syrian churches are also present, among the Indian community. Singapore is a stronghold of the evangelical movement, also in the Protestant and Anglican churches. The Evangelical Fellowship of Singapore is affiliated with the WEA (which had its offices in Singapore at one time).

NOTICES

SUMMER EDITION OF MARK THE WORD

Vicki and Rosemary are seeking contributions for the 2023 Summer edition of Mark the Word. We are again not proposing a theme for this edition and are open to any topic.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could send these via email to us (vicki.radcliffe@gmail.com or rosemarywearing@gmail.com) **no later than Sunday, 3rd December 2023.**

***MOZART: DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE* – FROM DECEMBER 6-9**

**Union Theatre, Level 2, Arts and Cultural Building (Parkville campus),
December 6,7,8,9**

Finally, after three years, we're producing the Magic Flute, in my arrangement for chamber orchestra. There are still a few tickets left!
<https://events.unimelb.edu.au/finearts-music/event/34856-die-zauberflote-the-magic-flute>

People to commemorate this week

Isaac Watts, G. F. Handel & J. S. Bach, faithful servants

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore

LECTIONARY READINGS 03 DECEMBER 2023

Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7,17-19; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

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As a Parish Mission of the Uniting Church in Australia,

The Congregation of Mark the Evangelist is responsible for Hotham Mission.

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