

# **CHRIST the KING HYMN FESTIVAL**

## **Lessons, Symbols and Songs of the Church Year**

*As we gather . . . The festival of Christ the King was first celebrated in 1925, in the midst of the European political turmoil of the 1920s and 1930s. It was intended to proclaim God's reign over a world wracked by one world war and facing another. That truth can still be proclaimed today. No human system is forever. None can claim absolute allegiance. Only Christ is sovereign.*

### **PRELUDE**

### **WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **OPENING NARRATION**

Often in our lives the celebration of a new year – a birthday, an anniversary, a new school term, a new calendar – provides a natural time of reflection. We see ways that we are not the same as we were a year ago, and we think about how the events of the past year have shaped us.

Today we celebrate Christ the King Sunday. The wheel of our church year has come full circle, and we are poised on the eve of a new year. Today we are invited to look back – to recall the stories of the seasons we have shared – and to turn with anticipation toward the year to come. Today we are invited to reflect on how our encounter with the Word of the living God has shaped us. For as we worship, we do more than remember: we enter into God's story of redemption and new life. We experience God's saving action, and we are changed.

And so on this day, we are invited *not* to sit back and relax as we begin our worship; rather, we are invited to *enter in* to in the presence of the living Lord. Through word and symbol song and prayer, we join with the whole church - gathered here in this place and throughout all times and places – to worship and adore Jesus, our risen and exalted King!

### **INVOCATION**

**Leader:** We begin our worship as we are called to begin each day of our life, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Assembly:** **Amen.**

## **ADVENT**

**Reading** – Isaiah 11:1-10

**Symbol** – light the candles of the Advent wreath

### **Narration**

The Church Year begins with the season of Advent – a word that means “coming.” This season of four weeks speaks of joy, hope, love, peace – of expectation. The One for whom we wait comes to liberate, to set free.

This is certainly no past need. A quick glance at the newspaper headlines or the evening news reveals how much our world needs someone to come to set free, to give hope, to give joy, to give love, to give peace – now. And not only in the world out there, but here – you and I – we need this liberation – this freedom. Listen to our conversations with one another – and to the conversations of your inner heart – and you too rejoice at the dawning of a new morn.

**Hymn** – “Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn” #242 (v. 1 & 2)

## CHRISTMAS

**Reading** – Luke 2:1-20

**Symbol** – manger is brought forward and placed near the altar

### **Narration**

In a lowly manger we witness the glory of God – all the splendor of divine love. God has come to dwell – to be Emmanuel – God with us – not only in Bethlehem long ago, but here today as well; for Christmas celebrates how almighty God chose to be born in all humility and lowliness and to live with us, among us, in us.

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let every heart prepare him room and heaven and nature sing!

**Hymn** – “Joy to the World” #267 (v. 1)

## EPIPHANY

**Reading** – Isaiah 60:1-3

**Symbol** – lit candle carried to table

### **Narration**

Epiphany means “to make known,” and in this season we celebrate both how God is made known throughout the world and how God is revealed in Jesus Christ – the light of the world.

In this season of Epiphany we open our eyes and our hearts and our lives to God, who continues to be revealed brightly today, in our world, among us!

**Hymn** – “Christ, Be Our Light” #715 (v. 1, 2 and 5)

### **The Baptism of Our Lord**

**Symbol** – pitcher of water poured into font

### **Narration**

On the First Sunday after Epiphany we celebrate our Lord’s baptism by John in the river Jordan. Early in the life of the Church great stress was laid on Jesus’ baptism, which was an epiphany, a “making known,” as the divine sonship of Jesus was revealed through the voice from Heaven. Here Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit – descending like a dove – and appointed to His messianic office – beginning His public ministry. And here we see Jesus’ complete identification with us – sinful humanity – as He who knew no sin was baptized by John.

On this day of celebration we remember with thanks not only our Lord’s baptism but also our own. And we pray that we might be faithful to our calling as children of God, free from the power of sin and open to the life of the Spirit.

**Hymn:** “Baptized and Set Free” #453

*[during the singing of this hymn the presider uses a pine bough to asperge (sprinkle) the assembly with water from the font]*

## **The Transfiguration of Our Lord**

**Symbol** – white cloth draped on table

### **Narration**

The season of Epiphany ends with a celebration of the transfiguration of our Lord on a high mountain. Jesus was transfigured – changed – before Peter, James and John. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. Like the epiphany, the “making known,” of Jesus at his baptism, the transfiguration is also a “making known” of who Jesus is. Here the Old Testament law and prophets – as seen in Moses and Elijah – are brought into Jesus’ time. And here we are offered a preview of His glory which is to come, before we descend into the shadowed valley of the season of Lent and of Holy Week.

**Hymn** – “Shine, Jesus, Shine” #671 (refrain, v. 2, refrain)

## **LENT**

### **Ash Wednesday**

**Responsive Reading** – Psalm 51:1-13

**Symbol** – cross placed on table

### **Narration**

Lent is a time of repentance and renewal. It is a participation in the labors of Christ for us; it is a journeying with Christ into the cycle of darkness, and finally to death.

A sign of this penitential season is the marking of ashes, in the form of a cross, on the forehead of each person during the Ash Wednesday liturgy, reminding us of our baptism where we were marked with the cross of Christ forever.

This cross is also a reminder that we are mortal, that we will finally die.

And finally, this cross is a call to repent, individually and communally, not merely in words, but in lives that seek to be turned around by the power of the Gospel, so that God might heal this fallen creation, beginning with us!

**Hymn** – “Savior, When in Dust to You” #601 (v. 1 & 2)

### **Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday**

**Symbol** – palm branch placed on table

### **Narration**

On the Sunday of the Passion we celebrate a parade, a march, a victory remembrance – Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem. “Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna!” The hero’s welcome given to Jesus anticipates his impending victory over death. We join with the crowds of Jesus’ day by crying out in loud voices and by waving palm branches - branches symbolic of hope, of life, and of victory seen in Jesus Christ.

Even so, on this day – the beginning of Holy Week – we know that our cries of triumph, soon to be cries of crucifixion, will lead straight to suffering and the cross.

Like Jesus, we are called to follow this path, this parade, this march of obedience. Obedience in our journey. Obedience in our life of faith.

**Hymn – “Lamb of God” #336 (v. 1 & 3)**

## **THE THREE DAYS**

### **Maundy Thursday**

**Reading** – John 13:1-5, 12-17

**Symbol** – basin and towel draped over the chair

#### **Narration**

The Three Days are a special time set aside to celebrate the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Like no other time in the year, we are drawn into the story through word and action, song and silence.

In the first part of the Three Days of Jesus’ passion, the Maundy Thursday liturgy includes the washing of feet, the sharing of Holy Communion, and the stripping of the altar.

“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.” (John 13:34). Maundy Thursday, or a “new commandment” as the name means, is not so much the observance of the anniversary of the institution of Holy Communion as it is the celebration of the intimacy of the Christian community, its mutual forgiveness, absolution, peace and love.

Perhaps nowhere is this seen as clearly as in the footwashing, a dramatic action showing the ultimate meaning of the Gospel’s call to love and service – God’s new commandment.

**Hymn – “Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us With Your Love” #708 (v. 1 & 4)**

### **Good Friday**

**Reading** – Isaiah 52:13-53:12

**Symbol** – black cloth draped on cross

#### **Narration**

Good Friday, from God’s Friday or God’s Day in the English and in the Dutch, is a celebration of our Lord’s sacrifice on the cross. Here we reflect through silence, readings, prayer, and the procession of the cross, on the destruction of death by death. Here we meditate on the mystery of the crucified Savior. Here we contemplate the mystery of redemption – what Jesus Christ has done for us.

**Hymn – “Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross” #335  
(v. 1 - Men; v. 3 - Women; refrain - All)**

### **Vigil of Easter**

**Symbol** – white cloth draped on cross

### **Narration**

The Easter Vigil, perhaps a new celebration for some Lutheran congregations, is sometimes called the “Queen of the Christian year” with its movement from the darkness of Good Friday to the light of Easter. Extended telling of the Old Testament’s stories of creation, deliverance, and salvation set the gospel in the context of the broader salvation history and establish God’s yes for the whole creation. The celebration of baptism and the first communion of Easter are also central to this resurrection liturgy.

**Hymn – “We Know That Christ Is Raised” #449**

### **EASTER – THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD**

**Reading** – Matthew 28:1-10

**Symbol** – rock placed on table

### **Narration**

The season of Easter proclaims that God’s love is stronger than hate; that God’s desire to save is stronger than the power to destroy; that God who is life is stronger than death.

The New Testament is emphatic on these two points: First, that God raised Jesus, who died, to life again. And second, that Jesus Christ is the first of many to rise. In Christ’s resurrection you and I are given power. Even as in baptism we were buried with Christ into His death, so now, through His resurrection, we are empowered to walk in newness of life.

He lives! He lives to grant comfort, guidance, assurance . . . life!

**Hymn – “I Know that My Redeemer Lives!” #619 (v. 1, 7 & 8)**

### **APOSTLES’ CREED**

**Leader:** Living together in trust and hope, let us confess our faith.

**All:** **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 power of 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 again 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**

## **The Ascension of our Lord**

**Symbol** – chalice and paten on the altar

### **Narration**

During the fifty-day festival of Easter, we celebrate of the Ascension of our Lord. Here we focus on Jesus' ascension into heaven, where He sits at the right hand of God the Father, in all power and glory. Here we focus on Christ's enthronement, and not on Christ's alone, but on the enthronement of humanity itself. For we pray this day that we might also come into the presence of God the Father, and live forever in the presence of God's glory.

While on earth – we celebrate the Eucharist feast, the thanksgiving feast, the Holy Communion. While on earth – we taste a foretaste of the feast which is to come.

**Hymn** – “You are Holy” #525

## **PENTECOST**

**Reading** – Acts 2:1-4

**Symbol** – red cloth draped on the table

### **Narration**

The victory of Easter – the victory of light over darkness, hope over despair, life over death – cannot be contained! In the season of Pentecost we remember with thanksgiving God's gift of the Holy Spirit – like a mighty, rushing wind, like breath – the very life and breath of God. The Holy Spirit continues to inspire and renew the church today, even interceding for us as we pray.

**Hymn** – “Spirit of Gentleness” #396 (refrain, v. 3 & 4)

## **Time after Pentecost**

**Reading** – John 15:1-5

**Symbol** – plant

### **Narration**

The work of Christ is now carried out through the Spirit in the lives of people – in you and me. Like a plant, green with new growth; God desires us to hear the Word and to have the Word take root within our lives, that we may grow and mature as faithful disciples.

The work of the Spirit among us leads us to offer our prayers. And so, let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

## **THE PRAYERS**

**Leader:** Merciful God,  
**Assembly:** **hear our prayer.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

Leader Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

Assembly: **Our Father, who art in heaven  
hallowed by 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**

## THE GATHERING OF THE GIFTS

Leader: The work of the Spirit among us leads us to offer our gifts, a sign of the giving of our whole selves in grateful response for all God's gifts to us.

*[A gift of music may accompany the gathering of the offering.]*

## Offertory Hymn – “We Are An Offering” #692

### Offertory Prayer

Leader: Let us pray. Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things.

Assembly: **Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.**

## CHRIST THE KING

### Reading – Luke 23:33-43

### Narration

As this year of grace ends, Luke does not leave Christ reigning on a gilded throne, but reigning from the cross. The world's only true king, Jesus, set aside his position of honour; he “humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross.” Rather than use his power to save himself, he uses it to bring others into paradise. In Jesus, we, too are invited to new life within the reign of God.

[Start intro to next hymn as the narration continues.] “Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2: 8-11).

### Hymn: “Crown Him with Many Crowns” #855

(v. 1 – All; v.2 – Women; v. 3 - All; v. 4 – Men; v. 5 - All)

## **BLESSING and DISMISSAL**

Leader: Through every season of the year, therefore, we live under God's blessing . . and to God's praise! And now receive God's benediction. ....  
The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord's face shine on you and be gracious to you, the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Assembly: Amen.**

Leader: My sisters and brothers: go in peace. Christ is with you!

**Assembly: Thanks be to God!**

## **POSTLUDE**

*\* Portions used from Sundays and Seasons used with permission*



## Service Notes

- This worship service, developed for use on Christ the King Sunday, November 25, 2007, was prepared by members of the Synod of Alberta and the Territories Worship and the Arts Committee. The service could be used at other times with a few thoughtful revisions.
- It is designed for use with the ELCIC's new worship book, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. Many of the hymns can also be found in the *Lutheran Book of Worship, With One Voice, Worship and Praise*, and other church music resources.
- Most of the seasonal observances related specifically to Christ are included to give worship planners a wide range of possibilities to work with. Feel free to adapt the service according to your congregation's needs and resources.
- If possible, have choirs, soloists, or ensembles contribute music either as part of or in place of some of the suggested hymns. Instrumental arrangements could also be used effectively.
- For continuity, consider using one or two narrators and keep them in position throughout the service.
- Involve a range of people in contributing the symbols and readings.
- Work with your pastor to determine her/his role in leading the service. The service could be led entirely by laypeople if that best meets your circumstances.
- The service does not include a sermon; if you wish to add one, consider shortening the service accordingly. A celebration of the Eucharist is also not included in this outline, but the Easter season section would be an ideal place to incorporate this celebration. Again, adapt as you desire.
- The synod office has a set of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* pew edition and accompaniment edition hymn books; contact the office if your congregation wishes to borrow them.

## Materials

### In place before worship begins:

- table in place at front of sanctuary
- baptismal font with pine bough placed nearby
- chair
- Advent wreath – placed on the table
- candle lighter at the back of the Sanctuary
- copies of Scriptures at the pulpit or lectern

### Needs during worship:

- candle lighter and match (Advent wreath)
- manger
- lit candle
- pitcher of water
- white cloth (to drape on table)
- cross (standing cross)
- palm branch
- basin and towel (on chair)
- black cloth (to drape on the standing cross)
- white cloth (to drape on the standing cross)
- rock
- chalice and paten
- red cloth (to drape on table)
- plant