



Rev. Barbara J. Cairns
Andrea Rogers Family & Youth Coordinator
Cheryl Jewell
and all members of West River United Church
Reign of Christ Sunday
November 22, 2020

MUSICAL PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE *

We give thanks for the light of Christ. And we ask that as we are one, in this circle of light that we may be one with You, Holy One, in the circle of Your loving presence. Amen. (*The Christ candle is lit.*)

♪ 'Open Our Hearts' MV 21

Open our hearts,
Open our minds,
Open our lives to you
O loving God.

Open our hearts,
Open our minds,
Open our lives to you
O loving God.
Open our hearts

CALL ALL TO WORSHIP ***

One: God is as a shepherd is to their sheep.

All: Protector and guide who stays watch over us.

One: God's promise to us is to seek us out always.

All: For God gathers us together, in love.

One: Let us come into this place with joy, knowing that we are home.

PRAYER OF APPROACH AND THE LORD'S PRAYER ***

O God of justice and love, today we gather in Your name, hearts open and ready to grow more in love and faith. Be with us now, hear our prayers for justice and peace, and help us to embrace the gift of hope as we place our trust in You.

This we pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray together:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be 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, the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer of Confession***

The year has been long, O God.

We are weary. We wonder what is left to hope for.

**All around us, injustices prevail,
people are dying, so many live in fear.**

Forgive us O God,

**for the times when we lose sight
of the ways in which You continue
to reign in this world, through Christ.**

**Help us to remember that in Christ,
there is always hope. There is always new life.**

May we trust in this, as a new church year begins. Amen.

Words of Assurance***

One: In Christ is new life. In Christ is new beginnings. In Christ is life.

All: Thanks be to God!

Minutes for Mission

♪ MV8 – ‘And on This Path’

And on this path,
the gates of holiness are open wide,
And on this path,
the gates of holiness are open wide,
And on this path,
the gates of holiness are open wide,
Open wide! Open wide!
Open wide, the gates are open wide!

So, enter in,
the gates of holiness are open wide,
So, enter in,
the gates of holiness are open wide,
So, enter in,
the gates of holiness are open wide,
Open wide! Open wide!
Open wide, the gates are open wide!

SCRIPTURE READING

EZEKIEL 34:11-16 NRSV

God, the True Shepherd

For thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will

strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

MATTHEW 25:31-46 NRSV

The Judgment of the Nations

“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. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then 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; for 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, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then 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? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And 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.’ Then 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; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I 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.’ Then 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?’ Then 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.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

SERMON

PASTORAL PRAYER

♫ **VU 213 – ‘Rejoice, the Lord Is King’**

Rejoice, the Lord is King!

Your risen Lord adore!

Rejoice, give thanks and sing,
And triumph evermore.
Lift up your heart,
Lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

God's kingdom cannot fail,
Christ rules o'er earth and heaven;
The keys of death and hell
Are to our Jesus given:
Lift up your heart,
Lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

As we have entered this church with thanksgiving on our hearts, let us remember that we have the opportunity to joyfully share from the bounty which God has provided. In the love and name of Christ, let us receive our morning offering.

♪ VU 540 – ‘Grant Us, God, the Grace’

Grant us, God, the grace of giving,
With a spirit large and free,
That ourselves and all our living
We may offer faithfully.

OFFERTORY PRAYER (*in unison*) ***

Today O God, we share our gifts that are many and varied, unique to who we are. We present all that we have, in the hope that Your love might touch the lives through us. This we pray in Christ's name, Amen.

Benediction***

Christ reigns, hallelujah!
Christ loves, hallelujah!
Christ lives, hallelujah!
Go from here with God's blessing upon you,
We go trusting in the One who
walks with us always. Amen.

Postlude

**Whole People of God, November 2020.*

*** Ministry Matters, Nancy C. Townley, November, 2020.*

****Rev. Tara Ann Gourson, Bideford P.C., November 2020.*

Open Our Hearts: Words and Music: Jim Strathdee © 2006 Jim and Jean Strathdee

And on This Path: Words: Lynn Baumann © 2000 Music: Linnea Goods © 2003 Borealis Music

Rejoice, the Lord Is King: Words: Charles Wesley 1746, alt. Music: John Darwall 1770, desc. Sidney Hugo

Nicholson ca. 1947, Descant © 1955 Hymns Ancient and Modern Ltd. Used by permission of Hope

Publishing Company

Grant Us God the Grace: Words: anonymous Words: attrib. Christian F. Witt, Psalmody Sacra 1715, adapt

Henry John Gauntlett 1861