



Chet Valley Churches



**All Together Worship
Christ the King**

21st November 2021

We Prepare for Worship

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

The Collect for Purity—A Prayer of Preparation

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden,
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love
you and worthily magnify your holy name
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

♪ Hymn: All Praise to Thee, for Thou, O King Divine

All praise to thee, for thou, O King divine,
Didst yield the glory that of right was thine,
That in our troubled hearts thy grace might shine: Hallelujah!

Thou cam'st to us in lowliness of thought;
By thee the outcast and the poor were sought,
And by thy death was God's salvation wrought: Hallelujah!

Let this mind be in us which was in thee,
Who wast a servant that we might be free,
Humbling thyself to death on Calvary: Hallelujah!

Wherefore, by God's eternal purpose, thou
Art high exalted o'er all creatures now,
And given the name to which all knees shall bow: Hallelujah!

Let every tongue confess with one accord
In heaven and earth that Jesus Christ is Lord;
And God the Father be by all adored: Hallelujah! Amen!

¶ The Collect—A Special Prayer for the Day

God the Father, help us to hear the call of Christ the King and to follow in his service, whose kingdom has no end; for he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, one glory. **Amen.**

Confession: We Say Sorry to God

**Father God, we ask you to forgive us
for the things we have thought and the things we have said
and the things we have done that do not please you.
We are sorry. Help us to be more like Jesus:
ready to pray, ready to help others,
ready to do your will in all things, every day. Amen.**

Absolution

**May the God of love and power forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by his Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

🎵 Hymn: Majesty

**Majesty, worship his majesty.
Unto Jesus be glory, honour and praise.**

**Majesty, kingdom authority, flows from his throne
Unto His own; his anthem raise.**

**So exalt, lift up on high the name of Jesus.
Magnify, come glorify Christ Jesus the king.**

**Majesty, worship His majesty.
Jesus who died, now glorified. King of all kings.**



📖 Reading: John 18:33-37 [Edwin]

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus answered, “Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?” Pilate replied, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?”

Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.” Pilate asked him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.”

Talk [Rev Alison]

I wonder what you think of The Queen—not the monarchy as such, but our queen, Queen Elizabeth the Second.

Faithfully and dutifully serving for nearly 70 years; meeting endless people; attending services; cenotaph wreath-laying on Remembrance Sunday; continuing on zoom/skype when unable to be in person; speaking out about community and poverty and fortitude through her Christmas messages over the years; acting as a figurehead for the country, nominally the head of government but with no real power.

In the old days, kings and rulers were powerful people. In Old Testament times, the people of God were beset by other tribes with their own kings, the Philistines for example;

God never wanted his people to have a king. He was their King. But in the time of the prophet Samuel, the first king of God's people was anointed. Samuel was old and his sons, appointed as judges, had turned away from God. They were willing to accept bribes and pervert the course of justice, and the people were demanding a king.

“Give us a king to govern us.”

Samuel prayed to God, and God said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.” Samuel went on to warn them, in God's words, what a king would be like:

A king would force their sons into his army or force them to slave on his land; a king would force their daughters into his household; a king would take the people's produce and give it to his courtiers; a king would take their slaves and their livestock. Their king, it seems, would just be like any other gentile king in stark contrast to God who had set them simple rules to live by, who had provided for them, who loved them and cared for their wellbeing. Their king would turn them away from following God.

Well, they got what they asked for and their king, King Saul, and subsequent kings, turned out pretty much as the people had been warned by Samuel. The kingdom was eventually divided and people were taken into exile and slavery.

When Jesus was born there were puppet kings in Israel—King Herod for example—in the pay of the Romans, doing the bidding of Caesar Augustus who regarded himself as the son of God. The people of God wanted a king to overturn Roman rule and to make their lives better.

Was Jesus this going to be the person to do this?

Jesus spoke about a kingdom, God's kingdom—the Kingdom of Heaven. It sounded a good place though a rather topsy turvy place where the poor and marginalised were raised up and rulers were thrown down, where hungry people were fed, where there was comfort for the desperate....

Many people had high hopes of him, though Jesus was not really the image of the powerful kings people had experienced. Some were worried—the Jewish leaders who were frequently the butt of his humour, subject to his harsh criticism. Some became disenchanted enough to betray him—poor old Judas will always have that laid at his feet.

And so it was that Jesus found himself in front of Pilate having a curious conversation about kingship. Of course, if Jesus was a king of the ‘current model’, his armies would come and fight for him, conflict and strife being part of life.

But Jesus wasn't; he was God in human form, coming himself to point people back to his ways and the ways of his kingdom. “For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice”.

As it was then, so it is now. ‘Truth’ is spoken by many people – except that some of it is lies, and some of it feels like false truth: The false truth that says climate change is not happening; the false truth that says that girls should not be educated; the false truth that says that black people are not as important as white people; the false truth that says bribery is acceptable; the false truth that says perverting the course of justice is fine; the false truth that... I could go on, but you get my drift.

There's the world's truth and there's kingdom truth—the truth that Jesus was talking about.

Do you belong to the truth? And if so, whose truth is it?

The world's truth or Jesus' kingdom truth?



Offertory Hymn: God is Love

**God is love: his the care, tending each, ev'rywhere,
God is love, all is there! Jesus came to show him,
That mankind might know him!**

**Sing aloud, loud, loud! Sing aloud, loud, loud!
God is good! God is truth! God is beauty! Praise him!**

**Jesus lived here for men, strove and died, rose again,
Rules our hearts, now as then; for he came to save us
By the truth he gave us.**

**To our Lord, praise we sing: light and life, friend and king,
Coming down love to bring, pattern for our duty,
Showing God in beauty. Sing aloud, loud, loud..**

The Profession of Faith

Let us affirm our common faith in God.



**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit:
who strengthens us with power from on high,**

**We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

We Pray Together [Val]

For our prayers today we are going on a journey so I ask you to shut your eyes and listen, as off we go.

We are starting at home, in our own homes. Can you see the room—perhaps the kitchen with the kettle and the biscuit tin. Perhaps the living room with things put down and not picked up. This is the place we call home: the mess, the tidiness, the calm, the shouting, the family, the time alone. Now look hard: there is a king standing in the corner. It's Jesus and he is smiling on all that is going on. He understands and is happy to be there with you.

Now we are going outside for a walk into town. Can you see the trees; golden autumn brown? Can you smell that special autumn smell? Look, there's a friend from school; and a person from the office; and here is the lady from the shop; and the man from the takeaway; and there is your neighbour; and the elderly couple who rarely talk but always smile. Now look really hard. Can you see the king standing at the bus stop? It's Jesus and he is smiling at all that is going on. He is happy to be there. Wait—he is beckoning to you. He wants you to go on a journey with him.

Wow! Where are we now? We are floating high in the sky and looking down on the world below us. It is like a beautiful patchwork of greens and blues, yellows and oranges. But look closer. There are black rivers flowing with dirty water. There are great gaping holes like scars where people are ripping metals and minerals out of the ground. There are chimneys blowing out great puffs of smoke which make your eyes and throat sore. You look around for the king—surely he can't be found in all this mess. But he is beside you, holding your hand. This time his face is sad. Listen closely; he is asking you an important question. He is saying, please save the world.

Where are we now? It is dark and dusty and there is a bad smell. It feels edgy, perhaps even dangerous. There are lots of people but they are not smiling. Some are hungry. Some are thirsty. Some are afraid. Some feel trapped and unloved. Most feel that nobody understands or cares. But there, in the middle of them, is the king. Yes, it's Jesus. He is quietly there, standing beside the lost and the forgotten. He is asking us to stand there too. Do we feel brave enough to face this challenge? Jesus hopes so.

And now our journey is coming to an end. Open your eyes. You are back in a familiar place; in church or at home. Look around though. The king will be there somewhere. In the little things, in the big things, the ordinary things, the complicated things. Jesus, the king, is always there. Sometimes we may need to look harder, but we must never stop looking.

We pray for the coming of God's kingdom in the words Jesus taught us:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory
are yours, now and for ever. Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn 695: Christ Triumphant

**Christ triumphant, ever reigning, Saviour, Master, King!
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining, hear us as we sing:
Yours the glory and the crown,
The high renown, the eternal name.**

**Word incarnate, truth revealing, Son of Man on earth!
Power and majesty concealing by your humble birth:
Yours the glory...**

**Suffering servant, scorned, ill-treated, victim crucified!
Death is through the cross defeated, sinners justified:
Yours the glory...**

**Priestly king, enthroned for ever high in heaven above!
Sin and death and hell shall never stifle hymns of love:
Yours the glory...**

**So, our hearts and voices raising through the ages long,
Ceaselessly upon you gazing, this shall be our song:
Yours the glory...**

Sending Out

As well as being the Sunday when we remember Christ the King, this last Sunday before Advent has also been known as Stir Up Sunday as traditionally this was the collect for today. It also became the tradition that you should start making (and stirring) your Christmas puddings today!

Stir up, O Lord, the wills of your faithful people;
that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works,
may be by you plenteously rewarded;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



Blessing & Dismissal

Christ our exalted King pour upon you his abundant gifts
and bring you to reign with him in glory; and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **In the name of Christ. Amen.**