ABOUT THE PROPERS

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service

Christ the King Sunday

November 22, 2026



King of kings and Lord of lords

Never could there be a king like Christ our King. Beyond all comparison is the rule he exercises in time and eternity. And incomparably great is our joy in worshiping him even now as we await his triumphant return to transform our worship in faith and under the cross to worship in sight and in glory. On this last Sunday of the Church Year, we rejoice in the fulfillment of God's plan for our salvation through Christ our King. And we rejoice because Christ our King reigns—the King who once came as a sacrifice; the King who still shepherds us day by day; the King who one day will conquer all our enemies once and for all. Rejoice in his reign and look forward to the day when every knee will bow with us before the King of kings and Lord of Lords!

Prayer of the Day

Lord Jesus Christ, by your victory you have broken the power of the evil one. Fill our hearts with joy and peace as we look with hope to that day when every creature in heaven and earth will acclaim you King of kings and Lord of lords to your unending praise and glory; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Lesson [1] Ezekiel 34:11-16,23,24

Since the time of David, Israel had called her kings "shepherds." The men who followed in David's line, however, did not shepherd Israel in the paths of God. So God made a promise: the Sovereign LORD would shepherd his people. Notice the first-person pronouns in this lesson—we rejoice because we have a King who acts on behalf of his people, like a shepherd for sheep. God says, "I will guide them; I will guard them; I will seek them; I will find them." Most importantly, God promised to raise up King David's greater Son to be the prince of his people and their Good Shepherd. Rejoice in the Christ the King who shepherds his flock day by day!

Second Reading [1] 1 Corinthians 15:20-28

If the story of Christ ended on Good Friday, there could be no joy at all. Had Christ not been raised, we should be pitied more than all men. But Christ has indeed been raised, and that means he is the firstfruits of the dead. Jesus' resurrection also proves that he rules over our enemies as the King of kings, even the final enemy of death.

Gospel [1] Matthew 27:27-31

Before they crucified Jesus, the soldiers mocked him by saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" The King of heaven came to earth and look at what his people did to him! Jesus could have swept them all away. He could have condemned us like he had the fallen angels. Instead, out of love, he gave his holiness for our sin and his death for our life. This scene is joyful because we know how it ends. The picture of our King wearing a crown of thorns is not tragic, but rather it is full of grace.

Psalm of the Day [4] Psalm 95 A "The Rock of Our Salvation"

The Church sings Psalm 95 in services that praise God as the source of the water of life and the rock of our eternal salvation. The psalm connects joyful worship of God with penitent listening to his Word. Martin Luther said, "Psalm 95 is a prophecy of Christ. The letter to the Hebrews cites a large portion of it as a prophecy of the time of the New Testament and the voice of the gospel. It educates and entices us to Christ and to the Word of God as proper worship. Christ had made us and is our shepherd, and we are his sheep."

Gospel Acclamation Revelation 19:12,16

"On his head are many crowns, and on his robe this name is written: king of kings and lord of lords."

Hymn of the Day 531 "The Head That Once Was Crowned with Thorns" (Thomas Kelly, 1769-1855)

Church Year Season [1] Season after Pentecost

After reliving the great events of the life of Christ, the worshipping Church spends half a year focusing on the teachings of Christ. The Church wears green during the season of Pentecost as the Spirit uses those teachings of Jesus to grow the faith of believers. The appointed lessons cover a great body of doctrine for faith and life.

Colors & Symbolism White

White is the color of our Triune God and heaven. It also symbolizes joy, celebration, gladness, light, purity and innocence. We receive these blessings through faith because Christ, our righteousness Savior, has forgiven all our sins.

Nain Paraments Easter

Superfrontal: *Alleluia* is a taken from a Hebrew word which means, "Praise the LORD." It is a word of joy and gladness and most commonly used in the Psalms (e.g. 103). An ancient custom is to refrain from using the term during Lent in order to distinguish the penitential nature of that season from the joy and hope filled nature of the Easter season that follows. The vines and vegetation branching out from the *Alleluia* represent the spiritual life that Jesus, the vine brings to God's children, the branches (John 15:5).

Lectern antependium: The doves flying in front of the cross represent purity, innocence (Matthew 10:16), as well as spiritual and eternal rest (Psalm 55:6). When the dove has an olive branch or leaf in its beak, it is a symbol of hope and peace (Genesis 8:11). Each of these blessings and more come by Jesus' death on the cross and through the gift of faith (Galatians 1:3,4).

Pulpit antependium: The cross is formed by the Greek letters Chi (X) and Rho (P). Chi and Rho are the first two letters in the Greek word for Christ (Χριστός). This ancient symbol represents Jesus and his office as the Messiah, the anointed King of kings and Savior of the world (Matthew 16:16). The vines and vegetation branching out from the cross represent the spiritual life that Jesus, the vine brings to God's children, the branches (John 15:5).

[1] Courtesy of "Planning Christian Worship: Year A". Jonathan E. Schroeder, Author.
[2] Courtesy of "Planning Christian Worship: Year B". Daniel M. Deutschlander, Author.
[3] Courtesy of "Planning Christian Worship: Year C". Joel J. Gawrisch, Author.
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