



CENTRAL
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PREPARATION

November 22, 2020

Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

“The church as a counter-culture is really like a model home in a rundown neighborhood. We’re a community who embraces the rule of Christ in every area of life. Christ then invites the world into that model home to take a look inside. The church is the occupant of that model home, inviting neighbors to come inside and look around. ‘Come in,’ they say. ‘Hear what we believe. See how we live. See how the kingdom of God operates and get a taste of what the kingdom will be like in its fullness one day.’”

— HARVIE CONN

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Lord, we pray, absolve your people from their offenses; that through your bountiful goodness we may be set free from the chains of all those sins which in our frailty we have committed: grant this, heavenly Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

THE COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

PSALM: Psalm 100

SECOND READING: Ephesians 1:15-23

GOSPEL: Matthew 25:31-46

ORDER OF WORSHIP

WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP

In Scripture, the Call to Worship comes from God. We need to be called because it is not our natural response to come to God. God takes the initiative, moves towards us with grace, and invites us to worship him.

Psalm 145

LEADER I will extol you, my God and King,
and bless your name forever and ever.

**PEOPLE Every day I will bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.**

LEADER Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised,
and his greatness is unsearchable.

**PEOPLE All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD,
and all your saints shall bless you!**

LEADER They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom
and tell of your power.

**PEOPLE Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures throughout all generations.**

HYMN

Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun

Isaac Watts · John Hatton

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does its successive journeys run;
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,
'Til moons shall wax and wane no more.

To Him shall endless prayer be made,
And praises throng to crown His head;
His name like sweet perfume shall rise
With ev'ry morning sacrifice.

People and realms of ev'ry tongue
Dwell on His love with sweetest song;
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early blessings on His name.

Let ev'ry creature rise and bring
Honors peculiar to our King;
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud Amen!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Aware of God's holiness and our sinfulness, the Prayer of Confession invites us to honestly confess our sins. We are free to confess even our most grievous faults because no matter how deep our sin may be, God's grace in Jesus Christ is deeper still. Confession both acknowledges our need for grace and celebrates its abundant provision in Christ.

Almighty God, you have raised Jesus from death to life and crowned him Lord of all. We confess that we have not bowed before him or acknowledged his rule in our lives. We have gone along with the ways of the world and failed to give him glory. Forgive us and raise us from sin, that we may be your faithful people, obeying the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ, who rules the world and is head of the church, his body. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

The Words of Assurance should be received with gratitude and joy because these words of Scripture assure us that God has promised to forgive and restore those who confess their sins through the finished work of Jesus Christ on our behalf.

Revelation 5:5, 9-10

Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered. With his blood he has purchased people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. He has made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on earth.

LEADER Hear and receive the good news of the gospel:
in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

ALL **Thanks be to God!**

HYMN

How Great is Our God

Chris Tomlin · Jesse Reeves · Ed Cash

The splendor of a King, clothed in majesty,
Let all the earth rejoice—all the earth rejoice.
He wraps himself in light, and darkness tries to hide,
And trembles at His voice, and trembles at His voice.

*How great is our God, sing with me,
How great is our God, and all will see.
How great—how great is our God.*

And age to age He stands, and time is in His hands,
Beginning and the End—Beginning and the End.
The Godhead, Three in One, Father, Spirit, Son,
The Lion and the Lamb—the Lion and the Lamb. *Chorus*

Name above all names, worthy of all praise,
My heart will sing, how great is our God.
Name above all names, worthy of all praise,
My heart will sing, how great is our God. *Chorus*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*We regularly pray for needs in our congregation, our neighborhood and city, and the world.
Please let the prayer ministry know of your prayer requests by visiting centralchurchnyc.org/prayerrequest.*

OFFERING

Please text [centralchurchnyc](http://centralchurchnyc.org) to 77977 or visit our website in order to give electronically.

OFFERTORY

Revelation Song

Kari Jobe

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Holy, holy is He
Sing a new song to Him who sits on
Heaven's mercy seat

*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty
Who was and is and is to come
With all creation I sing praise to the King of kings
You are my everything and I will adore You*

Clothed in glory of living color
Flashes of lightning rolls of thunder
Blessing and honor strength and glory and power be
To You the only wise King *Chorus*

Filled with wonder awestruck wonder
At the mention of Your name
Jesus Your name is power, breath and living water
Such a marvelous mystery *Chorus*

THE DOXOLOGY

Old Hundredth LM

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye Heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

The Word of God is the primary means by which God speaks to us and the ultimate authority for what we believe and how we live. All Scripture passages are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV) unless otherwise noted.

Acts 6:1-7

¹Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. ²And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. ³Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. ⁴But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” ⁵And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. ⁶These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

⁷And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

LEADER The word of the Lord.

ALL **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

The Spirit makes the reading and preaching of God's Word a powerful means of challenging, comforting, and strengthening God's people and awakening people to new faith.

Us AND Them | Love in Action

Rev. Jason Harris

THE THANKSGIVING

From the earliest days of the church a prayer of Thanksgiving preceded Holy Communion. The Thanksgiving includes the "Sursum Corda" which means "Lift up your hearts" or literally, "Hearts lifted," in Latin. The Thanksgiving bids us to acknowledge our absolute dependence on the God who desires to commune with us.

LEADER Lift up your hearts.

PEOPLE **We lift them up to the Lord.**

LEADER Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

PEOPLE **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

LEADER It is indeed right, our duty and joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, Lord, holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Holy Communion (also called the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist) is the family meal of baptized Christians. We invite all to partake of this sacrament who trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, who are at peace with God and with their neighbor, and who seek strength to live more faithfully for Christ. If you are not a Christian, or if you are not prepared to share in this meal, we encourage you to use the prayers printed below and spend this time in reflection or prayer. We hope that this time is helpful to you as you consider your relationship with Jesus Christ and with his people, the church. For health reasons, an individually packaged wafer and cup can be found in the pew for those who wish to participate in the Lord's Supper. Once consumed, please place empty cups in the back of the pew.

We take it as a sign of a healthy congregation to have regular attenders who love our community but who do not profess faith in Christ and so refrain from receiving the elements. If you are a Christian and have not yet been baptized, please talk with our pastors. We would be honored to baptize you.

Children are welcome to partake of communion. To receive the Lord's Supper, a child must have been baptized and been formally received as a communing member by the Session of this church or the governing body of the church to which you belong.

Prayer for Those Searching for Truth

Lord Jesus Christ, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so.

If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus Christ, I acknowledge that you are so holy and I am so sinful that you had to die for me. Yet you are so merciful and I am so loved that you were willing to die for me. I confess that I have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed by what I have done and by what I have failed to do. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayer of Commitment

Lord Jesus, I know that if I do not love you with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength, I shall love something else with all my heart and mind and soul and strength. Grant that by loving you first I may be liberated from all lesser loves and loyalties and have you as my first love, my chief good, and my final joy. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

We sing the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray to our Heavenly Father.

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 debts as we forgive our debtors,
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever, Amen.

BENEDICTION

We begin our worship with God's gracious invitation, and we conclude with God's blessing, his good word. It is appropriate to look up and open our palms as we receive the Benediction to symbolize how Jesus Christ lifts our heads and to demonstrate our eagerness to receive God's blessing.

DISMISSAL

God never draws us into relationship with himself without also sending us out into the world to be his representatives and ambassadors.

LEADER Let us go forth to serve the world as those who
 love our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

ALL **Thanks be to God!**