LAST SUNDAY OF THE CHURCH YEAR

The Royal Throne

AS WE GATHER

The disciples had hoped for thrones and power to rule beside Jesus, but the throne on which He pronounced His greatest edict was a cross. On it He prayed for forgiveness for His executioners. From it He promised paradise for the thief on a neighboring cross. And because of His royal sacrifice, the Father “delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son.” Like the people of Malachi’s day, who saw evil running rampant, we may not understand all that is happening in the world around us. But we trust that in Christ God has made “peace by the blood of His cross.” So lift high the cross, for by it our sins are forgiven and paradise is open to us!
PRELUDE  “Lift High the Cross”  Michael Burkhardt and Paul Manz

PASTORAL GREETING

TOLLING OF THE BELL

HYMN  “Lift High the Cross”  LSB 837

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES  Psalm 46:11; Colossians 1:13–14

Pastor: The Lord of hosts is with us;
People: the God of Jacob is our fortress.
Pastor: He has delivered us from the domain of darkness
People: and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,
Pastor: in whom we have redemption,
People: the forgiveness of sins.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Since we are confident of God’s forgiveness because of Christ’s sacrifice of Himself on the cross, let us confess our sins to God, our Father.
People: Heavenly Father, we confess that by nature we regularly sin without even thinking. Our thoughts, words, and deeds reflect the world around us rather than the grace You have showered upon us. We have not loved You above all things; we have loved ourselves more than our neighbors. Without Your help, we cannot free ourselves. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, forgive us; by the power of Your Holy Spirit, renew in us clean hearts and willing minds that we glorify Your holy name each day until we see the paradise You have so graciously promised us.
Pastor: The promises of God are sure! By the blood of Jesus’ cross He has made peace with us and reconciled us to Himself. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.
KYRIE

Pastor:  In the peace won for us on the cross, let us pray to the Lord.
People:  Lord, have mercy.
Pastor:  For the peace of a world that does not know Him, for the well-being of the Church whose head He is, and for the unity of all who ask Him to remember them, let us pray to the Lord.
People:  Lord, have mercy.
Pastor:  For this holy house and for all who, having seen in Jesus’ sacrifice the love of the invisible God revealed, respond here in worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.
People:  Lord, have mercy.
Pastor:  Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.
People:  Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE  “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”  
LSB 802
(Verses 1 and 4)

SALUTATION

Pastor:  The Lord be with you.
People:  And also with You.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor:  Let us pray.
   Lord Jesus Christ, only a few people watching saw Your royal rule and gracious gift of salvation as You died on the cross.
People:  Forgive us for focusing on worldly events, and open our eyes to see You graciously working around us and through us each day;
Pastor:  for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
People:  Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Malachi 3:13–18
(God promises to keep names in His book of remembrance.)

"You have said harsh things against me," says the LORD.
"Yet you ask, `What have we said against you?'
"You have said, `It is futile to serve God. What did we gain by carrying out his requirements and going about like mourners before the LORD Almighty? But now we call the arrogant blessed. Certainly the evildoers prosper, and even
those who challenge God escape.'"
Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened
and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning
those who feared the LORD and honored his name.
"They will be mine," says the LORD Almighty, "in the day when I make up my
treasured possession. I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his
son who serves him. And you will again see the distinction between the
righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

PSALM Psalm 46; antiphon: v. 7

People: The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.
Pastor: God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
Left side: Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way,
Right side: though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,

Left side: though its waters roar and foam,
Right side: though the mountains tremble at its swelling.
Pastor: There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.
Left side: God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved;
Right side: God will help her when morning dawns.
Left side: The nations rage, the kingdoms totter;
Right side: He utters His voice, the earth melts.
People: The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.
Pastor: Come, behold the works of the LORD,
how He has brought desolations
on the earth.
Left side: He makes wars cease to the end
of the earth;
Right side: He breaks the bow and shatters
the spear;
He burns the chariots with fire.
Pastor: “Be still, and know that I am God.
Left side: I will be exalted among the nations,
Right side: I will be exalted in the earth!”
People: The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.
EPISTLE: Colossians 1:13–20
(Jesus is the image of the invisible God.)

For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

Congregation, please rise for the Alleluia verse and the Holy Gospel.

VERSE  Luke 23:43  Choir and Congregation  Von Kampen

Verse for the Last Sunday of the Church Year

Luke 23:43  David von Kampen

Congregation:
Al-le-hu-ia, al-le-hu-ia, al-le-hu-ia.

Choir: Truly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in paradise.

Congregation: REFRAIN

(Jesus promises paradise to the thief on a neighboring cross.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twenty-third chapter.
People: Glory to You, O Lord.

A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. Jesus turned and said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not
weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. For the time will come when you will say, 'Blessed are the barren women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!' Then
"they will say to the mountains, "Fall on us!"
and to the hills, "Cover us!"
For if men do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals--one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.
The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One."
The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar and said, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself."
There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.
One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!"
But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."
Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."
Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.
People: Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY

“At the Lamb’s High Feast We Sing”
(LSB 633)
(Verses 1, 4-6)

SERMON
Pastor John Larson

NICENE CREED
Text found in the back of the Hymnal.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH
Pastor: Let us pray for all people around the world, for the Church wherever it is found, and for ourselves in our daily living as God’s people.

To our eyes, heavenly Father, arrogant and evil people get rewarded in this fallen world at the expense of those who would try to remain true to Your
will and rule in their lives. Hear the cries of those who call to You for justice, human rights, and dignity. Grant them an increase of faith and hope as they long to see Your gracious plans come to fruition.

People: Remember them, O Lord, in Your kingdom, and hear our prayer.
Pastor: Wherever people are anxious about food, clothing, or shelter, and whenever they must seek help for ills of any kind, be their refuge and strength, a present help in trouble. [We include those near and dear to us.] Visit, relieve, console, and strengthen them as fits Your gracious plans.

People: Remember them, O Lord, in Your kingdom, and hear our prayer.
Pastor: Lord Jesus, without Your aid, faith can grow cold, questions about Your love and mercy can arise, and the problems in front of our eyes can seem more real than Your abiding presence. Renew strong faith and urgent love in us and all Your brothers and sisters in the faith so that we each hear for ourselves the clear promise of paradise You announced from the throne of the cross. Strengthen us for joyful service in Your kingdom.

People: Remember us, O Lord, in Your kingdom, and hear our prayer.
Pastor: These and any other things You would have us ask of You, heavenly Father, grant to us for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, in whose name we pray.

People: Amen.

THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.
People: And also with you.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY “God is Our Refuge and Strength

Allen Pote
Ascension Chorale

HOLY COMMUNION AT ASCENSION

The Lord, our Host, invites to his Supper those who are baptized into the Christian faith, confess him as Savior, have been instructed and have examined themselves, truly repent of sins, believe the Risen Lord is present in the sacrament with his true body and blood, and resolve to live faithfully and obediently. For those with an intolerance to alcohol, the center ring of the tray contains grape juice. Gluten free wafers are available to those with wheat allergies. Children who have not been instructed, yet desire a blessing, are invited to come forward with arms crossed. When receiving the bread and wine, the communicant may respond with “Amen!”, a word of affirmation and belief.
SACRAMENT

PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you. 2 Timothy 4:22
People: And also with you.
Pastor: Lift up your hearts. Colossians 3:1
People: We lift them to the Lord.
Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. Psalm 136
People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who on this day overcame death and the grave and by His glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

HYMN “Stars of the Morning, So Gloriously Bright” LSB 520
(Verses 1-2)


Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

LORD’S PRAYER Matthew 6:9–13 Text found in the back of the Hymnal.

Amen!
DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

“Be Present at Our Table, Lord”  
“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”  
“Lord, Enthroned in Heavenly Splendor”  
“Here, O My Lord, I See Thee Face to Face”  

GENERAL COMMUNION BLESSING

BENEDICTION

Pastor:  The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✯ give you peace.  
Numbers 6:24–26

People:  Amen.

HYMN  “Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven”  

CONGREGATIONAL CONCERNS

DISMISSAL

Pastor:  Go in peace! Serve the Lord!
People:  Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE  “Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven”  

Michael Burkhardt
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 1:7, NRSV
Be still, and know that
I am God.
Psalm 46:10
### Serving in Worship

**OFFICIANT and CELEBRANT**
- Pastor John Larson

**DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES**
- Michael Zehnder

**ORGAN ASSISTANT & CHOIR ACCOMPANIST**
- Diana Gaide

**YOUTH BAND/AGAPE**
- Rose Berger, Bri Fort, Lisa O'Neal, Ken Price, Bob Shiflet, Larry Westra

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