

NOVEMBER 26, 2023
CHRIST THE KING
SUNDAY



Jesus calls his followers to acts of mercy.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 25:31-46	The sheep and the goats
Monday	Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24	God, the true shepherd
Tuesday	Ephesians 1:15-23	Paul's prayer
Wednesday	1 Corinthians 5:1-11	Spiritual gifts
Thursday	Joshua 24:14-28	Always be faithful to the Lord
Friday	1 Peter 5:1-11	Tending the flock of God
Saturday	Psalms 95:1-7a	Worship and obey the Lord
Sunday	Mark 13:24-37	When the Son of Man appears

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Psalm 95:6-7a (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Almighty God, give us eyes to see you and to worship you with our love and service to others for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for creating the earth to be fruitful and satisfy our needs for food and shelter, community and peace. In the name of Christ, amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May Christ the King give you peace and courage for each day.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Will You Let Me Be
Your Servant*



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What are some duties a shepherd has to do to care for the sheep?
- Jesus is called the Good Shepherd. Why do you think he is called this?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Matthew 25:31-46.

In the ancient Near East, the reference to shepherd (v.32) was a reference to the king, the one responsible to care for the people. In the Old Testament, the kings of Israel and Judah usually failed their role as the shepherd who ruled with justice for the poor. In Ezekiel, the Lord takes back the role of king and shepherds the people to safety with the promise of a new shepherd king in the line of David. For the church that shepherd is Jesus, the Son of Man. He comes as judge and as shepherd to separate sheep from goats, the ones who do the will of God and those who do not. The surprise in this reading is that the sheep don't even know they are sheep. They ask when it was that they acted with compassion as though they were serving the Son of Man. The surprising joy is that acts of love and mercy happen even—or especially—when the sheep (followers of Jesus) are not aware of their actions that love others. Following Jesus leads to a life filled with acts of compassion for the poor, the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and the imprisoned.

Discuss: Where have you seen God's kingdom through people's actions that show love and mercy?

Pray: **God of justice and mercy, we pray for your reign to be visible in us that the world may know your care for the poor and others in need through Christ Jesus our Savior. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you serve the stranger and others who need care?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

November 26th is the last Sunday in this church year. Think or talk about your involvement in the ministries of the church in the past year. Consider these questions: What were the highlights? In what ways did you grow in your faith? How did you share your faith with others? Take a moment to consider in what ways you will serve in the congregation and the community in the coming year.

Pray: **God of glory and might, we give thanks that you are our God and that we are the sheep in your hand through Christ our Lord. (Psalm 95:7a)**



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