



Sunday November 23rd, 2025 The Fig Tree Worship Resource



Call to worship & Lighting the Candle

Introit Come As You Are (v 1 only) TiS 693

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

**And this is the name by which he will be called:
"The LORD is our righteousness."**

Jer 23:5-6

Let us worship God,
who reigns in justice and righteousness.

We Light the Christ Candle

Light the candle

Christ is the light of life,
**sent to shine upon those who sit in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

Luke 1:79

Acknowledging



*Uniting Aboriginal and Islander
Christian Congress*

The land on which we gather
is the sovereign and unceded country
of the _____ people
of the _____ Nation.

**We pay our respects to the Elders,
past and present,
who have cared for this country for millennia.
We commit ourselves again
to the work of reconciliation
in these lands now called Australia.**

Singing - Here in this place TIS 474

OR: Lord of creation TiS 626

OR: Praise my Soul the King of Heaven TiS 134

Prayer

(with lots of space)

Sovereign Ruler of all peoples,
You are the One who calls us home
to your hearth.
You are the One who breaks down prejudices and
barriers to love.
You are the One in whom we live and love and
have our being.

Blessed are we who know of your grace.
Blessed are we
who comprehend your wisdom.
Blessed are we who gather in community
in your name.

In the quiet, let us consider
all the good things that come from you
(long pause e.g. 2 minutes)

Praise to You, O Guardian Ruler
Praise be to You, God of Justice
Praise to You, O Fountain of Life
Praise be to you, God of Peace
Praise to You, O Rock of Belonging
Praise be to you, God of Love
All our praise! All our loyalty!
All our generosity! All our life!
We are Yours!
Praise be to God, Amen.

Prayer of Confession (from UiW2 - alt)

God of all mercy
give us grace today to make a fresh start.
We know we have not loved you
with our whole heart,
nor have we loved our neighbour
as ourselves.

As we trust in your forgiveness
teach us how to forgive;
and lead us forward in a new life
where neither grudges



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nor resentment have a part;
though Jesus Christ our Liberator
Amen.

Words of Grace

Be free of all that entraps or imprisons.
Be free of shame, all is forgiven.
Be free of guilt, for all is forgiven.
Be free of all burdens,
for Christ brings new life.

Thanks be to God

Amen

Passing the peace

May the Peace of God dwell with you:
and also with you.

Listening

Read: **Jeremiah 23:1-6**

Colossians 1: 11-20

Luke 23:33-43

**Your word O God is a lamp to our feet,
a light to our path.**

Reflecting - Rev. Heather den Houting

Christ the King

The claim of disciples of Christ is that they are subject to/dedicated followers of Christ alone, (and an acceptance of the doctrine of the Trinity). If you are a Christian reading or hearing this reflection, please take a moment to meditate on the implications of this. Christian discipleship is not a social form of acceptance, or a participation in aggrandising religious rituals, but rather a complete and utter commitment to the way of the cross.

It is almost certain that when we become followers of Christ, we will develop our own images and concepts of power around the one we follow. Most often we find it in the fervent desire for the return of Christ so that our enemies will be brought to their knees and the righteous King will

lay low anybody who does not believe what we believe. I've come to the position that in the end we have to just concede that our desire for a powerful ally to prove us right will always be a feature of our own human nature. I figure that we need to accept this, and then try to mitigate against creating Christ into our own powerful ally, trophy or idol as far as possible.

Christ the King is the last Sunday in the liturgical year and is accompanied by a solemnity and pageantry around the one we claim to be the sovereign over the whole of creation. This is a big deal, and it is such an important part of our understanding of the nature of Christ. However, the irony is that "Christ the King" should always be a paradoxical phrase to us. Rather, we should see that the pageantry is only useful as a contrast to the humility of the crucified Christ and vice versa!

The readings of today hold these paradoxical understandings in front of us and ask us to sit in the mystery of it all. Warning! As soon as you find yourself in a place where you are confident you can make sense of it, take your confidence as a sign to go back and let God speak to you in new ways about the nature of Christ. The readings from today might help us to do this.

Firstly, we have the prophetic witness of Jeremiah. Against the multitude of cautions from God that Israel does not need a King, here is the revered prophet saying that a King will appear, and the people will be saved. He claims that the King will be a descendent of David and the marks of that King shall be the prospering of the community under a wise, righteous and just sovereign. We cannot seem to help ourselves. We love the idea of a kingly leader who will shepherd us into prosperity. Christianity picked up this prophecy and claimed Jesus Christ was the fulfilment of the scripture.

Secondly, we have the reading from Colossians where the claim is made that Christ is the image of the invisible God, who participates in the whole of creation, holds all things together and reconciles all things. The nature of the Cosmic Christ described here is beyond our understanding



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because of the breadth and power contained in such statements. This is the moment where we should gasp in reverence and awe. Where the pageantry for Christ the King makes sense.

But immediately Paul introduces us to the heart of the paradox. For here is a representation of the mighty, who despite all things associated with our ideas of kingly power was humbled on the cross. This cosmic power has at its very heart, not a story of accorded power and deference, but of deep and true connection across all eternity in a manner that transcends life and death. This is the hope that is at the heart of the Christian gospel. All things are part of God through Christ.

And this is why the readings continue today with Luke's story of the crucifixion. Christ's power is not defined by strength, might and defeat of our enemies. Christ's power is not defined by imperial tendencies to overcome anyone who disagrees with us. Christ's power is not defined by regal trappings of institutional power. Rather here is the story of the wisdom of the one who speaks to the crucified criminal next to him and says: I am with you.

So, as we today sit in a place where we may be overcome by awe at the graciousness and spaciousness of Christ the King, we fall at the foot of the cross knowing that we are disciples only because Christ is with us. Our response should be the fervent prayer that we might hold this wisdom for all others. Amen.

Singing - Faith will not grow from words alone TiS 691

OR: The King of glory comes TiS 279
OR: Lord of the Dance TiS 242

Offering

We bring our gifts to you, Gracious God,
in gratitude and hope
In dedicating them, we dedicate ourselves again
to be your people in the world,
in the strength and enabling power
of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Notices

A note from Jennie & Arnie (editors):

At the close of this liturgical year, we extend our gratitude to the contributors who generously offer their writings and reflections to create this resource for the wider church. Some have joined us recently, while others have been with us since the beginning in March 2020.

We also say thanks to our growing list of subscribers. We love receiving emails about where and how this Fig Tree Worship Resource is being used.

If you would like to join our free subscriber list and receive a weekly email with links to download the resource, please email Arnie: revarniewie@gmail.com or you can visit our webpage: <https://figtreeworshipresource.blog/>.

Prayers for World & Community

God of the blue wrens and brolgas,
We pray for our feathered, furred
and scaled friends,
for simple organisms and complex ecosystems,
for all of creation and the people who depend on
the just sharing of resources.
Shepherding Sovereign, **Lead us into justice.**

God of the commanders and captains
We pray for our world and its leaders,
for nations and regions,
for people caught up in the horrors of war
for cities and towns,
for all who long for your peace.
Shepherding Sovereign, **Lead us into peace.**

God of the Apostles,
We pray for your church and your servants
throughout the world
that we might be as steadfast as you
in your faithfulness.
We pray for your church here in _____

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and our leaders _____
Shepherding Sovereign, **Lead us into wisdom.**

God of all people,
We pray for all in need of your liberating love,
for people trapped in poverty,
for your beloved children
enslaved to profits and vanity,
for people stifled by fear.
Shepherding Sovereign, **Lead us into love.**

God of Truth and Justice
We pray for justice for indigenous peoples,
that their stories may be heard
and that the nations will attend to their pleas
to care for creation.
We pray for our justice system,
that it may honour the humanity
of all participants
Shepherding Sovereign, **Lead us into life.**

God of Liberation,
We pray for _____
trusting in your mercy and compassion,
We pray for ourselves, trusting in your grace,
In Jesus' name, Amen.

We pray together then as Jesus taught us:

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Singing - All my hope on God is founded ***TiS 560***

OR: O God our help in ages past TiS 47

Blessing

Words of Mission

We go from here in assurance
that the Holy Three in One is in charge.
Let us be free to live full and wondrous lives.

May the Sovereign Architect strengthen us
in community together.
May we live truthfully and with integrity.
May we build one another up in peace and love.
May we have confidence that God's truth
and love will ultimately prevail.

Blessing

And the blessing of Creator,
Liberator
and the Spirit of Truth and Justice
be with you and remain with you always,
Amen

Blessing Hymn: May Light Come into Your Eyes
TiS 780

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