

Welcome to Worship at  
Trinity Lutheran Church, Osceola, WI  
End Times 4 - Christ the King Sunday - November 22, 2020

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer. Amen.

**Hymn #341 - "*Crown Him with Many Crowns*"**

**Crown him with many crowns,  
The Lamb upon his throne;  
Hark how the heav'nly anthem drowns  
All music but its own.  
Awake, my soul, and sing  
Of him who died for thee,  
And hail him as thy matchless King  
Through all eternity.**

**Crown him the Lord of love -  
Behold his hands and side,  
Rich wounds, yet visible above,  
In beauty glorified.  
No angel in the sky  
Can fully bear that sight,  
But downward bends his wond'ring eye  
At mysteries so bright.**

**Crown him the Lord of life,  
Who triumphed o'er the grave  
And rose victorious in the strife  
For those he came to save.  
His glories now we sing  
Who died and rose on high,  
Who died eternal life to bring  
And lives that death may die.**

**Crown him the Lord of heav'n,  
Enthroned in worlds above;**

**Crown him the King to whom is giv'n  
The wondrous name of Love.  
Crown him with many crowns  
As thrones before him fall;  
Crown him, ye kings, with many crowns  
For he is King of all.**

**Confession of Sins:**

**P:** Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**C:** **Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. Therefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace and forgiveness for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. O Lord, have mercy on us!**

**P:** Upon this your confession, I as a called servant of Christ and His Word announce to you the grace of God, and in the place of and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C:** **Amen.**

**First Lesson: Ezekiel 34:11-16, 23-24**

For this is what the Lord God says. Here I am. I myself will seek the welfare of my flock and carefully search for them. As a shepherd searches for his flock when his sheep that were with him have been scattered, so I will search for my flock and rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own soil. I will shepherd them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys, and in all the settlements of the land. I will lead them into good pasture, and their grazing land will be on the high mountains of Israel. There they will lie down in good grazing land, and they will pasture on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will shepherd my flock. I myself will let them lie down, declares the Lord God. I will seek the lost. I will bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured. I will strengthen the weak. I will destroy the fat and the strong, and I will shepherd them with justice. Then I will raise up over them one shepherd, and he will tend them. My servant David will tend them, and he will be their shepherd. I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David will be the prince

among them. I, the Lord, have spoken. (EHV)

**Psalm 47:**

**Refrain: Let the people praise you, O God. Let all the people praise you.**

**Clap your hands, all you 'nations;  
Shout to God with 'cries of joy.**

**How awesome is the 'LORD Most High,  
The great King over 'all the earth!**

**God reigns over the 'nations;  
God is seated on his 'holy throne.**

**Refrain: Let the people praise you, O God. Let all the people praise you.**

**God has ascended amid 'shouts of joy,  
The LORD amid the sounding of 'trumpets.**

**Sing praises to God, sing 'praises;  
Sing praises to our King, sing 'praises.**

**For God is the King of 'all the earth;  
Sing to him a 'psalm of praise.**

**Glory be to the Father and 'to the Son  
And to the Holy 'Spirit,  
As it was in the be'ginning,  
Is now, and will be forever, 'Amen.**

**Refrain: Let the people praise you, O God. Let all the people praise you.**

**Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 15:20-28**

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came by a man, the resurrection of the dead also is going to come by a man. For as in Adam they all die, so also in Christ they all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ as the firstfruits and then Christ's people, at his coming. Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has done away with every other ruler and every other

authority and power. For he must reign “until he has put all his enemies under his feet.” Death is the last enemy to be done away with. Certainly, “he has put all things in subjection under his feet.” Now when it says that all things have been put in subjection, obviously that does not include the one who subjected all things to him. But when all things have been subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who subjected all things to him, in order that God may be all in all. (EHV)

**Verse of the Day:** Alleluia. I am the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. Alleluia.

**Gospel: Matthew 27:27-31**

Then the governor’s soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole cohort of soldiers around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him. They twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand, knelt in front of him, and mocked him by saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” They spit on him, took the staff, and hit him repeatedly on his head. (EHV)

**The Apostles’ Creed:**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**Hymn #217 - “The Head that Once Was Crowned”**

**The head that once was crowned with thorns  
Is crowned with glory now;  
A royal diadem adorns  
The mighty victor’s brow.**

The highest place that heav'n affords  
Is his, is his by right,  
The King of kings and Lord of lords  
And heav'n's eternal light.

The joy of all who dwell above,  
The joy of all below  
To whom he manifests his love  
And grants his name to know.

To them the cross, with all its shame,  
With all its grace, is giv'n;  
Their name, an everlasting name;  
Their joy, the joy of heav'n.

They suffer with their Lord below;  
They reign with him above,  
Their profit and their joy, to know  
The myst'ry of his love.

The cross he bore is life and health,  
Though shame and death to him;  
His people's hope, his people's wealth,  
Their everlasting theme.

The Sermon:      Ezekiel 34:11-16, 23-24  
                          "Searching For The Lost"

All too often we hear stories about mountain climbers who ventured out on some of the tallest mountains in the world, and didn't return to their **base camp**. They got **lost**, and consequently **search** parties were sent out in order to **find** them. The searchers might be **sherpas** or other experienced climbers. They might be members of the **forest service**, and they might even make use of **airplanes** and **helicopters** to aid in their search. But more often than not, one day passes, then two, then three, and finally the announcement is made that due to the **harsh conditions**, and the failure of efforts to **locate** the climbers, the search has been **called off**.

Today is **Christ the King** Sunday. And as our **King**, Jesus is **concerned** about **His people** who are lost. The LORD speaks with deep **feeling** and

**compassion** when He says, *“I will **seek** the lost. I will bring **back** the strays.”* Large numbers of people are spiritually **perishing** because of their **sin** and **unbelief**, but the search to **rescue** them from their **lost** condition will **continue** until the end of time. Jesus will not **call off** the search. Until Judgment Day arrives, the LORD will continue to raise up **congregations** and **individuals** who will continue to **Search For The Lost**, and bring them to **Jesus**, their **Savior**. **We** are **included** in that number, so may the Holy Spirit continue to **bless** our efforts as we focus on **Searching For The Lost**.

One of the things which stands out in our text for today, is the LORD’s **determination** to **Seek The Lost**. He said, *“I **myself** will seek the **welfare** of my flock and carefully **search** for them ... I will **rescue** them ... I will **gather** them .. I will **shepherd** them ... I will **lead** them ... I will **bind up** the injured ... I will **strengthen** the weak ... I, the **Lord**, have spoken”* These words remind us of **Jesus’** determination to seek and save the lost during the time of His ministry on earth. Do you remember what He said to the **chief tax collector** in Jericho whom He spotted sitting up in a fig tree? Jesus said, *“Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I **must stay** at your house **today**.”* Jesus made **no apologies** for inviting Himself to be a guest in the home of this **sinner**, so He could tell him about **His mission** as the Savior. *“The Son of Man came to **seek** and to **save** the lost.”*

Determination to rescue the **lost** was **also** a key element in Jesus’ parable of the **shepherd**. *“If a man has a **hundred** sheep, and **one** of them wanders away, will he not **leave** the ninety-nine on the hills and go looking for the **one** that **wandered away**? ... In the same way, your Father in heaven does not want even **one** of these little ones to **perish**.”*

Why was Jesus so **determined** to **Seek The Lost**? It was because Jesus saw **all people** as we really **are**. Jesus knew that **sin** had infected **all** of us, and had **ruined** our minds and spirits. We were all like **sheep** who had gone **astray**. Instead of loving **God** first, we focused our love on **ourselves**. Sin **separated** us from God, so that we found ourselves living to please the desires of our own **sinful flesh**, instead of pleasing our **God**. In fact, we became **so lost** that we couldn’t find our way **back** to God. We were without **hope**, without **life**, and on our way to **perishing** in hell **eternally**. That’s what it really **means** to be **lost**. And that’s exactly the way **Jesus saw us**. He looked at the crowds of people in Israel who had no one to teach them **God’s Word**, and He said they were *“like **sheep** without a **shepherd**”* - easy **prey** for **Satan** to carry them away and **destroy** them. But Jesus was determined to **rescue** them, and to bring them **His saving Word**. Jesus sees

you and me with that **same** determination, because we were **also** spiritually **lost** - *“separate from Christ ... without **hope** and without **God**.”*

*“The Son of Man came to **seek** and to **save** the lost.”* Jesus spoke those words as He was walking to Jerusalem to face His **death** by **crucifixion**. He walked that path **determined** to give His **life** as the payment for the sins of the world. Our **King**, who is also our Good **Shepherd**, laid down **His life** for His sheep. Jesus Himself is the **way**, the **truth**, and the **life**. No one comes to the Father, except **through Him**.

Through Jesus the sheep who were **lost** have been **found**, picked **up**, **held** tightly, **washed** clean of sin, and **returned** to the **safety** of God’s sheepfold - His **family**. Through His Word **we** have been **restored** to an intimate **relationship** with God. With determination Jesus **searched** for us and **found** us, and in baptism He **came** to us, bringing us His **salvation**, and a **rebirth**, making us dearly loved **children** of God, and **permanent** members of His family.

And that’s not the **end** of it either. The LORD is **still** determined to reach even **more** of the people who are lost. There are still **many** people in our world who don’t have Jesus in their hearts through faith. And the Bible clearly tells us that *“The one who does not have the **Son of God** does not have **life**.”* People who are **lost** are **everywhere**. They include really **nice** people - people who share **themselves** and their **resources** - but who unfortunately believe that **their** hard work and kindness will **earn** them a place in heaven. They include really **smart** people - people who unfortunately don’t believe that heaven and hell **exist** - or who don’t believe that sin, judgment, and eternity are **realities**, so they think they don’t **need** a **Savior**. They’re just living for the **here** and **now**. And they are **lost** - lost **eternally**.

But the LORD is **determined** to **reach** them. That’s why He’s allowing this world to **continue**, so that **more** of the **lost** may be **found**, and brought to saving **faith** in **Jesus**. That’s why God continues to provide us with His **Word**, so that through the working of the Holy Spirit we may be moved to **join** the **search party** for the lost. He says to us, *“**Go** into the highways and hedges, and **urge** them to come in, so that my house may be filled.”* He says, *“**Go** and **gather** disciples from all nations.”* And Jesus can command us to **do this** because He Himself is leading the way. He says, *“**I myself** will seek the welfare of my flock and carefully **search** for them.”* That’s the God we **worship** and **serve** - a **loving** God - a **selfless** God - a **gracious** God. May His determination overcome any hesitation that **we** have, and inspire us to bring **Christ** and the salvation He **won**, to those who are lost.

God's love for the lost is **amazing**. Paul expressed it this way to the Romans, "*At the appointed time, when we were still **helpless**, Christ **died** for the **ungodly**. It is rare indeed that someone will die for a **righteous** person. Perhaps someone **might** actually go so far as to die for a person who has been **good** to him. But **God** shows his **own** love for us in **this**: While we were still **sinners**, Christ **died** for us.*" Think of that in terms of the **business** world. The board of control of a big company is looking for a new **CEO**. So, they hire a firm to find the right person to fill the position. This firm hears about an individual with a great **management** record, so they decide to go after him. They fly a couple **thousand** miles to the other coast, and spend **hundreds** of dollars for hotel rooms, car rentals, and restaurant meals. The next day they **meet** with the person they're hoping to hire, but to their **disappointment** they find him to be **arrogant**, **self-centered**, and totally **unsuitable** for the job - not at all what they were **hoping** to find. What a **waste** of their **time** and **resources**. If only they had known the **truth** about him from the very start.

But in God's search for the **lost**, He already **knew** the truth about us. Before Jesus took a single step toward the **cross**, He already **knew** what our character was like. He knew that we were **critical**, **selfish**, and **disobedient**. God wasn't looking for **nice**, **warm-hearted**, **friendly** people - He was looking for **sinners**. And there's only **one reason** why He would **bother** to look for them. That **reason** is His **love**. The Good Shepherd **searched** for us, and **found** us, and **cradled** us in His arms, and **cleansed** us from all our sins. Have we looked at His **hands**? They have **scars** from the nails which pierced Him. Have we considered His **heart** - a heart full of **love** that covered **our sins** with **His righteousness**, and secured us in His **embrace** now and forever. "*Christ **loved** us and gave **himself** for us.*"

And that same love still flows from Jesus' heart as His unending **Search For The Lost** continues. It's with **love** that Jesus says, "***Other** sheep I have who are not of this sheep pen. **They too** must hear my voice; **them also** I must bring, and there will be **one** flock and **one** shepherd.*" It's with love for the lost that Jesus commands us, "*Go and preach the gospel to **every** creature.*" When you hear the word **evangelism** or **outreach**, does the **love of Jesus** come to mind? I hope so, because the Savior wants us to share His word of salvation with **everyone**. He loves **all** people, and wants them **all** to become His sheep. May the love of Jesus always shine brightly in our **Search For The Lost**.

Remember the **love** of Jesus - love that He has generously poured into our hearts. In His own words Jesus said, "*I will **search** for my flock and **rescue** them from all the places where they were scattered.*" That's the **determination** and

love of our Savior. May our hearts **see** it, **feel** it, and be **inspired** by it, so that when the LORD asks for volunteers to join His **search party** for the lost, we will be ready to **respond** by saying, *“Here am I. Send me.”* Amen.

### **Prayers:**

Dear heavenly Father, we are truly living in **evil** times. In Your wisdom, You have decreed that this sin-filled world shall **not** stand forever, but that **judgment** and **destruction** shall overtake us when we least expect it. Enable us to stand before You **unashamed** on that day. Nothing **we** could do could possibly win Your favor. Yet, **Your** love found a way, for You sent Your only **Son** to atone for our sins. We rest our faith on **Your** love, asking that You would **forgive** us where we have transgressed, and **strengthen** us where our faith has wavered.

O Savior, Jesus Christ, by whose blood we are declared righteous, accept our humble **praise**. We live in a world that is utterly **sinful** and **hostile** toward God. It is filled with strong **temptations** for our sinful flesh. But our **comfort** and our **hope** is in Your glorious **return**, when You shall bring to an **end** all things here, and receive us into the **joys** of our eternal home. We pray that You would come **quickly**, in accordance with Your Word and promise. But in the meantime, we ask that You would **bless** us with heavenly **wisdom** as we faithfully and diligently study Your **Word**.

O Holy Spirit, create in us **humble** hearts, and lead us daily to **repent** of all our sins. Turn our thoughts continually **away** from worldly matters, and give us the strength to **flee** temptations and evil lusts. Lead our footsteps along the paths of **righteousness**, guided by the **Word**. Fill our hearts with the love of **Christ**, so that we will also love one **another**. What great **joy** is ours as we look forward to the blessed day when our Savior and Lord will appear in glory to **raise** the dead, and **judge** the world. On that day, we shall finally be **delivered** from this vale of tears. Amen

### **The Lord’s Prayer:**

**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 trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;**

**But deliver us from evil.**

**For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.**

**Amen.**

**Hymn #373 - “O Jesus, King Most Wonderful”**

**O Jesus, King most wonderful,**

**O Majesty renowned,**

**O Conqueror invincible,**

**In whom all joys are found,**

**When once you visit darkened hearts,**

**Then truth begins to shine,**

**Then earthly vanity departs,**

**Then kindles love divine.**

**O Jesus, Light of all below,**

**O Fount of life and fire,**

**Surpassing all the joys we know,**

**All that we can desire,**

**May ev’ry heart confess your name,**

**Forever you adore,**

**Enkindled with the Spirit’s flame**

**To love you more and more.**

**Oh, may our tongues forever bless**

**And honor you alone,**

**And may we in our lives express**

**The image of your own!**

P: Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your Word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit! As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

**The Blessing:**

P: The Lord bless you and keep you,

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.  
C: Amen.

**Hymn #405 - "Oh, for a Faith that Will Not Shrink"**

**Oh, for a faith that will not shrink  
Though pressed by many a foe,  
That will not tremble on the brink  
Of poverty or woe,**

**That will not murmur nor complain  
Beneath the chast'ning rod,  
But in the hour of grief or pain  
Can lean upon its God,**

**A faith that shines more bright and clear  
When tempests rage without,  
That, when in danger, knows no fear,  
In darkness feels no doubt,**

**That bears unmoved the world's dread frown  
Nor heeds its scornful smile,  
That sin's wild ocean cannot drown  
Nor Satan's arts beguile,**

**A faith that keeps the narrow way  
Till life's last spark is fled  
And with a pure and heav'nly ray  
Lights up the dying bed.**

**Lord, give us such a faith as this,  
And then, whate'er may come,  
We'll taste e'en now the hallowed bliss  
Of an eternal home.**