

**BETHEL MURDOCH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
9602 Murdoch-Goshen Road, Loveland, OH 45140  
**November 21, 2021 10:30 a.m.**  
**Celebrating 207 years of Faithful Service to Our God**  
**Christ the King Sunday**

***We Enter Into God's Presence***

**WELCOME**

L: This is the day that the Lord has made

**P: Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

**THE PEACE**

L: Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.  
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

**P: And also with you.**

**“SURELY THE PRESENCE”**

**Surely the presence of the LORD is in this place.**

**I can feel His mighty power and His grace.**

**I can hear the brush of angel's wings, I see glory on each face.**

**Surely the presence of the LORD is in this place.**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

L: Look up and raise your heads,

**P: because your redemption is drawing near.**

L: Be alert at all times,

**P: praying that you may stand before the Son of Man.**

**OPENING PRAYER**

Ever-living God, before the earth was formed and even after it shall cease to be, you are God. Break into our short span of life and show us those things that are eternal, that we may serve your purpose in all we do; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in unity with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**HYMN: B-476 “O Worship the King, All Glorious Above!”**

1 O worship the King all-glorious above,  
O gratefully sing God's power and God's love:  
Our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days,  
Pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.

2 O tell of God's might O sing of God's grace,  
Whose robe is the light, whose canopy space.  
The chariots of heaven, the deep thunderclouds form,  
And bright is God's path on the wings of the storm.

3 The earth with its store of wonders untold  
Almighty Thy power hath founded of old;  
Hath established it fast by a changeless decree,  
And round it hath cast, like a mantle the sea.

4 Thy bountiful care, what tongue can recite?  
It breathes in the air, it shines in the light;  
It streams from the hills, it descends to the plain,  
And sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.

5 Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail,  
In Thee do we trust, nor find Thee to fail.  
Thy mercies, how tender, how firm to the end,  
Our maker, defender, redeemer, and friend.

#### **CALL TO CONFESSION:**

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. In humility and faith let us confess our sin to God as we pray together saying,

#### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION:**

**Eternal God, in every age you have raised up men and women to live and die in faith. We confess that we are indifferent to your will. You call us to proclaim your name, but we are silent. You call us to do what is just, but we remain idle. You call us to live faithfully, but we are afraid. In your mercy, forgive us. Give us courage to follow in your way, that joined with those from ages past, who have served you with faith, hope, and love, we may inherit the kingdom you promised in Jesus Christ.**

#### **SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

#### **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

L: Hear the good news! Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ, and Christ died for us, Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for us. Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old life has gone; a new life has begun.

**P: We know that we are forgiven and we can be at peace. Thanks be to God! Amen.**

**\*RESPONSE: "Gloria Patri"**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.  
Amen, Amen.

***We Hear God's Word***

**SPECIAL MUSIC: W&R- 472"Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus"**

Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face; and the  
Things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace.

**NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Revelation 1:4b-8**

Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, <sup>5</sup> and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, <sup>6</sup> and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

<sup>7</sup> "Look, he is coming with the clouds,"  
and "every eye will see him,  
even those who pierced him";  
and all peoples on earth "will mourn because of him."  
So shall it be! Amen.

<sup>8</sup> "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

**PSALM:Psalm 93**

<sup>1</sup> The LORD reigns, he is robed in majesty;  
the LORD is robed in majesty and armed with strength;  
indeed, the world is established, firm and secure.

<sup>2</sup> Your throne was established long ago;  
you are from all eternity.

<sup>3</sup> The seas have lifted up, LORD,  
the seas have lifted up their voice;

the seas have lifted up their pounding waves.  
<sup>4</sup> Mightier than the thunder of the great waters,  
mightier than the breakers of the sea—  
the LORD on high is mighty.  
<sup>5</sup> Your statutes, LORD, stand firm;  
holiness adorns your house  
for endless days.

### **GOSPEL LESSON: John 18:33-37**

<sup>33</sup> Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”

<sup>34</sup> “Is that your own idea,” Jesus asked, “or did others talk to you about me?”

<sup>35</sup> “Am I a Jew?” Pilate replied. “Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What is it you have done?”

<sup>36</sup> Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.”

<sup>37</sup> “You are a king, then!” said Pilate.

Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

### **MESSAGE: *Listen to the Truth* Rev. Dr. Deborah Uchtman**

On this Christ the King Sunday, we hear the account of the trial of Jesus from the gospel of John. Throughout his ministry, Jesus has been preaching the truth about God, the good news of the love of God for all people, that God wants to be in relationship with the people and that God’s kingdom is about to break in to this world.

This was a very difficult concept for the Jewish leadership to accept as, under the teachings of Jesus, they would no longer carry the power to request God’s forgiveness for the community. Therefore, the Jewish leadership felt threatened and feared for the loss of their power over the people. And so the Jewish leaders began to watch Jesus to see if he did anything that would be considered an offense against the law that could result in the death of Jesus. The Jewish

leaders of the day had heard the truth from Jesus, the Son of God and yet chose to fight against it in order to keep their power.

All of the while that they observed, - Jesus did nothing that would be considered an offense for which he should perish according to Jewish law and yet, the Jewish leaders had Jesus arrested. The Jewish leadership made it their business to involve the Roman authorities by making the claim that Jesus was a militant leader trying to take over the Jewish people. They tried to make Rome believe that this takeover would be violent and was therefore a threat to the Roman rule. The Jewish leaders wanted an offense for which death was the assured penalty. They wanted Jesus to die under the charges of blasphemy, treason and incitement to rebellion so that the truth he was speaking would be silenced. The Jewish leadership turned away from Jesus who spoke the truth of God.

Enter Pilate, the Roman prefect and governor of the region who was pulled into the middle of this issue. The Jewish leadership goes to the Roman headquarters with a previously arrested and bound Jesus in tow, but because it is Passover and they want to remain clean, the Jewish leaders refuse to enter. They summon Pilate to come to them.

Already Pilate is aware that tensions are stretched tight during Passover as there is always talk of rebellion; that the people's desire for the coming Messiah to lead the Jewish people in war increases during this celebration.

Although, when the Jewish leadership brings Jesus accusing him of being the sacrilegious leader of a violent group of rebels to Pilate, Pilate is not convinced. Pilate sees through their claims to the jealousy and fear and tells the Jewish leaders to try Jesus with their own laws. That is when the Jewish leaders admit they had nothing to charge Jesus with that would result in his demise saying instead that they were not permitted to put Jesus to death, yet they would not have brought him to Pilate if he were not a criminal. This placed a great deal of pressure on Pilate to charge Jesus as a criminal who had committed a crime worthy of death by crucifixion.

By now, Pilate's curiosity was piqued about Jesus and so he went in to interrogate the man brought to him identified as a rebel organizer and criminal by the Jewish leaders. Pilate had Jesus brought in and asked him point blank, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Pilate's meaning was: are you trying to enact a hostile takeover and shift the base of power to yourself, Jesus?

Now most political prisoners would respond to their captors immediately answering the questions in order to hopefully receive the best possible treatment

and perhaps persuade those in control of their lives to be lenient and release them with little or no torture. But instead of answering Pilate's question, Jesus turns the table and becomes the interrogator. Jesus asks Pilate, "Did you think to ask if I were the king of the Jews on your own or did someone prime the pump or plant a seed to prepare you so that you would ask that particular question?"

Clearly surprised by the turn of events, Pilate answers with a haughty statement saying, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me, a Roman Prefect, a leader of the known world. I'm trying to figure out why they would do that. What have you done?"

Jesus answers Pilate with the truth, saying, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom was from this world and I was the leader of a revolution, my followers would be fighting to the death to keep me from being handed over to the Jews and the Romans. But the reality is my kingdom is not from this earthly place."

Pilate remembers that he is supposed to be in charge of this interrogation and asks Jesus pointblank, "So you are a king, then!"

Jesus replies, "That is what you say - that I am a king. I was born, and came into the world for this reason alone, so that I could testify to the truth. Pilate, you need to know that everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

Now it is important to grasp here that both the leaders of the Jews and the leaders of the Romans rejected God's truth when they turned away from accepting Jesus. Only those who believed would pay attention to the fact that God's love is for all people. Only those who take note understand that it is through Jesus that God demonstrated God's desire for a relationship with all of humanity and creation. Only those who concentrate on the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus come to see where God's kingdom is breaking into this world. Only those who listened to and recognized Jesus as the one speaking God's truth would know that Jesus is God's truth.

What about you? Have you listened? Jesus is telling the truth about God because Jesus is God's truth. Will you listen to the truth?

***We Respond with Thanksgiving***

## **HYMN: B-150**

## **“Come, Christians, Join to Sing”**

1 Come, Christians, join to sing Alleluia! Amen!  
Loud praise to Christ our King: Alleluia! Amen!  
Let all, with heart and voice, Before His throne rejoice;  
Praise is His gracious choice. Alleluia! Amen!

2 Come, lift your hearts on high, Alleluia! Amen!  
Let praises fill the sky; Alleluia! Amen!  
He is our guide and friend To us He'll condescend  
His love shall never end. Alleluia! Amen!

3 Praise yet our Christ again, Alleluia! Amen!  
Life shall not end the strain; Alleluia! Amen!  
On heaven's blissful shore, His goodness we'll adore,  
Singing forevermore, Alleluia! Amen!

## **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

I believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen. *(The Apostles' Creed-Ecumenical)*

**OFFERING (Please remember to mail your offering to the church)**

**JOYS & CONCERNS OF THE CONGREGATION – (Please send your joys and concerns to the church email and we will publish them in the weekly ENews)**

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Let us pray,

Almighty God our creator, you made all things in your wisdom, and in your love you save us. We pray for the whole creation, especially in this time of crisis. Overthrow evil powers, right what is wrong, feed and satisfy those who thirst for justice, so that all your children may freely enjoy the earth you have made, and joyfully sing your praises.

Eternal God, you sent us a Savior, Christ Jesus, to break down the walls of hostility that divide us. Send peace on earth and put down greed, pride, and anger, which turn nation against nation and race against race. Speed the day when wars will end and the whole world accepts your rule.

O God, whom we cannot love unless we love our neighbors, remove hate and prejudice from us and from all people, so that your children may be reconciled with those we fear, or resent, and live together in your peace.

We ask healing for those who are sick, in pain or experiencing dis-ease in their lives.

We mourn with those who mourn, even while You welcome those who have taken their next step to be in heaven with you.

We share with joy the exciting things that have been happening.  
We ask travel mercies on those who are traveling.

We take just a moment to pray for ourselves.

Almighty God, in Jesus Christ you taught us to pray and to offer our petitions to you in his name. Guide us by your Holy Spirit, that our prayers for others may serve your will and show your steadfast love. It is in the name of the same Jesus Christ our Lord that we pray the prayer he taught us,

### **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 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.

### ***We are Sent Out to Love and Serve***

### **HYMN:B-155 "Rejoice, the Lord Is King"**

1 Rejoice, the Lord is King! Your Lord and King adore!  
Rejoice, give thanks and sing, And triumph evermore.  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

2 God's kingdom cannot fail, Christ rules o'er earth and heaven;  
The keys of death and hell Are to our Jesus given:  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

3 Rejoice in glorious hope! For Christ, the Judge shall come  
To glorify the saints For their eternal home:  
Lift up your heart, Lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!  
Lift up your heart, Lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

### **Charge and Benediction**

Go out into the world in peace. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind; and love your neighbor as yourself.  
And as you go out, know that you take with you the love of God, the grace of Our Lord, Jesus Christ and the *awesome* power of the Holy Spirit.

### **Choral Amen**

### **Postlude**