

**Bangor & Holyhead Methodist Circuit**  
**Sunday Worship Sheet – Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

Our worship for this week was written by Julian Bonnebaigt. You may wish to have your Bible to hand. The hymns are at the back of the sheet. CCLI licence 556292

Opening prayer. Father, as I read these words, and raise my heart up to you today, help me to see afresh, Jesus as my Lord, my Saviour, my King. **Amen**

Hymn: STF 319 “Christ triumphant, ever reigning”

Introduction:

Today is a celebration of “Christ the King”, and I personally find that quite exciting, after all it’s a great opportunity to sing praises to Jesus as our Lord, Saviour, and King. And yet it is also challenging, because, as a disciple of Jesus, I have to ask myself, do I hold back from allowing him to rule in all aspects of my life? As you pray through this service sheet, please take time to consider are there any parts of your life where Jesus is not King?

Prayer of confession: Lord Jesus, King of our lives, King of the universe, we come humbly before you, to confess that we find it difficult to live our lives as your followers. We wake up each day full of good intentions, but then we get so easily distracted, we find ourselves saying things we shouldn’t, we catch ourselves gossiping, and backbiting, we fail to show love to others in practical ways, we get too busy to spend time with you, in prayer and reading your word. We are sorry for all the ways we fail to live up to your call on our lives, for the times we praise you on Sunday, and forget you by Monday. Forgive us, fill us again with your Holy Spirit, and help us to put you first in our lives, we ask these things in your precious name. **Amen**

Prayer of Adoration: Holy God, to you alone belong glory, honour, and praise. We join with the hosts of heaven as we worship. You alone are worthy of adoration from every mouth, and every tongue shall sing your praise. You create the earth by your power; you save the human race in your mercy and renew it through your grace. To you, loving God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all glory, honour, and praise now and forever. **Amen**

Bible readings: John 18:33-39. Colossians 1:11-20

Reflection:

In our gospel reading, Pilate’s first, and most important question to Jesus, “Are you the king of the Jews?”.

I think that many people today are faced with a similar question about Jesus, “Are you, who your followers say you are? Are you King, Saviour, Messiah?” I believe that these “seekers of truth” often fall into 3 broad categories.

There are those, who honestly, like Pilate, don't know, who look for the truth about Jesus, but are distracted from finding it, or him, by the loud demands of the world. Then there are those like Nathanael in John 1:49, who come seeking, then meet Jesus and find the truth, "You are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel" (John 1:49 CSV). Then there's the third group, who just like the delegation from Caiaphas, who bring Jesus for judgement to Pilate, are fundamentally closed to the truth about him, they deny that Jesus is Messiah, they see no need for a saviour, and cry "we have no king but Caesar".

So, Pilate asks the same question that so many people, faced with the teachings of Jesus, have had to answer.

Jesus' answer to Pilate's question, "Are you the king of the Jews", is a veiled, "Yes", BUT, he explains, "My kingdom is not FROM here". No, his kingdom is not one that mirrors Roman tyranny, and violence, as most earthly kingdoms of the time were, and contrary to the expectation of his own people, his kingdom was not going to be based on terrorist acts to overthrow the Romans.

No, his Kingship challenges secular notions of power. Mark 10:45 tells us he came as a servant, willing to give his life for others. The basis of Jesus kingdom is truth and love. His commandment to those he reigns over, is love for God, and neighbour (John 14:6, and John 15:12).

Despite Pilate's reputation as a brutal man, he seems to accept Jesus' explanation, and probably considered him to be of minimal threat to the temporal power of Rome, because he returns to the crowd and states that he finds no grounds for charging him. If you read on into chapter 19, John paints a picture of Pilate increasingly frustrated by the Jewish leaders, who block his every attempt to release Jesus. Eventually, he gives in to their veiled threat to report him to Caesar and sends Jesus to the cross. But even then, Pilate, to the frustration of the Jewish leaders, has the last word with his unchangeable sign fixed to the cross: "**Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews**" (John 19:19-22).

Jesus was prepared to stand up for God's kingdom values, and it set him at odds with both the religious and secular leaders, if we are to follow Jesus as King of our lives, if we are to stand for truth, love, and justice, Kingdom values, do we put ourselves on a collision course with those in society to whom these are "inconvenient" ideas? Are we prepared, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to stand up, proclaim Jesus as King of our lives, our world, and to share the good news, in love, gentleness and humility, with those who do not yet know him? May it be so!

## Prayers of Intercession:

*We pray for our Government and the Governments of the world:* Heavenly Father, give wisdom to our politicians, make them people of honour, help them to always act justly, and for the benefit of all in our society.

*We pray for a world torn by violence:* Jesus Prince of Peace, so often when we watch the news, all we hear is reports of war, of violent crime and disputes. We think today of the people of Ukraine, suffering under the oppression of the Russian army, of the people of Myanmar, suffering under another oppressive army.

We ask that you send peacemakers into these countries and others torn by war. Bring their leaders to their senses and bring us to our knees on their behalf. Please comfort and strengthen those who have lost families, friends, and homes.

*We pray for your church:* Lord, give your church a real heart for both the physical and spiritual wellbeing of people, and a deep concern to care for the world in which we live. May you give courage to the leaders of the church to be bold in working for peace, and challenging injustice. Help us to share the gospel in both our words and actions, renew our commitment to care for the poor and all chained up by oppression. In this circuit, please guide us to use our limited resources in ways that build your kingdom, to work for peace in our community, and break down walls between us and those you call us to serve.

*We pray for those going through hard times:* Loving, healing father, we ask that you strengthen and bless all those going through hard times, we bring before you everyone who feels down and distressed, all who are weak, weary, and discouraged, and we ask that you surround and fill them with your love, uplift them and help them to find joy and peace in you. We ask that your hand of healing be on those who are sick, may they know your love, your peace, and your healing surrounding them every day. We bring all our prayers to you in Jesus name. Amen

Hymn: STF 327 "Jesus is King, and I will extol him"

## Closing Prayer & Blessing:

May the love of Christ our King, draw us to himself, the power of Christ our King, strengthen us in his service, the joy of Christ our King, fill our hearts, and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among us and remain with us always. Amen

## Hymn 319

- 1 Christ triumphant, ever reigning,  
Saviour, Master, King !  
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,  
hear us as we sing :  
*Yours the glory and the crown,  
the high renown, the eternal name !*
- 2 Word incarnate, truth revealing,  
Son of Man on earth !  
Power and majesty concealing  
by your humble birth :
- 3 Suffering servant, scorned, ill-treated,  
victim crucified !  
Death is through the cross defeated,  
sinners justified :
- 4 Priestly king, enthroned for ever  
high in heaven above !  
Sin and death and hell shall never  
stifle hymns of love :
- 5 So, our hearts and voices raising  
through the ages long,  
ceaselessly upon you gazing,  
this shall be our song :

Michael Saward (*b.* 1932)

Wendy Churchill

David C Cook <tym@kingsway.co.uk> for the UK  
& Europe. Used by permission.

## Hymn 327

- 1 Jesus is King  
and I will extol him,  
give him the glory,  
and honour his name ;  
he reigns on high,  
enthroned in the heavens —  
Word of the Father,  
exalted for us.
- 2 We have a hope  
that is steadfast and certain,  
gone through the curtain  
and touching the throne ;  
we have a priest  
who is there interceding,  
pouring his grace  
on our lives day by day.
- 3 We come to him,  
our Priest and Apostle,  
clothed in his glory  
and bearing his name,  
laying our lives  
with gladness before him —  
filled with his Spirit  
we worship the King :
- 4 'O Holy One,  
our hearts do adore you ;  
thrilled with your goodness  
we give you our praise !'  
Angels in light  
with worship surround him,  
Jesus, our Saviour,  
for ever the same.