

## Worship Guide for Sunday, November 22, 2020 | 10:00 am

Watch live on [NPC's Facebook Page](#).

### **PREPARING FOR GOD'S WORD**

PRELUDE

Cliff Brock

This is the day the Lord has made. **Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Rev. David Jones

**Welcome** | Please let us know that you are tuned in. Leave a message in the comments thread. All may view the Worship Guide at [www.newnanpres.org](http://www.newnanpres.org) if you wish to follow along. We are participating in the Sacrament of The Lord's Supper later in this service. Please gather your communion elements now. Please note that we will not have worship this Thursday evening because of Thanksgiving.

**Outreach Opportunity and Thanksgiving** | Your response to the One Roof Thanksgiving Dinner Boxes has been overwhelming! Thank you! Because of the generous giving of NPC, we have exceeded every goal that we had envisioned at the beginning of the month. We donated 80 dinner boxes (81 if you count the visual that sat atop the Communion table) and will still have funds beyond that which we will donate to the continued mission of One Roof. God has blessed this congregation with giving hearts, and it has shown during this month's Outreach ministry project.

We will still collect funds through Wednesday, Nov 25th. Make checks payable to NPC and designate them for One Roof/Thanksgiving Dinner Boxes. You may also give online through Realm.

**Advent Calendars for Children** | Calendars are available for children in the Narthex and in the Church Office. Please pick one up today!

**Tour of Homes** | On December 4, our Preschool hosts their Annual Tour of Homes. Please see <https://www.newnantourofhomes.com/> for information and tickets.

OPENING PRAYER

As we prepare for a time of worship, we breathe in God's mercy...  
And breathe out God's mercy to others...

HYMN 268, Crown Him with Many Crowns, vv. 1 & 4

***Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon his throne;  
hark, how the heavenly 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 years, the potentate of time;  
creator of the rolling spheres, ineffably sublime.  
All hail, Redeemer, hail! For thou hast died for me;  
thy praise shall never, never fail throughout eternity.***

CALL TO CONFESSION

Rev. Tyler Brock

With sincere and repentant hearts, let us name our sins against Christ and one another.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Sovereign God, we confess  
that we are not ready for your holy realm.  
You guide us toward right paths,**

**but we refuse to follow where you lead.  
You love and feed and care for us,  
but we fail to love and serve others.  
Forgive us, merciful God,  
so that we may return to your fold  
and rejoice in your presence;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
the Lamb upon the throne...**

*We keep a moment of silence for personal confession.*

#### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

However long we wander, however far we stray, God's steadfast love endures forever. Sisters and brothers be assured: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven. **Thanks be to God!**

#### RECEIVING THE PEACE

Jesus tells us, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." In this time, let peace reign in our hearts as we strive to live out God's will. May the peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

#### A TIME FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

Rev. Darcie Jones

#### GLORIA 585 Glory to God

*Cantor: Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest!*

**ALL: *Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest!***

*Cantor: To God be glory forever!*

**ALL: *To God be glory forever!***

*Cantor: Alleluia, Amen!*

**ALL: *Alleluia, Amen!***

### ***LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD***

#### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy God, open your Word. Give us a spirit of wisdom and revelation, that our eyes may be enlightened and we may know the hope to which we have been called; through Jesus Christ we pray. **Amen.**

#### NEW TESTAMENT READING

Ephesians 1:15-23

<sup>15</sup> I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason <sup>16</sup> I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. <sup>17</sup> I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, <sup>18</sup> so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, <sup>19</sup> and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. <sup>20</sup> God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. <sup>22</sup> And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, <sup>23</sup> which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## SERMON

### “The Last Word”

Today is the last Sunday in the church calendar, and we hold it up as “Reign of Christ” Sunday; the idea being that above all things, all that is on earth and all that is in heaven is the authority and power and majesty of our Lord Jesus. The church calendar begins with the season of Advent with its blues and whites and, of course, Christmas. It then moves into Epiphany marked by the arrival of the wise men, the baptism of Jesus, and the Transfiguration of the Lord. From there, we move into Lent, the season leading into Easter. Then we are in the season after Pentecost, which we call Ordinary Time. The Reign of Christ Sunday, today, marks the transition from Ordinary Time - a time of spiritual growth and reflection on the life of Christ and the church into a contemplative pause as we begin the new church year through Advent.

So as we end this Christian year - one that for us has been filled with strange tribulation and unprecedented adjustment - let us recognize that just as Christ is our Alpha and Omega, this ending is also a beginning. For you see, church time is not linear, it is cyclical, and as we approach this new beginning, we remember that we have been here before. We have witnessed the end of things, the end of people, the end of organizations, the end of all manner of things. And as it is with Christ, so it is with us, the end is only strange because it marks a transition, but each transition leads to a new beginning, always heading toward the next end. For Christians, endings and beginnings are governed not by elections or presidents or even churches and their pastors. Instead, on this Sunday, our church calendar reminds us that only Christ reigns above all.

Knowing this, let us turn to our passage from Ephesians. First, this letter is not written by Paul, but likely by one of Paul’s students. The language and the writing are very different from the letters we know belong to Paul, even as the theology and view of the world are the same. While Paul was thankful for the body of Christ that he was instrumental in forming, this entire letter reads like a love letter to that same body. Rev. Lee Hull Moses is the former pastor at First Christian Church in Greensboro, NC and she writes: “We might even think of Ephesians as a love letter to the body of Christ, flowing from gratitude to adoration to inspiration.” And we can see this in the opening lines of our passage from today: “...and for this reason, I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers.”

Our passage highlights so much of the cosmic nature and all-encompassing authority of Christ and, in doing so, prays explicitly that a “spirit of wisdom and revelation as [they] come to know him” shall be given to those faithful readers of this letter. Well, friends, today we are those readers, and down through the ages, Paul’s disciple is thankful for you and me. And in this week leading up to Thanksgiving, I must be honest - I, too, am grateful for each one of you.

I am thankful that in this season of pandemic, you have shown up to worship, you have attended virtual committee meetings, classes, and book studies. I am thankful that you have rolled with the session’s COVID-19 protocols regarding mask-wearing and social distancing. And while I know not everyone agrees on how that has been handled, everyone has been respectful and patient with one another, even in that disagreement. I am thankful that some of you have found your way into this sanctuary to worship, and I am grateful that many of you have found your way onto Facebook Live to participate virtually in worship. I am thankful for a staff committed to staying in touch with church members and a preschool that is committed to providing care for their members in a safe and uplifting way. I am thankful for a community of believers who volunteer their time and energy to raising our youth and children in the faith. I am grateful for a church family who shows up to care for the hungriest members of our community in their monthly outreach donations. I am thankful for the careful stewardship of a diminished church budget. I am thankful for a generous membership who has continued to honor their pledges and offerings in whatever way they can during a time of employment uncertainty.

I am thankful for those who strive to be faithful and succeed wildly, and I am thankful for those who seek to be faithful and fail miserably. I know that in the fullness of time, at the end and the beginning, Christ stands in authority over us all. And his power is not vengeful, but merciful; it is not fearful, but inspirational. So may we consider in our attempt to be the kind of

disciples for which Paul's disciple was thankful, these words from the Christian mystic Teresa of Avila. She says, "Christ has no body on earth but yours. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good; yours are the hands with which he blesses all the world." May we be thankful for each other, for this church, for our friends and family, and of course for Christ's presence in our lives. But may our gratitude compel us to the body of Christ in the world. May we believe that as one admittedly tricky year comes to an end, Christ remains and that as another year that will hold difficulty and blessing all its own, that Christ will indeed have the last word. Amen.

*A time of silent reflection follows the sermon.*

SERMON HYMN 336 We Gather Together, vv. 1 & 2

*We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing;  
he chastens and hastens his will to make known;  
the wicked oppressing now cease from distressing.  
Sing praises to his name; he forgets not his own.*

*Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining,  
ordaining, maintaining his kingdom divine;  
so from the beginning the fight we were winning;  
thou, Lord, wast at our side; all glory be thine!*

## **RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD**

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation to the Table

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Sanctus

Therefore, with all creation, we sing your praise:

***Holy, Holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.***

Words of Institution

Memorial Acclamation

Great is the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

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.**

Receiving of the Elements

Jesus said: "I am the bread of life."

Jesus said: "I am the vine, you are the branches. Come to me and never be hungry; believe in me and never thirst."

These are the gifts of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM

"Festival Flourish"  
Handbell Choir

Thomas Pearce

Post Communion Prayer

### ***GOING FORTH TO SHARE GOD'S WORD***

HYMN 475 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing, v. 3

***O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let that grace now, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee.  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;  
here's my heart; O take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above.***

BENEDICTION

May the grace of Christ surround you,  
the love of God astound you,  
and the Holy Spirit keep you,  
this day and forevermore. **Amen.**

POSTLUDE

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## CALENDAR

### **Sunday, November 22 | Christ the King Sunday**

10:00 am      Worship & Communion, Sanctuary

*No High School Youth Group this evening*

### **Monday, November 23**

6:00 pm      Session Meeting, Barrow Hall

6:00 pm      Nar-Anon Family Group, Youth Room

### **Tuesday, November 24**

10:00 am      Staff Meeting

*No Middle School Youth this evening*

### **Thursday, November 26**

Happy Thanksgiving!

### **Friday, November 27**

Office Closed

### **Sunday, November 29 | First Sunday of Advent**

10:00 am      Worship, Sanctuary

6:00 pm      High School Youth Group

<b>GIVING REPORT</b>	<b><u>Giving 2020</u></b>	<b><u>Giving 2019</u></b>
Pledged	\$362,300.94	\$354,551.90
Unpledged	\$25,979.00	\$60,434.49
Total	\$388,279.94	\$414,986.39



Members and visitors alike, please plan to give today in whatever way you are able either [Online through Realm](#), through your bank account, using the QR code or by mailing a check to the church. Thank you for your generosity.