



The
Ruler
Of All

Christ *the*
KING

Leader's Guide

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The
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Of All

A SERVICE FOR CHRIST THE KING

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The Ruler Of All

A SERVICE FOR CHRIST THE KING

Notes And Ordering Information

In this worship service for Christ the King Sunday you will celebrate Christ as the ruler of all in his reign of grace, power, love and everlasting life. The service includes hymns, prayers, a children's sermon and homilies that focus on specific aspects of Christ's rule. Hymns include "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name," "All Hail The Power of Jesus' Name," "The King of Love My Shepherd Is," and "Crown Him with Many Crowns." Kits are not returnable.

Printed bulletins (8 1/2" x 11") are available. Code **CKB**

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The Ruler Of All

A SERVICE FOR CHRIST THE KING

Newsletter/Bulletin Notices

Newsletter Notice

Join us for worship on Christ the King Sunday for a special service to celebrate Christ, who is the Ruler of all in our lives. Scripture readings, homilies and hymns focus on four specific aspects of his reign. Dwelling on Christ's rule of grace, his rule of power, his rule of love and his rule of everlasting life in this unique way will make us realize all the more that all authority in heaven and on earth is his each and every day of our lives.

Bulletin Notice

Thank you for joining us for worship on this Christ the King Sunday, when we celebrate Christ, who is the Ruler of all in our lives. Let the Scripture readings, homilies and hymns of this unique service highlight for you the supremacy of Christ's rule of grace, his rule of power, his rule of love and his rule of everlasting life, not just today but every day of our lives, from now unto eternity.

☐ The Ruler of all has given himself to die for you and for his sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. The Ruler of all has had mercy on his people.

- The **Hymn of Praise** is sung by the congregation to the tune St. Magnus CM:

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.

- The **Prayer of the Day** is spoken by the pastor:

☐ Lord God, heavenly King, enter into our midst. You are Ruler of all. We come before your throne to ask that you would enter into this moment to reign over our hearts and minds, songs and worship. Lord God, you rule with grace, power, love and life everlasting. Now bring these life-giving, world-changing gifts into our midst. We pray this in your name, O Christ the King. Amen.

- The **Children's Message** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

[Note: If possible, the presenter will want to have a toy crown and a crown of thorns available for the children's message. However, the message can be done without these illustration pieces.]

☐ Welcome, boys and girls! It is so great to have you here with me today. You have probably heard that today is a special day here at church. Today is Christ the King Sunday! Today is a special day when we celebrate how Jesus is the Ruler over all and the King of kings.

I want to try something to see how much you know. Finish this sentence for me: A king wears a _____ on his head. (Bring out toy crown if you have one.) Good job! Nobody said that a king wears a monkey on his head; nobody said that a king wears a pineapple on his head. You all know that a king wears a crown on top of his head. When we think of kings, a golden crown comes to mind. When we think of crowns, we think of power and palaces, thrones and kingdoms.

Jesus is a king. But do you know what Jesus wore on his head? I will give you a hint; it was not a golden crown like this (show toy crown). What type of crown did Jesus wear? (Show crown of thorns.) Jesus is a king; however, he is unlike any other king. Rather than demanding a crown of gold, Jesus chose to wear a crown of thorns. Rather than demanding that people love him, Jesus loved us first and died for us on the cross. Rather than sending soldiers to fight his battle, Jesus conquered death for us! He is our King and he lives. He is the Ruler over all.

Please pray with me: Jesus, you are Ruler over all. You rule with grace, power, love and life everlasting. Rule over our lives as well. We pray this in your name, O Christ the King. Amen.

- The **“Rule of Grace” Reading, John 1:9-17**, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”) For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

- The **“Rule of Grace” Homily** is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ Two kings: one king has wealth and power; the other king has but a handful of silver denarii. One king has enough supporters to fill a royal palace; the other king has twelve ragamuffin followers. One king is constantly on the attack; the other king ran away to Egypt. One king was born into the protection of the Roman Empire; the other king was born into the protection of his mother’s arms. Two kings living in the same time and place. One is King Herod; the other is Christ the King.

Herod is King of Judea. He was the client-king over Judea and all the Jewish people living in that place. As client-king, Herod worked for the Roman Empire. His job was to rule over Judea, build the infrastructure, support commerce and collect taxes. Herod did all this; in fact, he did a pretty good job of it. He built palaces, fortresses and aqueducts. He built a massive port to facilitate trade. Under Herod’s kingship, the economy was strong and stable.

Jesus is also a king. At his birth he was identified as the King of the Jews. Yet Jesus did not have the outward appearances of a king. His earthly thrones included a food trough and the stone slab of a tomb. At his birth, stray pieces of hay crowned his head; at his death, this king wore thorns braided together. The only scepter this king ever had was a walking stick. He did not build palaces, fortresses or aqueducts.

As for King Herod, he reigned by the rule of the law. If any man offended Herod, then he repaid the offense double. If any person stole from Herod, then he stole from her double. If any person threatened Herod, then the threat was eliminated in double-time. Herod’s kingship was established by the law, maintained by the law, and expanded by the law.

Unlike Herod, Christ the King reigned with a different rule. Christ the King reigned—and continues to reign—by the rule of grace. In him, God set aside his full glory to be born in human flesh. Jesus, the Ruler of all and God-with-us, rules his creation through grace. When his creation rebelled against him, he came to redeem it. When his people became subject to the kingship of death, he went to the cross to win them back. When sin plagues the hearts of his dear children, he sends his grace to forgive them. Christ’s kingship is established by grace, maintained by grace and expanded by grace.

Christ reigns today in your life by the rule of grace. You are free from your past mistakes because Christ rules over your sins. You are empowered to forgive others because Christ rules over your bitterness. Let your conscience be broken no longer because Christ makes all things new. Christ, not Herod, is the ruler over all. Christ, not sin, is the ruler over all. Christ, not your past mistakes, is the ruler over all. He is the real king over all things. He builds his kingdom by the rule of grace. He is the Word made flesh dwelling among us and “from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace” (John 1:16).

- The **“Rule of Grace” Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune New Britain CM:

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

’Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
’Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

- The **“Rule of Power” Reading, Hebrews 1:1-4**, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

P Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

- The **“Rule of Power” Homily** is delivered by the pastor:

P Herod had political connections. He had all kinds of well-known contacts: Mark Antony, Cleopatra, and Caesar Augustus. He had massive military power. At Herod’s request, the whole power of the Roman Empire was dispatched.

Jesus had no political connections. His political connections, if you even want to count them as such, were pretty slight: tax collectors, zealots, beggars and some widows. He had no military protection.

For a brief time in history, these two kings lived in the same place. King Herod felt threatened by the other king—Christ the King! Herod would do anything to maintain his kingship. He ordered his soldiers to go to Bethlehem and kill every male child under two years old. He was hoping to squash out the reign and rule of this other king by power.

By all outward appearances, it would seem that Herod is the real king. It would seem that Jesus is not a king at all. When we place these two kings side by side, it looks overwhelmingly clear that Herod is the real king. He has the army. He has the sword. It would even appear that Herod has the power.

Christ’s kingship, however, is not always obvious to the world. Christ’s kingship does not always fit with what we expect from a king. Sometimes Christ’s kingship looks like a manger for a throne or like thorns for a crown. Sometimes Christ’s kingship looks like death on a cross. Yet, despite the outward appearances, Christ is King. Christ is King even when the world fails to recognize him. Jesus Christ is an entirely different kind of King. He is the Savior-King sent by God. The sword is not the source of his power. Violence is not the lifeblood of his kingship. War is not the means by which he extends his kingdom.

And Christ is still King today and “he upholds the universe by the word of his power” (Hebrews 1:3). Christ is King even when you are in the midst of bankruptcy. Christ is King even when your loved ones are on the verge of death. Christ is King even when your marriage has fallen apart. Christ is King even in the midst of a miscarriage. Christ is King even when you’ve lost a job or failed a class. Christ is King even when depression or cancer or heart problems have seized your joy.

Christ the King rules with a different kind of power. His power cannot rust like Herod’s sword. Christ’s power cannot be hamstrung like one of Herod’s horses. Even when it looks as though Christ’s power is absent from your life, he is powerfully in control of the situation. His rule of power is eternal. His intervention is not seeking momentary victory; his actions are for all time. When God’s power seems distant from your life, he has his eyes set on something bigger than a momentary victory. When God seems far away and powerless to act, he is powerfully planning something better for you. When God seems slow to act by our earthly standards, he is right on time according to his eternal plans.

- The **“Rule of Power” Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Coronation 86 86 86:

All hail the pow’r of Jesus’ name! Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all.
Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all.

Crown him, ye martyrs of our God, who from his altar call;
Extol the stem of Jesse’s rod, and crown him Lord of all.
Extol the stem of Jesse’s rod, and crown him Lord of all.

- The **“Rule of Love” Reading, Romans 8:34-39**, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:
 - Ⓟ Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- The **“Rule of Love” Homily** is delivered by the pastor:
 - Ⓟ The Emperor Augustus—a personal friend of King Herod!—famously said, “It is better to be Herod’s pig than son.” These harsh words are sadly true. Wherever Herod went, a wake of hatred followed. He murdered his wife, remarried and then murdered the new wife. He murdered his children, had more children and then murdered them. He murdered his friends in order to make new friends. Herod murdered anyone who was incompetent because he or she posed a serious threat to his kingship. Herod murdered anyone who was competent because he or she posed a serious threat to his kingship. Herod loved to rule, but he ruled without love.

The Scribes and Pharisees—outspoken opponents of Jesus—could not help but wonder, “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?” (Mark 2:16). This question, accusatory as it may have been, is valid. Wherever Jesus went, a wake of strange characters followed. He sought out the outcast that nobody

would notice. He lifted up broken bodies from the floor. He raised dead bodies from the grave. Christ the King did keep rather strange company: vagabonds, lepers and a formerly dead Lazarus. People with disfigured motives and disfigured bodies gathered around this king. Jesus, though he was born to rule over all, ruled with selfless love.

And still today, Christ the King keeps rather strange company: us! Let that sink in for a moment. He dwells in our midst despite our waywardness. He died for us despite our disfigured hearts and minds. Though we are full of faith one moment and fearfully lost the next, Jesus still calls us his people. Though we cannot keep focus long enough to finish a prayer, Christ the King remains faithful to us. It is all rather strange: Jesus loves us despite our incompetent love for him.

The German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer understood that Christ's kingship is unlike any other kingship. He recognized that Christ's kingdom was different than Herod's kingdom. He admitted that Christ the King's rule of love was a bit strange, unexpected and not like this world. Bonhoeffer, reflecting on Christ's love for us, wrote, "A king who dies on a cross must be the king of a rather strange kingdom."

The kingdom of God is, like Bonhoeffer said, "a rather strange kingdom." Christ the King is not like any other king. His kingdom is not like the kingdoms of man. In God's kingdom, the Ruler over all is the one who dies for all. In God's kingdom, the king is the one to pay the tax of sin. In God's kingdom, his perfect loyalty to us is not based on our perfect loyalty to him. No matter what pain and struggle come our way, we can be certain that "in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Romans 8:37). Yes, the kingdom of God is a rather strange kingdom. However, it is the kingdom that we so desperately need. The love of Christ the King is what we so desperately need.

- The **"Rule of Love" Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune St. Columba 87 87:

The King of love my Shepherd is, whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am his and he is mine forever.

Where streams of living water flow, my ransomed soul he leadeth,
And where the verdant pastures grow, with food celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish oft I strayed, but yet in love he sought me,
And on his shoulder gently laid, and home, rejoicing, brought me.

And so through all the length of days thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise within thy house forever.

- The **"Rule of Life Everlasting" Reading, Revelation 21:1-6**, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

¶ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment."

Tune Coronation 86 86 86

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- The “**Rule of Power**” **Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Coronation 86 86 86:

All hail the pow’r of Jesus’ name! Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all.
Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all.

Crown him, ye martyrs of our God, who from his altar call;
Extol the stem of Jesse’s rod, and crown him Lord of all.
Extol the stem of Jesse’s rod, and crown him Lord of all.

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